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"If You Want to Test a Man's Character Give Him Power" Abraham Lincoln's Character and Use of Strategic Action: An Analysis of Presidential Decision-Making

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“IF YOU WANT TO TEST A MAN’S CHARACTER GIVE HIM POWER”
ABRAHAM LINCOLN’S CHARACTER AND USE OF STRATEGIC ACTION: AN
ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENTIAL DECISION-MAKING

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In studying the American presidency, there is arguably no president that has received more academic attention than Abraham Lincoln. Scholars and historians continue to strive to better understand Lincoln as both an individual and as a president, perhaps because he represented the country in such a unique era within history, as well as because of his unprecedented rise to power despite the odds against him. Historian Richard Hofstadter accurately captures the anomaly that Lincoln presents, writing,

“few have been able to point to such a sudden ascent from relative obscurity to high eminence; none has maintained so completely while scaling the heights the aspect of extreme simplicity; and none has combined with the attainment of success and power such an intense awareness of humanity and moral responsibility . . . Keenly aware of his role as the exemplar of the self-made man, he played the part with an intense and poignant consistency that gives his performance the quality of high art” (1973, 93).

Lincoln is revered as one the greatest presidents that the United States has had, and much of his prestige can be attributed to his ability to reunite the country and lead the Union to victory in the Civil War. As president during a time of intense conflict and immense uncertainty, Lincoln was forced to make extremely difficult decisions that had the potential to drastically influence the outcome of the war. My rationale for my research lies in the greater curiosity I have to understand presidential decision-making and how a president’s character and the resources that they have around them affects the outcomes of the decisions that they choose to make. Lincoln’s presidency offers a unique opportunity to better understand how presidents make key decisions while in office and also the opportunity to try and recognize the presence of certain factors that have the potential to influence the outcomes of those decisions.

My broad research question seeks to discover whether factors of character or structural factors of the presidency better explain the success or failure of presidential decisions? My hypothesis is that presidents that possess specific character elements that influence their ability to

make good judgments and demonstrate strong political leadership will be more apt to make successful decisions. My second hypothesis is that presidents that are able to persuade and bargain with those around them, as well as have an understanding of their presidential power, will make more successful decisions. The following chapter will include my literature review of relevant material both on the political theories of character and strategic action. Character literature will largely outline the work of foundational scholar James David Barber and political scientist Stanley Renshon. Strategic action literature will focus on the work of political scientist Richard Neustadt. The next chapter will then present my methodology and the two theoretical frameworks that I have developed and will employ in analyzing three different case studies. The following chapter will give a brief biographical history of Lincoln up until his election in 1860, as it is important to know about and understand his life before he was elected president. The next three chapters will present my three case studies, detailing key decisions that Lincoln made while in office, to demonstrate a possible rationale for why some decisions are successful and some are unsuccessful. The first case will focus on Lincoln's successful decision to draft and implement the Emancipation Proclamation. The second case will focus on Lincoln's failure in his management of General George B. McClellan. The third case will present Lincoln's decision to suspend the writ of habeas corpus in 1861. The final chapter will present my conclusions about the individual cases and the usefulness of using the two theoretical frameworks in analyzing presidential decisions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Character Literature

In examining the role that personality or character plays in the presidency, political scientist James David Barber provides the foundational theory in his book The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House, originally published in 1972. In the book, Barber aims to develop a way to understand and predict how presidents will act while in office based upon three main elements: worldview, style, and character (Barber 1972). For the purpose of this research, character will be the main element examined, but it is important to define the other two elements as well. Worldview is defined by Barber as, “*his [a president’s] primary, politically relevant beliefs, particularly his conceptions of social causality, human nature, and the central moral conflicts of his time*” (Barber 1972, 7). It is the way in which a president views and understands the world in which he lives. Style is, “*the President’s habitual way of performing his three political roles: rhetoric, personal relations, and homework*” (Barber 1972, 7). This is based largely on how a president acts and goes about what his role as president requires of him.

Barber defines the third and final element, character, as, “*the way the President orients himself towards life- not for the moment, but enduringly. Character is the person’s stance as he confronts experience*” (Barber 1972, 8). The element of character is mainly developed during childhood. It does not determine what a president’s style or worldview will be, but it does provide the broad direction for the other two elements to develop (Barber 1972). The core of Barber’s argument is that presidential character can be defined according to four types, which are configured from two baseline elements. The first baseline element is activity-passivity, which is defined as how much energy a president invests into his job (does he throw himself into his work or does he simply do his job as conditions arise?), and the second baseline element is positive-

negative affect, which is the level of enjoyment a president feels about their job in the political sphere (Barber 1972).

From these two dimensions, Barber creates the four basic character patterns, i.e. the four types of presidents, the active-positive, the active-negative, the passive-positive, and the passive-negative (Barber 1972). Barber admits that no individual president solely fits within one category but that these types simply predict tendencies (Barber 1972, 7). To summarize each type briefly, the active-positive is both very involved in and enjoys the position as president, oftentimes possessing high self-esteem and high productivity levels. The passive-positive enjoys their position, but, instead of using their position to move the country forward, they are constantly striving to please and receive affection from those around them and they mostly act out of compliance. The passive-negative largely performs their role as president out of a sense of duty or service and finds little enjoyment in their job, only serving their role because they feel they ought to. The active-negative is one who pours themselves into their job, but emotionally they struggle with their image and their sense of power, oftentimes possessing strong ambition but low self-esteem (Barber 1972, 12).

Barber takes a special interest in the active-negative type, as he believes them to be the most dangerous type to have in office. He writes that, “For the active-negative Presidents especially, character is key” (Barber 1972, 58). He presents five tendencies/themes that can be identified among active-negative types using presidents Woodrow Wilson, Lyndon Johnson, and Herbert Hoover as examples. One theme that Barber articulates is The Answer in Effort, in which a president will experience a severe depression as a particular policy unfolds. He throws himself into his work, loses himself in the task, and will then experience feelings of intense pain and self-sacrifice, spiraling into depression (Barber 1972, 57). A second theme Barber develops

is The Lone Struggle, where, as a policy develops, the president feels entirely responsible for the success of the policy and feels that he must bear the weight alone, often turning away from trusted advisors (Barber 1972). A third tendency is the Fight Against “Giving In” mentality. Here one can see a president who sees an issue as a conflict of strength and weakness. To give in would sacrifice one’s credibility and integrity and the fear of being labeled as soft compels them to persevere and to not give in (Barber 1972). A fourth tendency is The Appeal to Faith, where a president feels that they are the bearer of the nation’s promises, so they transform a policy problem as a matter of emotional ideals (Barber 1972, 57). The fifth and final tendency is The Emergent Enemy, in which a president becomes so frustrated from trying to enact his policies, that he will tend to rigidify around a common enemy who he believes is a major threat to his goals. From all of these tendencies, Barber’s thesis about active-negative presidents is that, “in each case, highly significant policy failures were rooted in the President’s character, which . . . pressed him to persevere rigidly in a disastrous policy” (Barber 1972, 95). These tendencies that Barber has identified can serve as predictors in identifying active-negative presidents. It is not necessary for an active-negative president to showcase all five of them, but the appearance of a few of them signals a potential active-negative type.

While several of Barber’s analyses seemed to have correctly predicted the behavior of certain presidents, namely Richard Nixon and George H.W. Bush, there remains a consensus among many political scholars in the inadequacy of Barber’s theory on its own and even more so in explaining presidents. One of the main issues of contention between Barber and his critics is the adequacy of the use of an individual simple typology versus employing a more complex typology (Tulis 1982, George 1974). Alexander George, the first critic of Barber’s theory on presidential character, enumerates two main issues that he has with Barber’s approach. The first

is the issue of Barber's typology of character. George calls Barber's model the "file-drawer" approach in that he fails to transform his four pure character types into a larger group of subtypes (George 1974). According to Barber's theory, the character type that defines a president may be an indicator of his dominant character but it fails to capture his whole being (George 1974). George writes that, "Barber's use of a primitive, undeveloped variant of the file-drawer approach . . . leaves the reader uncertain of the adequacy of his diagnoses of the Presidents for the task at hand" (George 1974, 275). The four pure types that Barber creates are not sufficient or developed enough to truly characterize a president, and George believes that it is challenging to utilize Barber's theory because of the inadequacy of the simple typology.

The second main issue that George has with Barber's theory is Barber's dependence on solely using character to explain behavior and failing to take into account situational factors. According to George, relying solely on character cannot predict behavior. George believes that a variety of constraints and numerous variables affect presidential performance, and that one must understand past behavior in previous situations, as well as the complex inconsistencies of an individual's personality (George 1974). George writes that, "although Barber is fully aware of and warns against the kind of psychological reductionism that has long plagued psychobiography, the difficulty of the task places him in jeopardy of committing this cardinal sin himself" (George 1974, 255).

This is not to suggest that George believes Barber's theory is totally useless. He believes that Barber's work does have value, but that it contains a number of inconsistencies and can only be used as a *starting point* for the diagnosis of an individual (George 1974). George articulates three possibilities for remedying the flaws in Barber's theory. The first possibility is to add in mixed types that would help to develop a more complex and sophisticated typology (George

1974, 277). George thinks there are particular issues with the dimensions of the active-passive and positive-negative types in the way that they are defined. There is both a clarification problem and a usefulness problem. The ambiguity between the dimensions concerning whether they are dichotomous (either a person is active **or** passive, positive **or** negative), or the dimensions are a continuum (each individual is placed at a point on the dimension) is not clear (George 1974). Also, the nature of “activity” and its significance in personality differs greatly from individual to individual. The dimension of positive-negative also has issues in that it does not take into account ambivalence towards one’s activity (George 1974).

The second possibility would be to do the opposite of adding in mixed types, but to simplify the present typology. Barber’s typology is overambitious in that it attempts to link too many variables into the four types and it would be more useful to formulate simpler classifications that do not result in personality types via a deductive formula (George 1974, 278). The final possibility, which George recognizes as the most difficult, would be to transition the typology from its present use as a classifying method to an ordering procedure, where individuals would be arranged along several axes that contain subtler distinctions (George 1974, 278). George concludes that none of these three possibilities would address the issue of the validity of Barber’s typology, which should be prioritized over fixing the pure typology, so from George’s critique it can be understood that there are many aspects of Barber’s theory that must be clarified and strengthened in order for it to be a useful political theory.

Political scholar James Qualls also provides a critique of Barber’s work in The Presidential Character. He provides a nice summary of the critiques already offered, including George’s, and he builds off of George’s two main issues with Barber’s theory, writing that, “Just as an accurate prediction cannot establish that Barber’s accentuation of personality and character

is correct, so such a prediction cannot establish that the relationships Barber draws between the components of character are true” (Qualls 1977, 185). Qualls suggests that if one looks to Barber’s earlier work, which examines the character of Connecticut legislators, the problems of reductionism are clearly evident in Barber’s earlier work, serving to foreshadow the issue of reductionism that Barber has with his later theories on presidential character (Qualls 1977). Qualls concludes in saying that it is not easy to characterize a certain individual by type and that the conclusion may not be accurate even with the right information (Qualls 1977). For Qualls, Barber’s character typology may have predicted the behavior of some presidents correctly, but it remains largely reductive and inconsistent, just as his earlier work was.

Political scientist Douglas Hoekstra attempts to apply Barber’s personality theory to Lincoln in order to ascertain the concrete applicability of Barber’s theory to additional presidents. He believes that in examining a president like Lincoln, Barber’s approach is largely useless (Hoekstra 1989). Hoekstra defines Lincoln as an active-negative president based upon Jeffrey Tulis’ work “On Presidential Character and Abraham Lincoln”. In this piece, Tulis gives several examples demonstrating Lincoln’s active character, including that he started his day early around seven in the morning and would work long into the nights, he refused to limit visiting hours so that he could meet with and hear the concerns of all of his visitors, and he kept in constant communication with advisers, especially within the War Department (Tulis 1982). Tulis provides clear evidence that Lincoln was an active type, but the more difficult question is whether Lincoln was more negative or positive. Tulis incorporates several of the tendencies that Barber articulates as behavior of potential active-negative presidents. First was the tendency that Lincoln had in his rhetoric to stress his faith in himself and also to appeal to the will of God. Here, one can see the tendency of the Appeal to Faith, where a president feels that they have the

duty to keep their promises to the nation and also that they transform a policy problem as a matter of emotional ideals, oftentimes through religious appeals. Lincoln's notion of appealing to faith and to his sense of duty was a main factor in his belief that his policies were the right ones. A second tendency that can be identified is the Fight Against "Giving In" tendency, as Lincoln rarely backed down or reversed a decision once it was made (Tulis 1982).

Hoekstra concludes through Tulis that Lincoln clearly was an active-negative president, however he believes that there are instances where it is clear that Lincoln does not demonstrate characteristics of an active-negative. A key indicator of an active-negative president is that they will "tend to rigidify around a failing course of action, particularly in times of crisis" (Hoekstra 1989). However during the Civil War, Lincoln showed incredible perseverance and diligence in the midst of multiple military defeats and amid political chaos, exactly the opposite of how a typical active-negative would act (Hoekstra 1989). Another example highlighting the failure of Barber's theory explaining Lincoln's character is that Barber believed that, "Only those with high self-esteem are secure enough to lead as democratic leaders must lead, with persuasion and flexibility as well as action and initiative" (Nelson 1982, 79). However, Lincoln is known as an individual who, at times throughout his life and presidency, had low self-esteem and personal self-doubt, however he was still able to lead as a leader must lead. Therefore, according to Hoekstra, it cannot be concluded from Tulis or from Barber that Lincoln can be identified as a true active-negative president. A critique of Barber's theory that can be identified through this conclusion is that perhaps Barber's typologies can only describe "normal" presidents. Tulis writes that, "The 'great' presidents pose special difficulties because they are supposed to have minds that are incapable of description according to criteria simple and formal enough to be applied to most men" (Tulis 1982, 99). These presidents would include Lincoln, as he was

known and is remembered as a great leader, therefore Tulis concludes that Barber's theory may be useful, but only to describe those presidents considered mediocre (Tulis 1982).

A clarifying point, one that critics of Barber oftentimes fail to see or understand, is that Barber's typology is not used to diagnosis individuals with a certain character type while they are president, but that there are noticeable tendencies of a particular type that occur **before** a president enters office. What Tulis and others have done is diagnosis presidents based on actions or decisions that they make while in office, but Barber never intended his theory to be use to diagnosis presidents. He wanted to use typology to **predict** how presidents would act if elected, so those particular critiques of the applicability of Barber's theory to presidents in office, while accurate, are slightly misguided.

Political scholar Michael Nelson seems to be both a critic and a supporter of Barber's theory. He believes that there are major flaws in Barber's theory, but he emphasizes that it remains a serious political theory and has contributed majorly to the field. Barber's concentration on the significance of presidential personality and his boldness in approaching his theory in a way that will inform and help voters predict what type of president an individual will become have both have been important contributions (Nelson 1982). However, Nelson believes that Barber's defense of his own theory, which is that one only needs to look at his successful prediction of the downfall of Richard Nixon while in office, is not very strong. Despite Barber's weak defense, Nelson believes that the elements of Barber's theory have sufficiently proven to be predictors of behavior and that they deserve to be more carefully considered and evaluated (Nelson 1982).

Barber provides somewhat of a response to his critics in a piece that he wrote twenty years after his original work was published in 1972. He does not call out any specific critics or

their remarks, but he reiterates the importance that his theory has in predicting how presidents will perform while in office. He clarifies part of his theory, stating that predictions will not work in a comprehensive sense, but only in a sense that would be limited to personality as a major factor (Barber 1992). He writes that, “the more plausible project is to concentrate on a continuity of personality carried forward by the president and likely to interact with whatever external politics he faces” (Barber 1992, 543). This, in a sense, attempts to deal with the criticism that Barber’s theory doesn’t consider situational factors. In Barber’s original work, he does touch upon two situational factors, Power Situation and the Climate of Expectations, which he defines but perhaps doesn’t utilize as much as he should. In the rest of the article, Barber showcases how his predictions have oftentimes been very predictive and successful, using Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and George H.W. Bush as examples (Barber 1992, 543). He uses these successful predictions in responding to his critics that if my theory has so many problems, how I have been able to accurately and correctly predict the behavior of several modern presidents? Barber acknowledges that his theory isn’t perfectly predictive, but that it has had considerable success applied to several presidents and for that reason he emphasizes that the idea of predicting the behavior of presidents can be highly useful.

After closely examining Barber’s foundational theory on presidential character, it is worthwhile to step back and evaluate the topic of presidential character more broadly and analyze the usefulness of studying individual leaders over other potential political approaches. Central to the question that political scholar Erwin Hargrove tackles is, how do the elements of leadership fit into these personality theories? Does the individual who is the president really matter or is it the historical conditions in which they find themselves in that matters? Hargrove presents three objections to the study of political leadership. The first is that individuality is too

great a wild card and that there are too many varying factors that make developing a general theory on presidential character impossible. Instead the study of political leadership must be both historically and institutionally specific (Hargrove 1993, 70). A second objection from Hargrove is that the study of leadership is like quicksilver, in that it is largely elusive and there is the potential for information to slip through the cracks (Hargrove 1993). This makes it difficult to be able to link the actions that leaders make with their possible consequences for society. A third objection is that one does not need to look at individuals and their impact, but that the concept of the institutional role of the presidency will suffice (Hargrove 1993). Similar political pressures and situations will cause different individuals to act in much the same way regardless of their character, therefore simply analyzing the institution itself is sufficient.

Despite these objections, Hargrove still believes that there is plenty of opportunity for expression of individuality through leadership. Thus far, presidential studies have not done a good job in sorting out what types of areas individuality can be exemplified in. One example that permits one to see the individuality of leaders is provided by scholar Fred Greenstein, who writes that “the greater the demands on the leader to act at high levels of skill, the more likely individuality will be expressed” (Hargrove 1993, 72). This indicates that crisis and high-pressure situations are an area in which individual leadership is more easily exposed. Another area in which individuality can be expressed is when presidents are dealing with ambiguous situations, where there is no set way in which a president must act (Hargrove 1993). Thus Hargrove concludes that personality, role, and situation are inextricably joined, and it is essential that a dynamic and more complex model of political personality, specifying aspects of individuality, be developed (Hargrove 1993, 72).

Hargrove develops two models of political personality. The first model showcases that beliefs and values, cognitive style, and needs → ego → creates synthesis and congruence. The second model is that political personality → policy purpose and to political and administrative style (Hargrove 1993, 75). What Hargrove's models do is link political personality with situations that leaders face in the time that they are in office. Leadership style is defined by Hargrove as, "the characteristic ways in which a political leader deals with recurring tasks of leadership such as persuasion, the management of conflict, and administration" (Hargrove 1993, 75). Hargrove makes an important connection between leadership and character writing that, "Leadership behavior is something more than rational choice of intelligent strategies. To a great extent it is intuitive and is an expression of personality in the fullest sense" (Hargrove 1993, 76).

Hargrove also considers the importance of political skill in his discussion of leadership. He develops a chart that aims to rank and compare the impact of presidents on history. Within the chart, there are two continuums, one of which is the level of political skill and the other is the state of conditions presidents find themselves in (Hargrove 1993). This framework is most useful for the comparison of presidents, as it permits the analysis of political skill in assessing the contribution of individuality to presidential success and failure within specific conditions (Hargrove 1993). The most important skill, according to Hargrove, is called "strategic leadership" which he defines as, "the capacity to discern where history may go and to reinforce that direction by skillful action" (Hargrove 1993, 85). He also outlines three components of presidential leadership that are, "1) policy purposes, 2) consideration of the politics of action in relation to purpose, and 3) the management of decision-making" (Hargrove 1993, 85). Hargrove contributes greatly to the field in that he both connects and distinguishes the elements of leadership and personality. He is able to link the two to come up with a more comprehensive

theory that takes into account character/personality features, but also contextual and situational factors as well.

Turning to an additional scholar that has contributed to the field of presidential personality, Fred Greenstein provides six qualities that he believes shape presidential performance. The first quality is the effectiveness as a public communicator (Greenstein 2000, 180). A president's ability in communicating with the public is essential in gaining trust and respect. The second quality is organizational capacity. This includes the ability of a president to forge a strong team of advisors and to create effective institutional arrangements (Greenstein 2000). The third quality is political skill. Political skill means the way in which a president puts his mark on public policy through how they build and maintain public support and establish their reputation (Greenstein 2000, 182). The fourth quality is policy vision, which means the extent to which a president's policy views inform his actions (Greenstein 2000). The fifth quality is cognitive style, which is how the president processes the information and the advice from his advisors and the sixth and final quality is emotional intelligence. This includes how a president manages his emotions, whether they dominate him and they undermine his performance, or if he is able to turn them into a constructive motivator (Greenstein 2000).

The final political scholar to consider in looking at presidential character is psychologist and political scientist Stanley Renshon. Renshon considers both psychological elements and political elements in conceiving of the presidency and the impact of the individual in that role. For Renshon, "the presidency is an office where its occupant's psychology counts" (Renshon 2000, 43). Renshon, similar to Barber, believes that character matters when conceiving of the presidential role. Renshon defines character as, "an individual's core psychology: It is the set of values, behaviors, and perspectives that show continuity over time and across situations. It is the

patterns of choice and response across time and circumstances” (Renshon 2004, 52). Despite the limitations of law, precedent, and competing institutions, there is a vast area of opportunity for presidential discretion and this is where a president’s character is revealed (Renshon 2004). Instead of identifying specific typologies of character like that of Barber, Renshon advocates that it is more useful to analyze the psychology of a president from three basic domains, which form the foundation of character: ambition, character integrity, and relatedness (Renshon 2004, 53). Renshon theorizes that these three elements are interrelated and can be identified in presidents before they are elected to office, however these elements do not provide exclusive categorizations or types like Barber’s theory does (Renshon 2000).

Ambition is, “a president’s (person’s) level of desire to achieve his purposes, and the skills he is able to bring to bear on accomplishing them” (Renshon 2000, 44). Ambition includes both personal and political skills, including self-regard and self-interest, that can be utilized in the pursuit and accomplishment of one’s goals and values (Renshon 2004; Renshon 1996). The element of ambition has two theoretical advantages. One is that ambition is a motivational element that appears to be a prerequisite for achieving a position in high public office (Renshon 1996). The second advantage is that, regardless of the level of ambition that a president possesses, such as a president who amasses power out of ambition from having low self-esteem (like Barber’s active-negative), or a president who is more oriented towards achievement, ambition is a common and underlying element to both types of stances (Renshon 1996). Renshon admits that there are problematic issues with ambition, because ambition can be either productive or problematic, and he believes that it is important to view ambition in relation to the other character domains to better understand it (Renshon 1996).

Character integrity, “refers to the ideals and values by which the candidate says he lives and his fidelity to them” (Renshon 2000, 44). There are two different perspectives regarding character integrity. One is how others view the degree to which the individual possesses a set of genuine beliefs and values that inform his choices and commitments. The second perspective regards a person’s interior psychology, which is how he views himself (his self-esteem and personal identity) and the level to which he has acted on his beliefs (Renshon 2000; Renshon 1996). Overall, character integrity reflects the president’s ability to commit and maintain boundaries and ethics regarding his ideals and values (Renshon 2004). The criterion with which one demonstrates fidelity to their ideals and values is that first that one must have the capacity to endure loss and second is that one must be able to endure conflict and a degree of separateness from others (Renshon 1996). Ambition and character integrity are related in that possessing strong ideals and values provides a foundation for the ethical framework in which one’s ambitions can be pursued (Renshon 1996). In addition, Renshon utilizes the conception of ambition from scholar Heinz Kohut, who notes that, “ambition in the pursuit of one’s ideals, many of which are socially valuable, is an integral part in the development of a strong and favorable sense of self” (Renshon 1996, 190).

The final element, relatedness, “refers to the basic nature of the candidate’s interpersonal relations, his stance toward others” (Renshon 2000, 44). There are differing circles of relationships that the president has and there is a different degree of closeness within each circle. Those individuals within the inner circle have a very close relationship with the president; these are likely his most trusted advisors. He also will have circles that contain highly antagonistic relationships (Renshon 2004; Renshon 1996). The successful development of the previous two domains of ambition and character integrity rests on a variety of productive interpersonal

relationships, thus relatedness depends heavily on the elements of ambition and character integrity (Renshon 1996). Character integrity is connected with the domain of relatedness in two central ways. The first is that ideals oftentimes develop out of the relationships and the influence that others have on our lives. The second is that our sense of self is intimately tied to the relationships that we have with others (Renshon 1996). Regarding ambition, the interpersonal relationships that one has with others have a significant effect on ambition, as relationships of cooperation versus competition can have a significant influence on one's level of ambition (Renshon 1996).

Renshon writes that, "These elements, and the associated patterns that develop from them, are put forward as useful frames for the analysis of the two crucial dimensions of presidential performance, judgment and leadership" (Renshon 1996, 203). Renshon believes that that each of the three character elements of ambition, character integrity, and relatedness influences what he deems the two pillars of presidential performance: leadership and judgment (Renshon 2004). He emphasizes that if character is relatively stable and consistent, an examination of a candidate's personal and political history can provide valuable information for how he might handle his presidential responsibilities, which can be seen through their judgment and leadership (Renshon 1996).

Presidential judgment is essentially a president's ability to match solutions to circumstances, in that he can identify a problem, see it for what it is, and devise an appropriate solution (Renshon 2004). Regarding why good judgment is important, Renshon writes that, "We expect our president to manage the domestic economy, ensure domestic tranquility, and keep Americans safe at home and powerful abroad. We give him the technical means to do so- budgets, troops, advisers, and staff- and an almost endless list of resources he can call upon. Yet,

few modern presidents have been considered outstanding” (Renshon 2003, 25). For Renshon, the amount of resources that a president has at his disposal influences very little if a president cannot make good judgments regarding the problems that he faces. He defines judgment as, “the quality of analysis, reflection, and ultimately, insight that informs the making of consequential decisions” (Renshon 1996, 207). Assessing judgment requires four considerations: the problem itself, the context(s) within which decisions are made, the actual decisions that were made, and the results of those decisions (Renshon 1996). It consists of both a president’s reflective and analytical abilities and the nature of the problem to be faced (Renshon 1996).

Renshon also addresses the question of is good judgment situational? He answers that there are some basic character elements, presumably the three character domains, that would seem to point to good judgment, however good judgment is also connected to specific domains and problems that are generated by experience (Renshon 1996). He reiterates his point that character is enacted in patterns and that the psychological domains underlie the enactment patterns because they are consolidated and continue over time (Renshon 2003). This suggests that one could have good judgment regardless of the situation, as they would act according to their character patterns, not to the situation in which they find themselves. So the answer to Renshon’s question is that good judgment can be situational, but also it depends upon character elements and the level of experience of the president in office. Character and judgment are largely connected in that judgment reflects a combination of knowledge, experience, and insight, but it also requires a consolidated set of character domains that are strong and can withstand the decision-making process (Renshon 1996). He believes that good judgment can be contextually specific, but that poor judgment is systematic (Renshon 2003, 30). Poor judgment can result from unrestrained ambition, as well as failure to recognize or acknowledge crucial risks within a

problem (Renshon 2003). Good judgment reflects having a developed and consolidated professional and personal identity, and in making and maintaining a range of positive interpersonal relationships (Renshon 2003, 33).

Renshon writes, “I argue that substantially developed character capacities are instrumental, if not necessary, correlates to good judgment. However it is clear that good judgment is a necessary but insufficient element in presidential performance” (Renshon 1996, 223). This is where the second pillar of political leadership comes in. He defines it as the capacity to act based upon one’s judgments, and also the ability to translate judgment into effective policies (Renshon 1996). The “president’s attempts to *mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate* activity in the pursuit of presidential goals” highlight the three distinctive aims of presidential leadership (Renshon 2004, 54). Mobilization refers to the president’s ability to stimulate the public. He must be able to anticipate problems and educate the public about them, as well as invest himself in solving the problem (Renshon 1996). Orchestration refers to the application and shaping of mobilization in a specific policy way to achieve one’s goals (Renshon 1996). Finally, consolidation refers to the skills that help to preserve a president’s supportive relationships and the institutionalization of one’s policy judgments (Renshon 1996). Political leadership, like judgment, is strongly related to character. The character domains of ambition and integrity are especially important in the aims of mobilization and orchestration, as it takes a strong level of desire and strong fidelity to one’s values and ideals to be able to mobilize the public and orchestrate policy decisions (Renshon 1996). Strong political leadership also is strongly affected by the ability to make and maintain personal relationships, indicating the third character domain of relatedness, so each of the three character domains have a significant influence on political leadership.

Renshon emphasizes that a president's psychology is not synonymous with character, but that one's character reveals psychological patterns that can be identified and help to show an individual's strengths and limitations. These patterns are built into the foundation of character. The particular patterns that Renshon identifies are persistence, impatience, the need to be special, the wish to have it both ways and the dislike of boundaries, taking risks, taking responsibility, competition, and achievement (Renshon 2000). He developed these patterns in his book *High Hopes* and in *The Psychological Assessment of Presidential Candidates*.

Renshon provides a useful application of his theory applying it to the Clinton presidency. He indicates that Clinton clearly had a high level of ambition, shown through his effort within his campaigns, both for governor and for president, and his perseverance and high energy (Renshon 2000, 45). Regarding his character integrity, this was a large element in Clinton's governorship and presidency in that he constantly had to defend his values and beliefs. There were two sides of Clinton: one that was the focused and effective Clinton and the one that caved in to external correction and was more impulsive (leading to many screw-ups) (Greenstein 1998, 180). Clinton's positions on certain policies tended to change depending on what side of Clinton was strongest at that particular moment, which doesn't show strong character integrity of sticking to one's ideals (Greenstein 1998). Clinton's relatedness is demonstrated through strong interpersonal relations, stemming from his desire to receive validation from others. He needed and wanted others to accept the view of himself that he had created (Renshon 2000).

What is interesting about Renshon's theory is his focus on patterns of behavior. He believes that these patterns are built in the foundation of character and that they help to define the qualities that an individual possesses that demonstrate their psychological resources and limitations (Renshon 2004). Renshon conceives of one's character as the foundation of their

psychology, and that the patterns of behavior are the visible and public demonstration of their psychology (Renshon 2004). The identification of patterns through specific character elements provides much more depth than a classic typology, however elements from both Barber's theory and Renshon's theory are extremely valuable in conceiving of the importance of character in the executive office.

Fred Greenstein also applies his own theory in looking at the Clinton presidency, which provides for an interesting comparison of Renshon's application. He looks at Clinton using each of his six character elements that impact presidential performance. In regards to his effectiveness as a public communicator, Clinton could either be outstanding or unfocused and off-topic, however he usually had a strong ability to captivate an audience (Greenstein 2009, 185). Clinton's organizational capacity was very low. He gave too much freedom to his aides and advisors and there was no structure to his organizational strategy (Greenstein 2009). Clinton showed a high level of political skill in that devoted his life to politics, but he was also quite susceptible to change his policies and to overreach when he believed political conditions were favorable (Greenstein 2009). Regarding his political vision, Clinton's vision was never clearly defined. He was perhaps too open to modification and took the middle ground on many issues so that a clear policy vision was never showcased (Greenstein 2009, 187). Clinton's intelligence was impressive throughout his early life and his presidency, showcasing a high cognitive style (Greenstein 2009). Finally Clinton's emotional intelligence was lacking. He was extremely politically gifted, shown through his thwarting of the Republican party's efforts to remove him from office, but his experience as president shows that the absence of emotional soundness created great obstacles in him being able to exercise his full political potential (Greenstein 2009).

Seen through both Greenstein and Renshon's theories, it is clear that Clinton possessed extreme political ability and intelligence, but that he struggled with emotional intelligence and his need to be validated. Both applications provide similar conceptions of the performance of Clinton as a president, although the character elements that they develop and utilize are different. With the addition of Renshon's psychological patterns, his theory provides more depth, as it looks at both psychology and leadership/character elements to give the fullest picture of an individual as president. Renshon writes, "Unlike a person's attitudes or personality traits, character, if it has any useful substantive meaning, reflects a person's basic and habitual ways of relating to circumstance. So to the extent that a person's character has become psychologically consolidated, we can expect a certain degree of behavioral consistency" (Renshon 2000, 54). The element of consistency is extremely important because it allows for the theory to confidently predict how any individual will act while in office. In this sense, Renshon sees the usefulness of Barber's attempt to use character typology as a predictive theory, a fact that many of Barber's critics fail to recognize or acknowledge. Renshon wants his theory to be predictive and he states that typologies of leaders have been useful in pointing to broad areas of temptations or tendencies for presidents who are able to fit into a specific category, however clearly there are limitations to what typologies can provide (Renshon 2000). It is possible for presidents to drift and to overcome psychological impulses or tendencies and this complexity makes using a typology risky, but not impossible (Renshon 2000). The depth and the complexity of Renshon's theory on presidential character is highly valuable and the consistency that he believes that it can provide in predicting presidential behavior allows for his theory to be utilized more confidently in conceiving of the role that character plays in presidential decision-making.

Strategic Action Literature

In Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents, Richard Neustadt focuses on the way that a president uses the resources and the situational elements around him to gain power. He writes that one should not measure a president as if they are the entire government, but they should be measured by their strengths and weaknesses concerning their capacity to influence the conduct of the people who constitute the government around him (Neustadt 1990). He emphasizes that, “To rate a President according to these rules, one looks into them man’s own capabilities as seeker and wielder of effective influence upon the other men involved in governing the country” (1990, 4). Words from former president Dwight D. Eisenhower frame the main problem that Neustadt tackles in his book, which is that “powers” are no guarantee of having power and that clerkship, the successful balancing of different interests, is no guarantee of leadership (Neustadt 1990, 10). Eisenhower said that, “I sit here all day trying to persuade people to do the things they ought to have sense enough to do without my persuading them . . . That’s all the powers of the President amount to” (Neustadt 1990, 10). Neustadt emphasizes three distinctive elements that a president must possess in order to succeed in his role and to gain power: the power to persuade, a strong professional reputation, and a high level of public prestige. He uses three cases in which he believes that these three elements are strongly demonstrated. The first case is the removal of Douglas MacArthur as commander of American forces in the Far East in 1951. The second is Truman’s seizure of the steel mills in 1952. And the third case is Eisenhower’s executive order in 1957 to send federal troops in Little Rock, Arkansas to allow for racial integration in public schools.

The common denominator among these three cases is that the president’s executive order brought results in the form of direct action because they were self-executing (Neustadt 1990).

There are five common factors that were present in each of the cases; both the president's involvement and his words were unambiguous, his order was widely publicized, the people who had to carry it out had everything they needed, and these people also had no doubt of his authority to issue it to them (Neustadt 1990, 18). While all three of the cases demonstrate these five factors, it is quite rare that this entire combination occurs and that presidential orders are carried out with such ease (Neustadt 1990). These cases also are all last resort decisions; ones that Truman and Eisenhower did not necessarily want to make, but they felt as if they were left with no other option (Neustadt 1990). Emphasized by Neustadt is the importance of considering the cost of decision making. These types of last resort decisions that Truman and Eisenhower made are very costly, as drastic and such direct action rarely comes at a low cost (Neustadt 1990). The persuasive process that presidents must employ in order to have power and authority is still demonstrated through these cases, however it is important to recognize that commands are only one method of persuasion and they are not a method that is suitable for the majority of decisions that presidents will make. Neustadt emphasizes that through the method of bargaining, and not commanding, a president avoids high cost decisions and is able to gain more power and influence through the three main elements of the power to persuade, professional reputation, and public prestige.

Neustadt's first element, the one that he seems to place the most importance on, is the power to persuade. He opens up the discussion emphasizing that what the Constitutional Convention of 1787 aimed to create was a government of separate powers, but in actuality it created a government of "separated institutions *sharing* powers" (Neustadt 1990, 29). This separateness of the institutions combined with the sharing of authority between the president and political parties sets the scene for situations in which a president has the need to employ

persuasion (Neustadt 1990). A president's main persuasive task is, "to convince such men that what the White House wants of them is what they ought to do for their sake on their authority" (Neustadt 1990, 30). The best way for a president to do this is to convince those around that his aims are dependent upon their help (Sperlich 1969, 407). It is important to note that persuasive power is not simply possessing the individual characteristics of charm or strong argumentation skills, but that the derivation of power comes from one's status and authority (Neustadt 1990). This type of power gives a president great advantage over others, and his relationships with those around him strongly influence his persuasive abilities. Essentially, Neustadt argues that persuasive power gives the president the power to bargain, and that his status and authority yield bargaining advantages (Neustadt 1990). Self-interest is at the heart of the notion that presidential power is the power to persuade. An Eisenhower aide summed it up well saying, "The people on the Hill don't do what they might *like* to do, they do what they think they *have* to do in their own interest as *they* see it" (Neustadt 1990, 39). In dealing with representatives, senators, and aides, a president's task is to convince them in believing that what he wants of them is what they want of themselves and what is in their best interest (Neustadt 1990).

A president's success in persuading others is no guarantee, so Neustadt emphasizes that a president can maximize his effectiveness by guarding his power prospects in the course of making choices (Neustadt 1990). To guard his power prospects, a president has to first understand the nature of his power (Sperlich 1969). He must be able to be his own "power expert" and see the possible power implications inherent in his decisions (Sperlich 1969). In order to do this a president needs meaningful information, which comes mostly through trusted advisors, but also through a president's own initiative in finding out the range of facts and

opinions that he can get on a particular issue, therefore he must be an active participant in the details of his political work (Sperlich 1969).

The second element a successful president should possess is a strong professional reputation. Those individuals whose opinions make up a president's professional reputation are members of the "Washington community" (Neustadt 1990). These include his administration, governors of states, members of Congress, military commanders, leading politicians in all parties, representatives of private organizations, individuals in the media and news, and foreign diplomats (Neustadt 1990). These sectors of individuals need the president just as much as the president needs them, leading to what is called the "law of anticipated reactions". This means, "The individuals who share in governing do what they think they must. A President's effect on them is heightened or diminished by their thoughts about his probable reaction to their doing. They base their expectations on what they can see of him. And they are watching him all the time" (Neustadt 1990, 51). A president largely builds his reputation by rewarding his friends and punishing his enemies. A president's professional reputation is not static and not every Washingtonian will share the same view and opinion of him, however there is usually a dominant tone regarding the appraisals of a president (Neustadt 1990, 53). Reputation is both established and altered by the president himself, and he has the opportunity to change his reputation if he feels that he is not being professionally respected and trusted (Neustadt 1990). The quality of a president's reputation has a significant impact on his ability in achieving favorable bargains and the security of guarding his power prospects (Sperlich 1969). Having a strong and positive reputation makes it much easier for presidents to work with, and persuade, those around them. Individuals who do not have a favorable view of the president can be

extremely difficult for presidents to work with, thus impeding the ability for a president to achieve what they want.

The third and final element that Neustadt outlines is public prestige, which is how the outside public (separate from the Washington community) views the president (Neustadt 1990). Similar to professional reputation, public prestige is a matter of opinion and judgment. The law of anticipated reaction still applies, one only need to swap in the public in place of those in the Washington community. The public is a much broader and diverse group than the Washingtonians, and their impressions are generally more imprecise regarding the president, thus, a high public prestige is oftentimes more challenging to achieve (Neustadt 1990, 73). Public prestige and professional reputation are strongly connected. The public's view of the president is a strong influence on his professional reputation. If those in the Washington community think that a president's public prestige is high, his professional reputation is likely to be stronger (Neustadt 1990). Favorable impressions of the president yields him greater persuasive power among those in the Washington community, which allows him to more actively pursue and enact policies that he desires to implement and the less likely that Washingtonians will resist his aims (Sperlich 1969).

The satisfactions and the frustrations that the public feels regarding the president's performance have a significant impact on public prestige. However, there are numerous factors that a president cannot control that oftentimes frustrate the public that pose a serious threat to his public prestige (Hargrove 2001). A president must prepare the public for these frustrations in case they occur. Neustadt writes that, "If he can make them think the hardship necessary, and can make them want to hear it with good grace, his prestige may not suffer when they feel it" (Neustadt 1990, 84). In order to do this, a president must teach reality. The way he teaches

reality is through making the right choices and actions. Teaching reality relies upon, “the politician’s faculty of discernment in the effort to articulate plausible remedies for emerging policy problems that will win general political support (Hargrove 1998, 43). He must inform the public that he oftentimes faces constraints that he cannot overcome, but that he does the best with the resources and the information that he has.

One critique of Neustadt’s theory is provided within Hargrove’s article on Presidential Power by scholar Peter Sperlich. Sperlich emphasizes that Neustadt’s model of leadership is logically consistent, however he asks the question of, “Is persuasion, through bargaining, the only or best path to influence or are there other bases to persuasion as well?” (Hargrove 2001, 246). Persuasive resources should not solely rely on “instrumental appeals”, as many presidents are able to be persuasive without the use of power and command, but should instead rely on restructuring institutional roles and creating cooperative teams (Hargrove 2001). Sperlich also believes, as do many critics of Neustadt, that no president is able to adequately calculate the political resources that he has and achieve what he wants all through bargaining. In fact, Sperlich believes that quest for the type of power that Neustadt outlines would lead to “overload and breakdown” (Hargrove 2001, 246). He believes instead that Neustadt’s prescriptions should be more balanced by a wider array of leadership skills.

A second critic of Neustadt, James MacGregor Burns, believes that Neustadt only considers half of the possibilities of leadership potential. Burns conceives of transactional leaders and transformational leaders. According to Burns, Neustadt only considers transactional leaders, which are exemplified by presidents who bargain and “exchange favors in a situation of political stability in which fundamental questions about policy or the polity are not asked” (Hargrove 2001, 248). A transformational leader is one who can “articulate and reinterpret the historical

situation according to widely shared values about the moral purposes of the polity” (Hargrove 1998, 30). All that Neustadt has described within his book is a transactional president, which MacGregor Burns believes leads to endless bargaining, power hoarding, and the management of manipulation (Hargrove 2001). The shortcoming of MacGregor Burns’ critique is that he is not fully explicit whether a president can have elements of both types of leaderships. For example, Abraham Lincoln, according to Hargrove, was a brilliant transformational leader, but he also was clever in the transactional sense, and this led him to be extremely successful in the attainment of power (Hargrove 1998, 31). Hargrove makes it clear that transformational leaders must possess some transactional abilities, but not all transactional leaders must be transformational leaders (Hargrove 2001, 249).

Neustadt does not take into account the historical context in which presidents find themselves, as he only looks at midcentury presidents. This is only one small piece of time, one in which it is well matched that a president must bargain and use his political resources wisely (Hargrove 2001, 251). Scholar Stephen Skowronek views the presidents that Neustadt examines as presidents only having to face how to make a static presidency work, not how to change and reconstruct the system of politics based upon when they are president. Also presidents in different historical periods may act very differently and Neustadt’s theory does not allow for that adaptation (Hargrove 2001). Skowronek broadens Neustadt’s idea of bargaining to include two virtues that he believes must be included in order for presidents to be effective. First is that presidents, “must have a perception of their place in the succession of presidencies” and second is “an ability to articulate a political agenda appropriate to their place in the succession” (Hargrove 2001, 251). Skowronek gives a valuable critique of Neustadt, as he gives a much

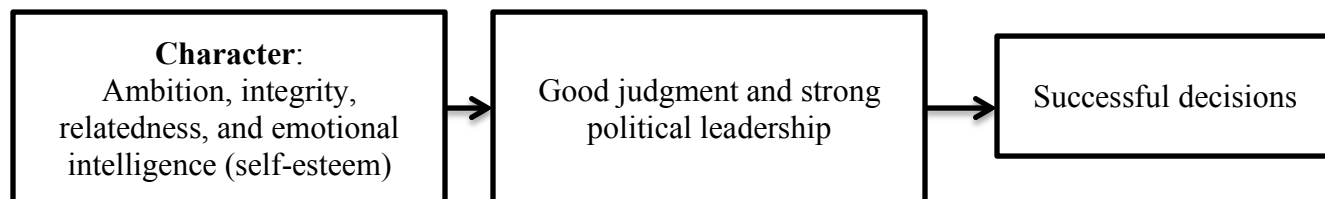
broader view of the political limits and possibilities and he emphasizes that skills and strategies of leadership must be matched to the time in which a president is a leader (Hargrove 2001).

In terms of the impact of the institution of the executive office and how the president works with others, scholar Matthew Kerbel measures individuality, the institution, and historical context in relation to success and failure. Kerbel found that organizational efficiency, meaning a politically savvy staff, is crucial to presidential success (Hargrove 2001, 257). Personal traits such as charm and charisma are not as important, but persuasion and bargaining skills do matter, especially when carrots (rewards) are offered over sticks (threats) (Hargrove 2001). He also found that high public prestige and presidential achievement are not necessarily related (Hargrove 2001). These central critiques target Neustadt's theory in three main areas: the conception of political resources, the importance of the individual presidential within history, and the institution of the presidency. However despite these critiques, Neustadt's theory on persuasion and bargaining is a useful model in which to better analyze the success or failure of particular presidential decisions.

CHAPTER 3: THEORY AND METHODS

Character Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that I will be employing regarding presidential character will contain a combination of different elements from the various theories that were discussed in the literature review. It will primarily focus on the elements of Stanley Renshon's character theory, but I will be using elements from Fred Greenstein's theory as well. Through analyzing these theories on presidential character, I have developed a set of character elements that I believe are crucial to successful presidential decision-making. While presidents do not necessarily have to strongly demonstrate all four elements of character in order to be successful decision-makers, the presence of these elements within a president's behavior in making decisions can provide rationales for successful decisions. In examining the impact that character can play in presidential decision-making, these are the key variables that I believe will offer the most useful way of conceiving of presidential character and decision-making. The theory is as follows:



My research question seeks to understand if the presence of certain characterological elements can help to explain the success or failure of presidential decisions. I hypothesize that the possession of a set of strong character elements will make successful decision-making more likely. I believe that my independent variables, the character elements that I have chosen, namely ambition, integrity, relatedness, and emotional intelligence, will be determinants in shaping good judgment and political leadership which will influence a president's demonstration of political

leadership and judgment and determine whether a decision will likely be successful or unsuccessful. Regarding the literature on character theory, James David Barber is the foundational scholar. His theory has its strengths and weaknesses, but for the purpose of my research, his typology scheme is not as useful. I agree with Alexander George's critique that Barber's theory is too simplistic with its four pure character types of active-positive, active-negative, passive-positive, and passive-negative (George 1974, 274). Each of the types that he develops is presented as a cluster of characteristics, but there is no empirical or theoretical basis for them, and he does not adequately take into account situational factors (George 1974, 251). Fred Greenstein's list of character elements is more useful, especially the element of emotional intelligence, but his "theory" is simply a list of elements, not an integrated and developed political theory, and so it cannot be used on its own. Stanley Renshon's theory is perhaps the most complex of the theories reviewed, as the elements that he employs are concrete and well developed and I believe that they can be used as central elements that can help explain the success of presidential decisions. The elements of ambition, integrity, and relatedness are employed in a broad, yet focused way that does not attempt to categorize presidents. Also these elements lead to good judgment and political leadership, which I believe are very important determinants for successful decision-making and neither Barber nor Greenstein includes these two elements within their frameworks. This is why I will be principally using Renshon's theory on presidential character for my model on presidential decision-making.

To briefly revisit the meanings of each of the character elements, ambition is "a president's level of desire to achieve his purposes, and the skills he is able to bring to bear on accomplishing them" (Renshon 2000, 44). Ambition encompasses the motivational element that individuals possess and the set of skills that they have that can be successfully engaged in the

pursuit and accomplishment of their goals (Renshon 1996, 186). Renshon very briefly considers self-esteem regarding ambition, however he does not go into sufficient detail to understand how self-esteem has an impact within his theoretical framework. That is why I have included the element of emotional intelligence, which comes from Fred Greenstein's list of character elements. Emotional intelligence is how a president manages his emotions, whether he uses them as a motivator or whether he allows them to undermine his performance (Greenstein 2000, 6). I believe that self-esteem is inherently connected to emotional intelligence, as a low self-esteem will likely lead to low emotional intelligence and vice versa. Self-esteem is very difficult to measure, whereas emotional intelligence can be more easily defined and measured, so that is why I am choosing to add the element of emotional intelligence within the model. Self-esteem is also highly related to ambition, as Renshon also discusses that ambition can be problematic in that if one has high ambition and is driven by a low sense of self-esteem in amassing power, ambition is not always a good quality to have (Renshon 1996). Emotional intelligence provides a remedy for understanding the bad vs. good ambition, something that Renshon does not go into enough detail in within his theoretical framework.

Integrity, what Renshon refers to as character integrity, "refers to the ideals and values by which the candidate says he lives and his fidelity to them" (Renshon 2000, 44). This encompasses both how others view the way that he possesses a set of genuine beliefs and sticks to them, but it also includes a president's interior psychology in how he views himself and how he feels that he has acted according to his beliefs (Renshon 2000; Renshon 1996). Here again we see a subtle mention of self-esteem, another reason why I have included it within the element of emotional intelligence in my framework. Finally relatedness "refers to the basic nature of the candidate's interpersonal relations, his stance toward others" (Renshon 2000, 44). A president's

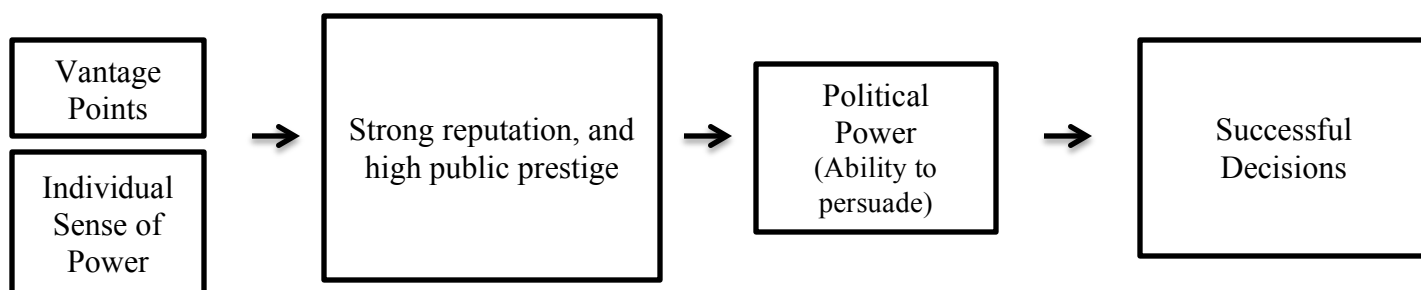
relationships with others form his relational sphere, and within the sphere there is a wide range of different groups (Renshon 1996, 192). This sphere includes the antagonistic and hostile relationships and the extremely intimate relationships (Renshon 1996, 192). While a president may have antagonistic relationships in his sphere, relatedness is an inherently positive characteristic and the better a president's interpersonal relationships, the stronger his relatedness is towards others. In order for presidential decisions to be successful, these elements must be demonstrated within an individual president's character.

The demonstrated presence of these character elements should then lead to good judgment and strong political leadership, also elements taken from Renshon's theory. The element of judgment is one of the most important elements, and one that other political scholars did not take enough into account. Presidential judgment is essentially a president's ability to match solutions to circumstances, in that he can identify a problem, see it for what it is, and devise an appropriate solution (Renshon 2004). According to Renshon, the resources that a president has at his disposal will not matter if he cannot make good judgments. He must be able to analyze, reflect upon, and make decisions based upon these analytic and reflective abilities (Renshon 1996). Renshon writes that, "I argue that substantially developed character capacities are instrumental, if not necessary, correlates to good judgment. However it is clear that good judgment is a necessary but insufficient element in presidential performance" (Renshon 1996, 223). That is why Renshon adds the element of political leadership, as good judgment is not sufficient in determining whether a decision is successful or not. There are three distinctive aims of political leadership: mobilization, orchestration, and consolidation (Renshon 2004). A good political leader must be able to translate his judgments and turn them into effective policies (Renshon 1996). It is imperative that presidents have the elements of ambition, relatedness,

integrity, and emotional intelligence in order for him to demonstrate good judgment and strong political leadership. These are the variables that will lead to successful decision-making.

Strategic Action Theoretical Framework

Compared to the character theoretical framework, the strategic action framework used here is simpler in that it comes primarily from a single scholar, Richard Neustadt. Looking back to my research question, I also seek to understand whether the use of strategic resources, through persuasion and bargaining, can lead to the relative success or failure of presidential decisions. Richard Neustadt's theory is the most well known of theories regarding a president's use of his strategic resources. My version of the theoretical framework is as follows:



My hypothesis is that a president's ability to persuade and bargain strategically using the political resources available to him will make successful decisions more likely. My independent variables of vantage points and an individual's sense of power are the determinants of a strong reputation and high public prestige, two of the core elements of Neustadt's theory. Each one is essential to a president's attainment of political power, which Neustadt defines as the ability/power to persuade, the third core element of Neustadt's theory (Neustadt 1990, 11).

To briefly define each of the terms, vantage points are simply the bargaining advantages that the president has through the formal presidential powers that are enumerated within the Constitution, including the veto power and power of appointments (Neustadt 1990, 31). Vantage

points also include the status that the president has that no other individual possesses. Individual sense of power is simply an individual's recognition that maintaining his/her own personal power is essential for successfully carrying out the duties of the presidency (Neustadt 1990, 144). These two factors then enable a president to acquire a strong professional reputation and high public prestige. A president's professional reputation consists of the opinions of the individuals that make up the "Washington community" (Neustadt 1990). It is essential that a president have a strong reputation because this makes it much easier for him to work with and persuade those around him, thus helping him achieve greater political power. The way he establishes a strong reputation is by using his vantage points to reward his friends and punish his enemies so that those around him view him as powerful. The final element is public prestige, which is how the outside public views the president (Neustadt 1990, 73). In the quest for public prestige, the president must teach the public reality. He must convey to the public that there are limits to what he can do, but he must also reassure them that he will do everything he can with the resources that he has. High public prestige correlates with a strong reputation, because a favorable impression of the president by the public yields him greater persuasive power among those in the Washington community, which allows him to achieve his political aims and gain political power.

These elements then lead to the ability to persuade, which consists of the president's skill in convincing those around him, advisors and politicians, that his aims are dependent on their help and support and their aims are dependent on the president's assistance (Neustadt 1990, 30). Neustadt argues that persuasive power gives the president the power to bargain, meaning the ability to convince others that what he wants of them is what their responsibilities and own self-interest require of them (Neustadt 1990, 40). His status and authority yield bargaining advantages, which are vantage points that a president recognizes that he has at his disposal,

making persuasive power more than just simple charm. These advantages help in securing political power (Neustadt 1990, 32). The combination of these three elements leads to a president achieving a large amount of political power and successful decisions are much more likely if a president possesses substantial political power.

Methods

To gain a better understanding of how these two political frameworks can provide explanations for successful presidential decision-making, I will principally be utilizing a comparative case study method approach. Case studies allow for a process-oriented investigation, which is the best way in which to conceive of presidential decision-making. They also aim to illuminate a specific case and use that case to suggest broader understandings or generalizations that can be taken from a particular case study (Lipson, 2005). A small-N design will permit me to examine my case in depth, and allow for exploratory and descriptive results that will hopefully provide a contribution to the field (Johnson and Reynolds, 2012).

The president that I will be examining within these theoretical frameworks is Abraham Lincoln. I believe that it is useful to try and examine and better understand one of our nation's greatest presidents through several of his key decisions. Lincoln was president during a very unique time in our country's history, as no other president has served during a civil war, so this provides an additional interesting element of his presidency to consider. Many of the decisions that Lincoln made were highly controversial and they had significant impacts and grand implications for the future of the Union. While Lincoln is not a modern president, his significance in history is unquestionable and he is arguably the most written about and studied president, so there are a vast amount of resources to study and utilize surrounding both him and his presidency.

I will be using multiple cases that I believe will provide variation and allow for more useful conclusions to be made. There are three cases, i.e. decisions, that I will be examining, one a success, one a failure, and one with mixed results. The first case that I will be using is Lincoln's successful decision to issue Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect in January of 1863, and essentially freed all slaves within Confederate territory. This decision represented a large shift in the war objectives of the Union and the issuing of the proclamation severely diminished the military power that the Confederates possessed, as many freed slaves chose to join the Union Army following their emancipation, giving the Union a strong strategic advantage. The second case that I have chosen is Lincoln's failed management of General George McClellan. Until Lincoln selected General Grant to lead the Union army in 1864, he had a series of problems with insubordinate generals, especially General George McClellan. The Union suffered several significant losses due to the disobedience and incompetence of General McClellan, putting the future of the Union in jeopardy. The final case is Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus* in 1861, which some would view as a successful decision and some would see as a failure. Lincoln asserted extraordinary innumerable executive powers to allow for the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in order to protect the capital from riots and potential attacks. Some see this as a legitimate use of war powers, while others see it as a huge violation of civil liberties. I have selected these three cases specifically because I feel that they represent several different, yet equally important, aspects of Lincoln's presidency, as well as each of them are relatively well-known and highly studied decisions so there are sufficient resources about each case.

As a principal source of information, I will be using archival sources and Lincoln biographies. Because Lincoln was president 150 years ago, much of the information that scholars

and historians have about him comes from letters, statements, and other primary documents written both by him and about him, so I will be using many of these types of documents within my research. I will also be gathering information from several contemporary biographies written about him, as well as using newspaper, magazine articles, and biographies/memoirs written during his lifetime. Some of the information that I will be utilizing comes from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, located in Springfield, Illinois, which houses the largest database of documents about him and his presidency.

Operationalizing the Character Theoretical Framework

As viewed above, I have developed two different theoretical frameworks using existing theories from several notable political scholars, one focusing on character and the other on the strategic use of political resources. It is important to define my variables for each of these frameworks, so that I can identify the presence of them within the three cases that I have selected. Starting with my character theoretical framework, my independent variable includes the character elements of ambition, integrity, relatedness, and emotional intelligence. In looking at ambition, one should look for whether a president initiates policies that are incremental or transformational (Renshon 2004, 56). Does a president simply build upon predecessors' policy frameworks or does he use his political position to transform them? An ambitious president will seek to achieve his purposes through transformation of policy. The types of skills that they will possess in order to achieve their purposes encompass both physical and motivational skills. Physically, an ambitious president will be highly active and engaged. Motivationally, an ambitious president will demonstrate strong inner drive and initiative. An ambitious president will also be identified through his desire to leave a historical legacy and be remembered for generations to come.

Next, integrity will be identified through a president's demonstration of a developed and consolidated identity. A president that possesses strong integrity will publicly express their values and ideas and stick to them when making decisions. A president that is willing to take personal and political risks sticking to their values showcases strong integrity through the courage of their convictions (Renshon 2004, 61). Included in integrity is a president's willingness to put his convictions to the ultimate test: the test of loss (Renshon 2004, 61). If a president is able to stick to his convictions despite potential losses and accept responsibility if things don't go the way they should, that signifies strong integrity.

Relatedness can be operationalized through the quality of relationships that a president has with those around them. Within their sphere of relationships, do they surround themselves with people that they can trust and have honest and meaningful dialogue with? Are they inclusive and comfortable with a wide variety of people or do they often exclude others and only have a small circle of trusted advisors? Also included within relatedness is the way they a president treats his staff, advisers, and appointees (Renshon 1996, 96). Finally within the independent variable of character there is the element of emotional intelligence. Strong emotional intelligence is demonstrated when a president in is control of his emotions. While there may be hardships or problems within his personal or political life, a president does not let negative feelings of grief, anger, sadness, frustration, or despair affect the way that he does his job, remaining both calm and focused even when under pressure.

These four character elements then shape the level of judgment and political leadership that a president possesses. Good judgment can be operationalized through a president seeing a problem with clear eyes, not through wishful thinking (Renshon 2004, 109). He sees a problem as it is, not how he wants it to be. A president who employs good judgment will also be watchful,

meaning that he will be curious and seek information regarding how to deal with any problems or decisions that they may face. Finally they will be realistic risk assessors in that they can weigh different outcomes of their potential decisions and decide based upon the possible intended outcomes. A president will also demonstrate the three aims of political leadership- mobilization, orchestration, and consolidation- through their ability to organize and educate the public about their policy views and political vision. They will also demonstrate charisma and finesse in discussing any problems with their advisors and in informing the public. A president demonstrating strong political leadership will also be able to use his political skills in the strengthening of his political relationships, both with the public and within their circles of political advisors.

My dependent variable is successful decisions. Successful decisions depend upon the presence of the character elements of ambition, integrity, relatedness, and emotional intelligence, which then leads to good judgment and strong political leadership. Successful decisions will be decisions that are supported and well received by the public and by the political community. Successful decisions may still be controversial, but they will be significant and will implement changes that are in line with the policy vision of the president.

Operationalizing the Strategic Action Theoretical Framework

Moving on to the theoretical framework of strategic action, I will first operationalize the independent variables of vantage points and an individual sense of power. For vantage points, one must look to how a president uses the powers that are built into the Constitution. Does he utilize the full array of presidential powers that he has? Does he bargain using the vantage points of veto power, appointments, command of the army and navy, etc.? For the independent variable of an individual's sense of power, this will be seen in how a president views how necessary

power is in achieving their aims. A president must view power as essential in order for to them to make successful decisions. They will strive to achieve sufficient amounts of power, as they will have both an intrinsic and indispensable need for power to achieve their purposes.

The next variable, strong reputation, can be operationalized by viewing how political advisers around the president believe how politically astute the president is. In order to have a strong reputation, those around him must believe the president is politically astute and adept in utilizing their presidential powers. They may not view the president favorably or agree with all of their decisions, but they will respect the way in which they uses their political power to make decisions. Public prestige will be operationalized in how those within the Washington community believe how favorable the public is of the president. Both strong reputation and public prestige can be identified through letters or statements made by those around the president regarding how they believe how politically astute they are and how they believe the larger public views the president. A president that attains political power will demonstrate control and authority dealing with each specific decision that they face. They are able to persuade those around them using the bargaining advantages that they have and they will have the ability to convince others to act in ways compatible with the president's policy needs.

My dependent variable, like in the theoretical framework regarding character, is successful decisions. Successful decisions depend upon the presence of the vantage points and an individual's sense of power. These then determine a president's professional reputation and public prestige, which lead to a president obtaining political power (the ability to persuade). Previously stated, successful decisions will be decisions that are supported and well received by the public and the political community. While they may still be controversial, they will also be significant and will implement changes that are in line with the policy vision of the president.

CHAPTER 4: LINCOLN BIOGRAPHY

The intricate personality of Abraham Lincoln is both fascinating and complex. Even one hundred and fifty years following his death, historians and scholars continue to try and better understand the character of one of our most revered presidents. Lincoln biographer Ronald C. White summarizes the challenge that understanding Lincoln represents, writing that, “Lincoln continues to fascinate us because he eludes simple definitions and final judgments” (White 2009, 3). Lincoln has written very few words about himself, only writing a few short autobiographies in 1858 and 1860 for his election campaigns, which makes the goal of understanding him that much more difficult, however, numerous scholars and historians have attempted to fill this void and have published detailed biographies of Lincoln’s life. A brief summary of these works examining Lincoln’s life pre-presidency can help to better make sense of his character and personality and how he became the individual that he is remembered as today.

Abraham Lincoln was born to Thomas and Nancy Lincoln on February 12, 1809 in a small log cabin in Hardin County, Kentucky (White 2009). Throughout Abe’s early childhood, the Lincolns moved several times to different farmsteads in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, failing to live prosperous lives due to both isolation from any major markets and Thomas Lincoln’s lack of ability to farm enough land to support his family (Goodwin 2005, 47). When Lincoln was nine years old, Nancy Lincoln died from what was called “milk sickness”, and his father later remarried Sarah Bush Johnston, who adopted Abraham as her own son and who Abraham came to care for very dearly (Goodwin 2005). His relationship with his father, Thomas, was quite the opposite of the relationship he had with his mother and stepmother, as Abe never had any favorable words or memories of his father and he distanced himself from him at an early age (Donald 1995, 32). Later in Lincoln’s life when asked about his family and childhood, he

answered that it could all be condensed into a single sentence, “The short and simple annals of the poor” (Goodwin 2005, 47). Lincoln didn’t see his family history and ancestry as particularly important or significant, and he believed his origins to be from “undistinguished families” (Donald 1995, 19). Despite the hardships of poverty, death, and the constant relocation of his family, Lincoln came to find solace in books and in his imagination in satisfying his intellectual drive (White 2009). Lincoln believed that his own education was something that he had to pick up on his own, as the local school did little to foster his inquisitive spirit. Books became his academy and he read everything that he could get his hands on (Goodwin 2005, 51).

At the age of 22, Lincoln left his family home and set off for New Salem, Illinois, where he would live for the next six years, until 1837. He worked a number of jobs, including as a flatboatman, clerk, merchant, postmaster, and surveyor (Goodwin 2005). He also served as a captain in 1832 during the Blackhawk War, unanimously voted captain by the militia volunteers, as he was an individual who quickly won loyalty and respect from those around him (White 2009, 50). Within the town of New Salem, many grew fond of the hardworking and helpful Lincoln, and he quickly established strong relationships with the other men in town (Donald 1995). One of Lincoln’s most significant decisions in his early life was in March of 1832, when he made his first move into the political world, running for the state legislature after encouragement from friends in New Salem (White 2009). He lost the election, however he felt heartened by the fact that he received 277 out of 300 votes from New Salem. This inspired Lincoln to persist in growing his political base and in broadening his support outside of Sangamon county (White 2009, 53). When he ran for a state legislature seat two years later in 1834, he won easily due to his extended network of support. This victory was the first of four successive terms that he would hold in the Illinois state legislature (in 1836, 1838, and 1840) and

it marked his first foray into the political world that he would be involved in for the remainder of his life (Goodwin 2005).

Lincoln began to study law following his victory in the 1834 election and he received his license as a lawyer in the spring of 1837. He then moved to Springfield, where he would begin his career with prominent Springfield lawyer John Todd Stuart at the Hoffman Row office (White 2009). Just as in New Salem, Lincoln made friends easily in Springfield, conversing with other men late into the night in an informal literary and debate society, discussing politics, religion, and literature (Donald 1995, 70). Politically, Lincoln continued to gain influence and support, becoming the leader of the Whig Party in the state legislature, and becoming well-known throughout central Illinois for his speeches supporting William Henry Harrison for president in the 1840 election (Donald 1995).

On November 4, 1842, when Lincoln was thirty-three years old, he married Mary Todd, a wealthy woman with Kentucky origins, after a tumultuous courtship and multiple engagements (White 2009). Lincoln's marriage to Mary started a new era in his life, both in starting a family and in continuing to grow his political and legal career. They had their first child, Robert Todd Lincoln, in August of 1843 and in the fall of 1844 he began his law partnership with William Herndon (Donald 1995). In August of 1846, Lincoln, still a member of the Whig Party, won his biggest political seat yet, being voted the representative for the Seventh District of Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives, setting him on the road to the nation's capitol (White 2009, 135). Within the House, Lincoln was able to win the respect and trust of others, relationships that would prove essential in his future rise to power. Following his two-year term as a representative, Lincoln felt that he was "losing interest in politics" (Goodwin 2005, 130). Returning to Springfield in 1849, Lincoln would spend about the next six years dedicated to his

law career. He faced terrible sadness during these years, as his second son Eddie Lincoln, who was born in 1846, died of tuberculosis in the winter of 1850, but also joy, as Mary would have two more sons, William Lincoln, in December of 1850, and Thomas Lincoln, in the spring of 1853 (White 2005, 181).

The year 1854 marked a new beginning to the political career of Abraham Lincoln, as his desire to achieve high political office was reawakened with the passage of the pro-slavery Kansas-Nebraska Act (Goodwin 2005). He began to make public speeches denouncing slavery and the Kansas-Nebraska Act and opposing the extension of slavery to new territories within the United States. Also during this time, Lincoln was instrumental in the formation of the new Republican Party. He played a vital role in the 1856 elections, helping Republicans to win a majority in the Illinois legislature and he became a prominent leader of the party (White 2009, 230). Following these elections, Lincoln himself reentered the political world, running for the U.S. Senate in the 1858 elections against Democrat Stephen Douglas (Goodwin 2005). Lincoln's House Divided Speech at the Republican nomination in Springfield in 1858 garnered major support for Lincoln and the Republican Party. He stated, "A house divided 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" (Donald 1995, 206). Following this speech, the campaign between Lincoln and Douglas was fierce, especially with the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates, an extended series of seven debates within different cities in Illinois (White 2009). Despite Lincoln's strong charisma and widespread support, he lost the election 54 to 46, and while disappointed, he accepted his defeat graciously and without protest (Donald 1995, 228).

Knowledge of the politician Abraham Lincoln spread throughout the country following the Lincoln-Douglas debates. With the positive reception that both the debates and his continued political speeches had received in Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Kansas, the idea of Lincoln running for president became quite plausible as his network of political support expanded beyond Illinois (Donald 1995, 235). One of the most important events leading up to Lincoln's nomination and election was his speech at Cooper Union in New York City in February of 1860, which some scholars regard as the reason why Lincoln became president. The speech propelled him onto the national scene, and made him stand out as a serious candidate for the Republican nomination. The speech was extremely well received by his audience and was published in several major New York newspapers for everyone to read (White 2009, 314). Lincoln famously ended his speech with the words, "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it" (White 2009, 313).

Lincoln himself remained cautiously optimistic about his political future and whenever he was asked about the upcoming presidential election he carefully guarded his ambitions and would speak enthusiastically of other candidates (Goodwin 2005, 211). Only two and a half weeks before the Republican Party nominating convention did Lincoln slightly reveal his desire to receive the nomination, stating that, "The taste is in my mouth, a little" (White 2009, 318). Lincoln's main opponents in the nomination for the presidency were William Seward, Edward Bates, and Salmon Chase, all who would become future members of Lincoln's presidential cabinet. Lincoln was a come-from-behind, surprise winner, some say from luck, some say from strategy, and some say from the miscalculation of his opponents concerning his chances of obtaining the nomination (Goodwin 2005, 254). In reality, Lincoln had strong political intuition and he had developed a strong group of lifelong friends and political allies, avoiding making any

major enemies, and these were key factors in his successful nomination. His profound sense of ambition and desire for success was free of malice and opportunism and he was fiercely committed to his ideals and values regardless of what he felt others would think of them (Goodwin 2005, 256). Following his successful nomination for presidency, Lincoln was quite passive, avoiding large rallies and instead quietly observing the political climate and reaching out to his defeated Republican opponents and working with them to become a more united party (White 2009, 332). On election day on November 6, 1860, Lincoln defeated Democrat John C. Breckinridge, winning 180 electoral votes and 40% of the popular vote (Donald 1995, 256). Few could have predicted Abraham Lincoln's rise to the presidency, a man who came from humble beginnings and "undistinguished families" in rural Kentucky, to becoming one of the most famous and revered men in United States history.

This basic biographical story of Lincoln leading up to the 1860 presidential election is important to understand and many biographers and scholars of Lincoln have presented this information in addition to their personal perspectives of Lincoln's character. There are many points surrounding Lincoln's personality on which scholars can agree, but there are also controversies. One important quality of Lincoln is that he was an individual that possessed a strong moral character. Miller comments that what Lincoln's influences were, meaning the individuals or institutions that shaped this moral understanding, are hard to define (Miller 2002, 57). According to scholar Ronald White, Lincoln embodied Aristotle's definition that ethos, or integrity, is the key to persuasion and gaining respect (White 2009, 3). Lincoln won the nickname "Honest Abe" when his store in New Salem went bankrupt and instead of cutting and running like most men of his time would do, Lincoln stayed and paid back what he came to call his "National Debt" (White 2009). Lincoln was an individual that, once he acquired certain

opinions and ideas, they stayed with him, meaning his moral and political positions were not lightly abandoned (Miller 2002, 14). His wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, used the word “stubborn” to describe the way in which her husband adopted certain political or personal positions (Miller 2002). Despite this stubbornness, throughout his life Lincoln was an individual that was humble and admitted when he was wrong. White writes that, “Lincoln gave voice to a principle- the willingness to both admit mistakes and learn from them- that was becoming a part of his moral character” (White 2005, 177).

Lincoln clearly was also seen as a strong leader, someone who easily created close and trusting relationships. Following Lincoln’s first political defeat in 1832 he spent the next two years garnering support and building relationships and ultimately won the seat in 1834. White writes, “In a brief two years, Lincoln’s abilities and experiences began to coalesce into his gifts of leadership” (60). Even as a young boy within the classroom, his peers saw him as a leader. They admired his ability to tell stories and in their eyes he was an exceptional individual, extremely intelligent, and a self-confident and charismatic person (Donald 1995, 32). Each place that Lincoln moved to, from New Salem, to Springfield, and to Washington D.C., he easily created strong relationships with those around him, and he had the ability to make people laugh and to listen to what he wanted to convey. He also was an individual who could bring people with varying perspectives and personal interests together and was someone who respected the dignity of those around him. White writes that “Lincoln’s genius was his ability to draw upon the talents of others, meld together diverse personalities who often did not trust one another, and then listen to their advice, recognizing that it was sometimes wiser than his own” (319). Author Bruce Miroff echoes similar sentiments, writing that, “Lincoln did not treat subordinates as instruments of his masterful will; he followed the dictates of an ethic of care and paid heed to

their individual needs” (1993, 108). As evidenced, Lincoln was good with people, and this is a large element into what made him so politically successful, as throughout his life he had built a strong network of relationships within many different spheres of people and he respected those around him, regardless of their viewpoints and opinions.

Also throughout his life Lincoln had developed a strength of will, what Miller calls “his resolution, the gem of his character”, through his growing confidence in his intellectual abilities (2002, 64). He writes, “Not every person in young Lincoln’s situation, no matter how smart, would have had the strength of purpose to carry out that remarkable series of self-initiated projects of self-education that started with virtually teaching himself to read and then proceeding to read anything he could get his hands on” (2002, 64). It was not only Lincoln’s intellectual abilities that set him apart from others around him, but it was also his sense of himself and what he had the capability of being that made him stand out to others. Miroff writes that, “Charles Dana, Lincoln’s assistant secretary of war, recalled that ‘even in his freest moments one always felt the presence of a will and an intellectual power which maintained the ascendancy of the President’” (1993, 85). Many individuals that spent time around Lincoln would say similar things about being in his presence, feeling his strong will and intellectual abilities that distinguished him from many others around him.

Despite these positive qualities of Lincoln, he also experienced dark periods of his life that show a deeper side within him. Perhaps one of the darkest moments of Lincoln’s life, one in which he faced a true personal crisis, came when he broke off his engagement with Mary Todd. He had many anxieties about his upcoming marriage, as he wasn’t sure he had the ability to support a wife (Goodwin 2005, 99). Following the dissolution of the engagement, Lincoln stopped attending the legislature and withdrew from the Springfield social scene, becoming

depressed and almost suicidal. He was discouraged by the fact that if he were to die, he had “done nothing to make any human being remember that he had lived” (Goodwin 2005, 99). Even in the darkest moment of his life, his desire to be remembered carried him forward and through his resilience and his convictions, he gradually overcame his depression (Goodwin 2005).

Many scholars have examined Lincoln’s level of ambition, and while most scholars believe that he was a very ambitious individual, there are others who are not quite convinced. One such scholar is historian David Donald, who in his biography of Lincoln, believed that Lincoln’s character was quite passive. Donald bases this off of a letter that Lincoln wrote to a Kentucky Unionist in 1864 in which he wrote, “I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me” (McPherson 1995, 5). Elsewhere in the biography, Donald talks about Lincoln’s “fatalism”, and that he had a “reluctance to make bold plans” (McPherson 1995). As the Civil War continued, Lincoln came to believe that he couldn’t alter the sequence of events that only God could. There are many interesting examples of Lincoln appealing to faith throughout the war, believing that he couldn’t control the events that would occur. McPherson, who writes this article about Donald’s characterization of Lincoln, believes that while there may have been moments in which Lincoln felt that he was constrained by fate, there were many decisions that he made, including his decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, that were the opposite of passive. This element of Lincoln that Donald identifies certainly provides greater complexity to Lincoln’s character, as there is some evidence to why he would view Lincoln as passive. It is just one more element to try and grapple with in the attempted understanding of Lincoln’s multifaceted character.

Apart from Donald and a few others, most scholars believe that he was a very ambitious person, especially regarding his desire to be a remembered figure in history. Scholar William Lee

Miller writes, “Out of the potent stew of these ingredients there was brewed within him an intense drive to make his name mean something in the world- a ‘thirst for distinction’. Lincoln is consistently said to have been ‘ambitious’” (2002, 64). Doris Kearns Goodwin echoes Miller writing that, “Even as a child Lincoln dreamed heroic dreams. From the outset he was cognizant of a destiny far beyond that of his unlettered father and hardscrabble childhood . . . His mind and ambition, his childhood friend Nathaniel Grigsby recalled, ‘soared above us. He naturally assumed the leadership of the boys’” (2005, 49).

White also recognizes these qualities in Lincoln, especially through Lincoln’s words following his decision to run for state legislature in 1832 saying, “Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed by my fellow men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition, is yet to be developed” (White 2009, 49). This shows a true insight into several of Lincoln’s beliefs. He was aware that ambition can lead to selfishness and egotism, and that in order to be esteemed, he had to gain that by rendering himself worthy from those around him (White 2009). With his first taste of politics, Lincoln possessed the dream that he would restate several times throughout his life: the desire to prove himself worthy and to win the trust and respect of his fellow citizens (Goodwin 2005, 87). Following his one term as a U.S. representative, Lincoln felt that he still hadn’t made his mark and there remained the desire to leave a legacy, stating in 1850 that, “How hard, oh how hard it is to die and leave one’s country no better than if one had never lived” (White 2009, 168). It is quite interesting that Lincoln seemed to connect being remembered in history only with being involved in the political world, not something that he could achieve through his legal career. Lincoln’s desire to be remembered is a common theme throughout his life and his ambition in achieving this desire was evident from a young age. As a

young boy, Lincoln read many books that dealt with the triumph of good over evil and that demonstrated the possibility that ordinary people could do extraordinary things, and he instilled this belief within himself as a child (White 2009).

Miller writes that Lincoln was able to accomplish such a dramatic ascent in the political world through his extraordinary efforts, but also through the fact that his ambition was a product of his time, as Lincoln was encouraged by the “ethos of the new country” (2002, 23). His intense desire to leave a legacy was but one source of his greatness, but it also led to some things that he did that may be not so worthy of praise (Miller 2002, 65). Politics was the ideal vocation for Lincoln to achieve his desire of being remembered. It played upon his some of his greatest strengths, including persuading people through his rhetorical ability, making speeches, writing, and thriving amidst having attention (Miller 2002, 94). Lincoln’s law partner William Herndon characterized Lincoln’s ambition as “a little engine that knew no rest” and commented that, “the vicissitudes of a political campaign brought into play all his tact and management and developed to its fullest extent his latent industry” (2002, 302).

One of the key speeches that Lincoln made that indirectly reveals much about himself is the Lyceum speech, which he gave in Springfield, Illinois when he was just shy of twenty-nine years old and still a largely unknown politician. Author Bruce Miroff writes that the Lyceum speech “has been treated not merely as a fascinating foreshadowing of central themes in Lincoln’s later career but as an essential key to everything that Lincoln was to become” (Miroff 1993, 86). It was a speech in which Lincoln spoke against the institution of slavery and against the threat of an increasing disregard for the law and an upsurge in mob violence (Miroff 1993). The speech also reveals a lot about Lincoln’s thoughts on ambition. Historian Edmund Wilson has closely examined Lincoln’s Lyceum speech, which he believes contained a warning against

the overly ambitious leader, a “tyrant” of sorts, a figure that Lincoln described with both admiration and apprehension. Wilson claims that Lincoln’s admiration of the ambitious leader was a clue to his own desires, as this speech both projected Lincoln into the role of the ambitious leader while also speaking against this style of leader (Miroff 1993, 87). Other historians have disagreed with Wilson’s claim that Lincoln was projecting himself into the role of an overly ambitious leader, and they have concluded that the Lyceum speech, instead, identified the emergence of a genius and a savior of the republic (Miroff 1993, 87). Miroff believes that the Lyceum speech does provide us with an important window into who Lincoln was, but that it is not the defining element for understanding him. It certainly deals with the question of Lincoln’s sense of ambition, something that he would continue to grapple with throughout his life. Miroff then identifies three different themes or versions of ambition that Lincoln embodied throughout his life: greatness as liberator of the oppressed, posthumous fame through service in a noble cause, and martyrdom to liberty (Miroff 1993, 90).

This first theme can be seen in a piece of Lincoln’s writing that is included within the *Collected Works*, where Lincoln expresses his desire to be famous and remembered as great, but only justified through his ability to “elevate the oppressed”. Miroff writes that, “Lincoln wanted no monarch’s crown; he wanted the fame of a true republican (1993, 90). The second theme is evidenced through the previous scholars that were reviewed, and that is Lincoln’s desire to be remembered after his death. There are multiple instances of Lincoln expressing this desire and his ambition drove him to try and establish his legacy in the nation’s history. The third theme, the role of martyr to liberty, was something that “struck a deep chord within Lincoln” (Miroff 1993, 91). This theme of ambition in Lincoln’s life reveals an ambition that wasn’t always positive, as Miroff writes, “Lincoln’s images of martyrdom testify to the powerful ambivalence

of his ambition. They are grandiose, the fantasies of a man whose ambitions demanded heroic fulfillment. They are also self-sacrificing, checking egotism by throwing away life itself in the name of liberty” (1993, 92).

In addition to Lincoln’s ambitious desires, he also had a lot of emotional need, and popular support and public office were two of his most important sources of self-esteem (Miroff 1993). Lincoln’s self-esteem is a topic that many historians have grappled with, and it seems to be intricately connected with his ambition. How Lincoln’s self-esteem affected the way he conducted himself in the political world is still greatly debated. Some historians say that he was able to separate his self-esteem from politics and other historians and Lincoln scholars disagree. After reviewing all the complex and informative details about Lincoln’s character, a final account of who Lincoln was is summed up well by Miroff,

Lincoln’s gentleness and kindness were not the marks of an effusive character. He could be aloof, brooding, mysterious. But out of the depths of his personality and response to experience he developed a masculine/feminine temperament that governed his personal relationships. His fusion of an ethic of rights and an ethic of care was a matter of political conviction as well as temperament. As a democratic leader, Lincoln believed that he must not only represent and educate the people as a collectivity but also care for the dignity and needs of the individual (111).

Using these conceptions of Lincoln’s character from several different political and historical scholars, it is important to give a preliminary assessment of how the character framework’s categories can be applied to Lincoln. As character is largely consistent according to Renshon, one should be able to identify these character elements in Lincoln before he was elected president. We can then later reevaluate them with each additional case study that is examined. It is clear from examining several different perspectives from varying historical scholars that Lincoln possessed a high level of ambition, strong ability to create and maintain good interpersonal relationships, and a strong sense of moral character and integrity. One of the

biggest indicators of Lincoln's high level of ambition is his desire to be a remembered figure in history, a desire that he held since childhood and brought up in many instances throughout his life. Some historians argue that Lincoln's ambitious desires were not healthy, to use Renshon's words that his ambition may have been problematic and not productive (Renshon 1996). The Lyceum speech provides an interesting juxtaposition of the two types of ambition, and some historians say that Lincoln embraced the good type of ambition and others say that he embraced the problematic side of ambition, highlighting an area of Lincoln's ambition that is not fully agreed upon. Lincoln also possessed strong inner drive, especially in his political life and in his sense of his own potential, which is another indicator of high ambition.

Concerning integrity, one of the important aspects is having a developed and consolidated identity. Politically, Lincoln strongly stuck to his ideals and he developed his political identity over time within the Illinois state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. Lincoln did switch to the Republican Party and was instrumental in its organization, however many Whigs like Lincoln transitioned into the Republican Party as it more closely advocated for their values, especially on the issue of slavery. Another important factor is that, despite loss, a president still sticks to their convictions. Lincoln lost his first election in 1832, and despite this loss, he stuck to his ideals, extended his network of supporters and won the election in 1834. Later in his political career, he lost the Senate race in 1858 to Stephen Douglas, and again, he did not abandon his beliefs and values, and ultimately was elected president in 1860.

Lincoln's relatedness was also quite strong. He had an extensive network of friends, and easily created and maintained good and trusting relationships throughout his life. He was someone who was very inclusive with a wide variety of people, and other people felt very

comfortable around him. He wanted to include many people within his circle, even if they had different perspectives and viewpoints than himself. Perhaps one of the best examples of Lincoln's high relatedness was his appointing of each of his four rivals in the 1860 election into important posts within his cabinet, and he was able to bring them together to produce a diverse and effective group. The final element is emotional intelligence, and here is an element that is debatable. It seems that at times Lincoln was able to separate his grief, anger, or frustration from his political career, but other times his emotions largely got in the way. One example showcasing that Lincoln's emotional intelligence was lower was his depressive state following the breaking off of his engagement with Mary Todd, when he was unable to attend the state legislature and had no motivation to work. However, when Lincoln's second son Eddie Lincoln died of tuberculosis, he was very sad and spent time grieving, but was seemingly able to separate his emotions from his political and legal career.

Based upon this initial analysis, Lincoln largely exhibited high ambition, strong integrity and an innate ability to create and maintain good relationships. We will see if the presence of these elements identified from Lincoln's earlier life is evident when Lincoln is president and then determine their influence on Lincoln's leadership and judgment when he was making decisions as president. A further analysis of each individual case will yield more a significant understanding and help to determine how the character theoretical framework and the strategic action framework can help in explaining successful or unsuccessful decisions.

CHAPTER 5: EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

One cannot conceive of Abraham Lincoln as president without the Emancipation Proclamation. His decision to draft and implement the Emancipation Proclamation remains of one his most important decisions that he made as president; in fact it is regarded as one of the most important decisions any president has ever made, giving him the title the Great Emancipator. Ultimately, what makes the Emancipation Proclamation so important a decision is that it was Lincoln's strongest weapon that ultimately helped the Union win the Civil War (Klingaman 2001, 2). Despite Lincoln's own personal views on slavery, he issued the Proclamation first and foremost as a military necessity. It did not free all of the slaves, it left around 750,000 slaves in bondage, but the remaining 3 million were declared free (Foner 2012). William Klingaman writes, "Measured against Lincoln's wartime expectations, the Emancipation Proclamation proved a resounding success" (2001, 288). One can see Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation as a success in two different ways. The first is that the Emancipation Proclamation was a successful and strategic war decision, which ultimately helped the Union to win the war (the success that Lincoln intended it to be). The second way that the Emancipation Proclamation was a successful decision is that, even though Lincoln did not issue it for reasons of justice and racial equality, it disrupted the slave system that had been in place for centuries and immediately gave new opportunities to blacks living within the Confederate states and ultimately helped to free all of the slaves after the Union won the war.

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The Narrative

This narrative will attempt to give a brief historical account of Lincoln's decision-making process in issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. As one will see, there were multiple different

justifications that Lincoln used to make the decision, and these factors can be summed up into three key rationales. The first rationale Lincoln used was moral reasoning. Lincoln had been an individual that thought that slavery was an inherently unjust institution and that the country and its government could not survive “half slave and half free” (Donald 1995, 206). There were times in Lincoln’s thinking process that he appealed to faith and to God to give him a sign of what to do about slavery, and he struggled in reconciling his moral duties as a human being and his political duties as president. The second factor was a constitutional one. Did he have the power, as commander in chief, to issue the proclamation? Lincoln sought to find meaning within the Constitution to justify his ability to issue an emancipation proclamation as an emergency war power. The final factor was one of military strategy. Issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, according to Lincoln’s reasoning, was a strategic decision, one that would help to ultimately end the war and reunite the country. These final two factors were linked together by the fact that the constitutional rationale depended upon the military rationale. Lincoln sought to balance these three factors when making his decision, and the following narrative shows that his thinking is oftentimes contradictory. It is clear that he was conflicted about how to justify his decision, as he wanted to both do the right thing and win the war.

The process of Lincoln deciding to issue an emancipation proclamation to when it was signed and enacted was relatively short, only about ten months, from March of 1862 to January of 1863. It began in early March, when Lincoln invited Senator Charles Sumner to his office and read him a plan that he had prepared to give to Congress that would implement gradual, compensated emancipation, providing federal funds to states that adopted a plan for the abolishment of slavery. Sumner was shocked, as no president had ever asked Congress to adopt any type of emancipation measure, but, as a leader of the antislavery movement, Sumner

supported the plan (Klingaman 2001, 105). Later that month, Lincoln presented the plan to Congress and asked them to pass a resolution providing federal aid to any state willing to implement a plan that would abolish slavery within their borders (Goodwin 2005, 459). The plan was based upon Lincoln's conviction that since slavery was, "the disease of the entire nation . . . all must share the suffering of its removal" (Klingaman 2001, 105). His plan was most directed towards the representatives from the border states, and Lincoln concluded in his message to Congress that in his first annual address he had pledged to employ "all indispensable means" to preserve the Union (Klingaman 2001). Lincoln recognized that slavery was a central issue in the war, and it was an institution that was crumbling, therefore he hoped that some of the border state delegates could see the value that gradual emancipation would provide in potentially ending the war. The majority of moderate Republicans and several Democrats supported Lincoln's plan, but not a single representative from the border states approved of the plan (Klingaman 2001, 108). The border state representatives argued that emancipation, in any form, would only lengthen the war and it would "further consolidate the spirit of rebellion in the seceded states and fan the spirit of secession among loyal slaveholders in the Border States" (Goodwin 2005, 459). They believed that they would face backlash from their constituents if they supported the plan, and they thought the proposal would cost more than what the federal government could actually pay (Goodwin 2005).

Within the war, the strategy of the Union army in the spring months of 1862 was largely guided by the Peninsula Campaign under the leadership of General George B. McClellan, who was in command of the Army of the Potomac. The Peninsula campaign was a Union offensive strategy with the intention of capturing the Confederate capital at Richmond (Goodwin 2005, 424). Throughout the months of April to June 1862, General McClellan and his army fought

their way towards Richmond, however they were largely unsuccessful due to the military prowess of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and the hesitation to attack by McClellan (Goodwin 2005, 444). The devastating reverses from the Peninsula Campaign during that summer made it clear to Lincoln that extraordinary measures were needed in order for the Union to be saved (Goodwin 2005, 462). Lincoln knew that if the Confederacy were rid of their slaves, these slaves could potentially join the Union forces, which would serve as a large advantage for the Union Army. With this new turn of events, Lincoln was able to see emancipation in a new light, as a military necessity, not just a moral obligation. As mentioned previously, Lincoln's compensated, gradual emancipation plan was based upon his conviction that slavery was a disease to the country, clearly more of a moral argument, but the events of the war allowed him to consider another rationale for issuing an emancipation proclamation, which was as a military strategy. Lincoln wrote that, "Things had gone from bad to worse, until I felt that we had reached the end of our rope on the plan of operations we had been pursuing; that we had about played our last card, and must change our tactics or lose the game. I am now determined upon the adoption of the emancipation policy; and without consultation with, or the knowledge of the Cabinet, I prepared the original draft of the proclamation" (Klingaman 2001, 139).

Lincoln conceived of and drafted the Emancipation Proclamation on his own, finally informing several others of his plan in mid-July of 1862. He had been working on the draft since late June, and in it he referenced the Militia Act of 1862, warning the rebellious states that if they did not cease participating in the rebellion and rejoin the Union, that he, as commander in chief, would declare free all slaves within this territory on January 1, 1863 (Brewster 2014, 257). The first person that he showed the draft to was his vice president Hannibal Hamlin (Klingaman 2001). It seems that Lincoln told his vice president first because Hamlin had urged him to issue a

proclamation before, as Lincoln told Hamlin that, “you have often urged me to issue a proclamation of emancipation. I am about to do it. I have it here, and you will be the first person to see it (Klingaman 2001, 140). He then told Navy Secretary Gideon Welles and Secretary of State Henry Seward of his plans to free the slaves while in a carriage on the way to Secretary of War Edward Bates’ son’s funeral (Brewster 2014, 12). It is not clear why he decided to tell these two individuals at this time; it is possible that he felt like he needed to confide in others about his plans. He told Welles and Seward that he had, “dwelt earnestly on the gravity, importance, and delicacy of the subject and had come to the conclusion that it was a military necessity absolutely essential for the salvation of the Union, that we must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued” (Goodwin 2005, 463). Seward was hesitant to respond to Lincoln’s announcement, as he said that he needed to give the matter further thought, although he assured Lincoln that the rebellion justified a presidential emancipation decree (Klingaman 2001, 149). Welles was so surprised by Lincoln’s announcement that he couldn’t do any more than agree with what Seward had said. Welles later wrote that up until that moment, whenever emancipation had been brought up to Lincoln, Lincoln had been prompt in denouncing any interference by the government concerning slavery. But it was clear to Welles that McClellan’s Peninsula campaign failure had pushed Lincoln “to adopt extraordinary measures to preserve the national existence” (Klingaman 2001, 149).

On July 22, 1862, Lincoln read the preliminary draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet. Lincoln told them that he welcomed any suggestions after hearing the draft, but that he had made up his mind and had not called them together to ask their advice on whether he should issue the proclamation or not (Goodwin 2005, 464). The document expressed that if the rebellion by the Confederate states continued, he would use his authority as commander in chief

to issue an emancipation proclamation that would free all of the slaves within the states in rebellion (Klingaman 2001, 156). Members of his cabinet were divided on whether the proclamation should be issued. Attorney General Edward Bates was the first to respond, and he voiced his support for the proclamation, adding that he wished that it would be accompanied by a plan for the deportation of the freed slaves (Brewster 2014, 76). Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase did not fully support the issuance of the proclamation, preferring a “quieter” method of emancipation, worrying that Lincoln’s proclamation could lead to a race war (Brewster 2014). Postmaster General Montgomery Blair strongly opposed the proclamation, and his rationale was that there would be political repercussions for the Republican Party if Lincoln issued the proclamation (Brewster 2014). Secretary of War Edwin Stanton instantly saw the military reasoning behind the document and supported issuing the proclamation (Goodwin 2005, 465). Finally, Secretary of State Seward, who already knew of the document’s existence, supported the emancipation, but not the timing. He suggested that Lincoln should wait for a Union victory and then issue the proclamation, as the Union Army had experienced large defeats throughout the summer and issuing the proclamation presently would seem an act of desperation (Brewster 2014, 84). Better to wait for a military victory and issue it with the Union supported by a military success. Lincoln agreed with Seward’s suggestion and put the document aside until a Union victory was achieved.

From mid-July until August, Lincoln was constantly thinking about the proclamation, making minor edits to the document, and anxiously waiting for a Union victory. While waiting, Lincoln set out to educate public opinion and attempt to prepare the country for possible emancipation of the slaves within the rebellious states. Lincoln believed that one of the main stumbling blocks to issuing the proclamation was the fear by whites, in both the North and

South, that the two races could never peacefully coexist within society (Donald 1995, 367).

Lincoln seemed to share this fear, which can be demonstrated by a meeting that Lincoln held in mid-August where he met with a delegation of freed slaves. From the meeting, he hoped to garner their support and cooperation in educating blacks on the benefits of colonization (not on the intended emancipation). He told the delegation that the black race had endured “the greatest wrong inflicted on any people”, but that “when you cease to be slaves, you are yet far removed from being placed on equality with the white race” (Goodwin 2005, 469). Thus, Lincoln felt it better that the races be separated following any emancipation. The delegation was vehemently against his proposal, and the news spread around Washington of Lincoln’s contentious meeting.

Perhaps the most scathing of criticisms following this meeting came from journalist Horace Greeley who wrote in the *New York Tribune* that he, writing for *all* slaves (although he was not black, nor a slave), was “sorely disappointed and deeply pained by the policy you [Lincoln] seem to be pursuing with regard to the slaves of the Rebels” (Brewster 2014, 106). Greeley implored Lincoln to change his current position on attempting to gradually emancipate and colonize the slave population within the South, however he may have viewed Lincoln’s course of action differently if he had known of Lincoln’s plans to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln’s response to Greeley is one of the most famous passages that he wrote, emphasizing that “If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I don’t believe it would help to save the Union” (Brewster 2014, 106). It was a statement that left several different

options open to Lincoln, freeing all of the slaves, none of the slaves, or some of the slaves, anything that would save the Union.

On September 17, 1863, Lincoln finally got his Union victory. The Battle of Antietam resulted in Confederate forces, led by Robert E. Lee, retreating across the Potomac, and while the battle was not a resounding victory, as the Union army failed to pursue the Confederate forces, it was the long-awaited event that Lincoln had been anticipating (Goodwin 2005, 481). Following the victory at Antietam, Lincoln spent the next several days revising his draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, the draft that would become the final draft, and on September 22, he read his final draft to his cabinet. The final draft still freed only the slaves within the rebellious states, but in the final version Lincoln had added that freed slaves would be welcomed within the Union armies (Brewster 2014, 233). Lincoln had also added, at the suggestion of Chase, the sole mention of morality within the document, writing that, “And upon this act, **believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity**, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God (emphasis added, Klingaman 2001, 229). He knew the circumstances were not ideal, but he admitted that he had made a promise to God, a moral rationale, saying, “I made a solemn vow before God, that if General Lee was driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves” (Klingaman 2001, 187). Reading the document, it cited his position and his authority, as chief executive, to emancipate the slave as an emergency military measure undertaken in order to save the Union that was warranted by the Constitution. He set the date of January 1, 1863 as the day that slaves within the rebellious states would be freed if they did not restore themselves to the Union. And thus, the Emancipation Proclamation was issued on September 22, 1863 and took effect on January 1, 1863. When Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation

he stated that, “I never, in my life, felt more certain that I was doing right, than I do in signing this paper. If my name ever goes into history it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it” (Goodwin 2005, 499).

One can see that Lincoln, in his cabinet meeting in which he read the final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, cited moral, constitutional, and military strategy rationales for the issuing of the document. Morally, Lincoln had held the belief that slavery was wrong, and he viewed the Confederate defeat at Antietam as a sign from God to issue the proclamation and free the slaves within the rebel states. Militarily, he cited that the proclamation was an emergency military measure and that he had constitutional authority as commander in chief to issue it. From start to finish, the Emancipation Proclamation was conceived of, issued, and signed all in less than a year. It was a resounding action to be taken by a president, as there was no precedent for the use of presidential powers in this way. Lincoln was the first president who was in the distinct position of authorizing unilateral power in the name of national security, which was a controversial issue as none of his predecessors has conceived of or expanded their powers in this way (Tichenor 2013, 776). Contrary to popular belief, the Emancipation Proclamation was not a statement of the equality and justice that blacks deserved, and many find fault with Lincoln for that. The infamous title of Great Emancipator has been tied to Lincoln’s legacy, but to Lincoln, the document was first and foremost a military measure designed to save the Union. While the proclamation destroyed an inherently unjust institution and ultimately gave freedom to an entire people, it is arguable that this title of Great Emancipator is not so deserved. Despite these questions of morality and equality, the Emancipation Proclamation is regarded by many as an extremely successful decision, and it is important to further analyze what made Lincoln’s decision a success (Klingaman 2001; Brewster 2014).

Analysis Using the Character Theoretical Framework

Can one attribute the Emancipation Proclamation's success to Lincoln's character? If we look to the character elements previously developed, i.e. ambition, integrity, relatedness, and emotional intelligence, can one determine that these elements are present or that they affected Lincoln's decision-making? And if they are present, what can we observe in Lincoln's political leadership and judgment? From my initial assessment, Lincoln possessed high levels of ambition, integrity, and relatedness. First, in looking at ambition, Lincoln, when signing the Emancipation Proclamation, stated that if he were to be remembered in history, it would be for this document. This is probably true, however Lincoln's process of making the decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, seems to have come from a purely military strategic reasoning, not as an action that would give him a historical legacy. If Lincoln had been using this document to achieve a renowned place in history, it is not evident from the information previously discussed.

What is quite indicative of ambition in Lincoln's decision-making is the use of his political position to enact transformational policy, as the Emancipation Proclamation is arguably one of the most transformational policies enacted by any president. Lincoln sought to justify his actions from his constitutional authority as commander in chief and before issuing the proclamation, he wasn't sure that he possessed that amount of power. An individual working within the War Department, a lawyer named William Whiting, produced an argument for Lincoln that outlined the powers that he was entitled to under the Constitution. Whiting told Lincoln that the Constitution should be interpreted by "common sense" and that the document only provided a framework of government and that, within that framework, there existed whatever presidential or legal power needed to meet the nation's changing needs (Perret 2004,

198). Lincoln could demonstrate a compelling military necessity for his actions based upon this constitutional interpretation and Lincoln later said that, “as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, in time of war . . . I have a right to take any measure which may best subdue the enemy. I conceive that I may in an emergency do things on military grounds that cannot be done constitutionally by Congress” (McPherson 2008, 269). Legal scholar John Yoo writes that, “Lincoln’s greatness in preserving the Union depended crucially on his discovery of the broad executive powers inherent in Article II for use during war or emergency” (Tichenor 2013, 773). The Emancipation Proclamation played a large role in the Union ultimately winning the war, and Lincoln’s ambition in achieving a Union victory came through his redefined presidential authority and the transformative policy of the proclamation.

Ambition also includes inner drive and self-initiative, which I believe that Lincoln demonstrated throughout his decision-making. Eric Foner writes that, “The hallmark of Lincoln’s greatness was his combination of bedrock principle with open-mindedness and capacity for growth. That summer, with his preferred approach going nowhere, he moved in the direction of immediate emancipation” (2012). Lincoln had conceived of issuing a proclamation freeing the slaves before he told anyone about his plans, but the way in which he originally envisioned it, gradual emancipation and colonization, was no longer viable due to the events happening in the war in the summer of 1862. Gradual emancipation, while Lincoln’s preferred method, would not help the Union win the war. He needed to take action that would impact the Confederate’s ability to continue fighting the war and an immediate emancipation of the slaves within the rebellious states would be detrimental to the Confederacy, thus, Lincoln took it upon himself to act in a more drastic manner. His decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation was interestingly private. Even when he told members of his cabinet about issuing the

proclamation in the initial meeting in July, and in the meeting in which he read them the final draft in September, Lincoln emphasized that the decision was his own and it was already made; that he only wanted suggestions on the language and the wording of the document. Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation was a go-it-alone situation, completely driven by his own initiative. Based upon his demonstrated inner drive and self-initiative, and also his ability to enact transformational policy, I believe there is sufficient evidence that shows that Lincoln's ambition was an evident factor within his decision-making.

An interesting factor within the decision to issue the proclamation was Lincoln's integrity. One factor of a president possessing integrity is their willingness to take personal and political risks while still sticking to their values. The Emancipation Proclamation was one of the greatest risks of Lincoln's presidency, and his decision to issue it certainly challenged his integrity. One of the main risks that Lincoln recognized was that the issuance of an emancipation proclamation could inspire a "coup d'état" within the Union army, as there were some individuals within the army that wanted to rid the nation of slavery, others not, and some that would see the seizing of property, i.e. the slaves, as an unfair way to fight a war (Brewster 2014, 63). A second risk would be that it would fail as a military tactic, as freed slaves could stay to fight for the South, serving to bolster the Confederacy. Freeing the slaves could also lead to an all-out race war of blacks against whites (Brewster 2014). Despite these risks and the multiple matters that could have gone awry, Lincoln still issued the Emancipation Proclamation, believing that the potential benefits outweighed the risks.

Todd Brewster writes that, "Lincoln, who had spoken out forcefully against slavery for decades, had just authored a proclamation of freedom without mentioning the most forceful argument for doing it, *which is that it was the right thing to do*" (160). Lincoln, before becoming

president, had spoken out against the expansion of slavery within new territories and had been a proponent of gradual and compensated emancipation and colonization. Lincoln thought that blacks and whites could never be truly equal, as evidenced by his statement to the delegation of freed blacks he met with in the summer of 1862. Lincoln “had believed in a gradual, peaceful, and compensated path to the extinction of slavery, one that took into account the interests of both slaveholders and slaves, that rejected the riskiness of sudden emancipation with its harsh rebuke and potential for violence” (Brewster 2014, 239). Even though Lincoln resorted to the risky direct and sudden emancipation that Brewster mentions, he had tried to convince others and find support for gradual and compensated emancipation before he ultimately decided to issue the proclamation. The Emancipation Proclamation was a huge risk for Lincoln to take, and while some could challenge his integrity concerning the decision, I believe that evidence shows that Lincoln always preferred and stuck to his belief that gradual emancipation was the best option, but he recognized that path was not what was going to ultimately reunite the country.

Integrity also includes putting one’s convictions to the ultimate test of loss. The Emancipation Proclamation could have had a number of different and possibly detrimental outcomes, and there were individuals that told Lincoln this. However, “despite repeated warnings that the issuance of the proclamation would have harmful consequences for the Union’s cause, Lincoln never considered retracting his pledge. As Frederick Douglass had perceived, once the president staked himself to a forward position, he did not give up ground” (Goodwin 2005, 497). Interestingly enough Lincoln,

had made a vow, a covenant, that if God gave us the victory in the approaching battle, he would consider it an indication of Divine will, and that it was his duty to move forward in the cause of emancipation. It might be thought strange, he said, that he had in this way submitted the disposal of the matter when the way was not clear to his mind what he should do. God had decided this question in favor of the slaves. He was satisfied it was right, was confirmed and strengthened in his action by the vow and the results (Burlingame 2008, 407).

Despite Lincoln's moral reasoning concerning divine will, his decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation showed a true sense of integrity. He was willing to take a large risk and was also willing to put his beliefs to the ultimate test of loss. Lincoln had the option to let the war to continue to play out organically, and while he may have thought that the Union would lose the war if he didn't take more drastic action, he risked issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, which, if it had failed, could have certainly led to Union defeat.

Relatedness does not seem to have played a large role in Lincoln's decision-making, as he kept his decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation largely to himself. He told only a few people about his plans before he announced it to his cabinet. Lincoln certainly trusted and respected the individuals within his cabinet to tell them of his decision, however he didn't want their opinions, only suggestions, of which the only one he took into account was Seward's suggestion to wait for a Union victory before issuing the proclamation. Lincoln didn't mistreat or disrespect any of the members of his cabinet throughout his decision-making process, he simply felt that he did not need to listen to their opinions and garner their support for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. In terms of the factor of emotional intelligence, which is the ability to not allow one's personal emotions to affect their job, waiting for a Union victory was difficult and frustrating for Lincoln, but he managed to retain his patience and resolve until the Battle of Antietam, despite heavy Union losses in August. Lincoln's ability to remain calm and focused amidst so many uncertainties and pressure from all sides is a sign of his emotional intelligence.

Based upon the presence of these character elements within Lincoln's decision-making, can one then see demonstrated political leadership and good judgment? Strong political leadership includes the ability to mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate public opinion about specific policies and political visions. While waiting for a Union victory, Lincoln attempted to

try to prepare and educate the public for possible emancipation. Harold Holzer calls Lincoln a public relations genius because, “what Lincoln allowed the public to know- and when- served, however fitfully, imperfectly, even insultingly, to prepare the country’s white majority for black freedom even as it has served since to sully Lincoln’s reputation as an emancipator” (37). Holzer outlines that Lincoln had calculated a three-tiered strategy to a) modify his original draft to close loopholes and to revise, b) work to prepare the nation for an imminent policy revolution (both racially and in terms of a redefinition of war aims) and c) labor to manage and benefit from the expectation that news of emancipation would or might find its way to the public before the Union armies won the military victory (Holzer 2012, 36). Lincoln actively attempted to mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate public opinion, and while not everyone within the Union was supportive, I believe that he clearly demonstrated strong political leadership.

In terms of good judgment, Lincoln was able to see the problem that slavery presented in the war, seeing it for what it was, not what he wanted it to be. He of course wanted the problem to go away through gradual, compensated emancipation, but as the war for the Union continued to get worse, he changed the way in which to solve the problem. In this sense, Lincoln was a strong risk assessor, meaning that he was able to weigh different outcomes of potential decisions and he was extremely intentional with how he conceived of and announced his plans to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. Holzer writes that, “by confiding, cautioning, clarifying, and caviling, but most of all by waiting, an adroit Lincoln set the stage for the proclamation’s inevitability and surprisingly warm reception. Seeming alternatively to be inconsistent, harsh, humble, and ruthless, Lincoln was more accurately patient, wise, prescient, and practical” (2012, 70). Throughout the ten months of the development and issuing of the proclamation, Lincoln was

extremely watchful, considering both what was going on within the war and monitoring public opinion surrounding emancipation, demonstrating good judgment.

From this analysis of Lincoln's character concerning his decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, I believe that it can be concluded that Lincoln's character can be a strong explanatory factor for the success of the decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. One can see that Lincoln's high levels of both ambition and integrity played the largest roles in the success of the decision, which then led to strong political leadership and good judgment.

Analysis Using the Strategic Resources Framework

I will next analyze Lincoln's ability to strategically bargain and persuade using the resources around him to determine whether this can also explain the success of the Emancipation Proclamation. The first element within this theory is vantage points, which are how a president uses the powers that are built into the Constitution. Lincoln not only used the presidential powers outlined within the Constitution as commander in chief, he redefined the powers enumerated within the Constitution to possess more power than any president before him had done. Issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, for Lincoln, was a military necessity and warranted by emergency power. The proclamation states, "And upon this act, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God" (Donald 1995, 407). Lincoln had grappled with the question of how far his presidential powers could reach and he believed that an executive order of emancipation would be beyond the powers of the president, except if the order were issued as a furtherance of the executive's war powers (Brewster 2014, 59). Therefore, in terms of vantage points, it is clear that Lincoln not only used the presidential powers that he had, but that he even went beyond those powers enumerated within the Constitution. While some may argue that Lincoln reached too far

and misinterpreted and abused his presidential authority, others believe that the Union would not have won the war without Lincoln's expansion of his presidential powers and his issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln's resolve to pass the Emancipation Proclamation regardless of his cabinet member's opinions doesn't indicate use of direct persuasive ability, however none of the dissenting members of the cabinet questioned Lincoln's authority as a commander-in-chief to issue the proclamation, so indirectly it could be argued that Lincoln persuaded his cabinet to understand his constitutional rationale.

The only group that Lincoln tried to openly persuade concerning emancipation was blacks. Prior to issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln met with a group of freed blacks in an attempt to bargain with them about gradual and compensated emancipation. Although he was unsuccessful, it was an attempt to persuade a specific sector of society of his plans. Strategically, Lincoln was quite adept at anticipating what his opponents were thinking and, while waiting for a Union victory, he tried to prepare different sectors of society for possible emancipation. His bargaining strategy was not overt, as he adopted a strategy more composed of indirect bargaining and subtle persuasion, but one could argue that while not noticeably successful, Lincoln's strategy allowed him to prepare the country as best he could for emancipation.

The second element within this framework is individual sense of power, which includes how a president views how necessary power is in achieving their aims. Concerning this element, it doesn't seem that Lincoln strove to amass power or even that he viewed power as necessarily valuable in achieving his aims. Burlingame writes that, "Lincoln did not burn with a desire to wield power, but his keen sense of responsibility led him to perform his duties conscientiously, onerous though he found them to be" (2008, 287). He used and expanded his power, but didn't

view it as essential to his success. Also included within the element of sense of one's power is the understanding of the power that others have and Lincoln was able to understand his power in relation to others, especially concerning Congress. Lincoln, in his understanding of power, believed that the individuals in Congress did not have the constitutional power that he did to issue an emancipation proclamation. He felt that because he was commander-in-chief, he had certain emergency war powers that superseded the powers that Congress possessed.

These two elements of vantage points and sense of one's power then influence a president's professional reputation and public prestige. Professional reputation consists of the opinions of the president from the "Washington" community, thus it is important to gauge how individuals around a president believe how politically astute the president is in using their presidential powers. As mentioned previously, when Lincoln told the cabinet about his decision to issue an emancipation proclamation, he didn't ask for or even want their opinions. Most of the cabinet was shocked when Lincoln told them of his plans, not that they thought that Lincoln was abusing his presidential authority, but just on the nature of what he was planning to do. Also, the opinions of the Washington community didn't seem to be a factor in Lincoln's decision-making, as he knew that issuing the proclamation would be controversial regardless of what his advisors and individuals within his administration would think. Despite the fact that Lincoln tried to prepare different sectors of society for emancipation, including those within the Washington community, whether he was successful or not concerning that preparation didn't seem to matter to him. Lincoln also made choices that were designed to protect his professional reputation, especially in regards to what he included within the Emancipation Proclamation. He rooted the Emancipation Proclamation in constitutional authority and military necessity, and this protected him from the Washington community criticism that he was abusing his presidential authority.

Public prestige can be seen in how supportive the public is of the president. Concerning the Emancipation Proclamation, there were some skeptics within the public that didn't believe that Lincoln actually intended to go through with signing the Emancipation Proclamation after his announcement in September (Goodwin 2005, 497). Perhaps the most telling example of public opinion can be shown from the 1862-midterm elections. Lincoln announced his intent to issue the Emancipation Proclamation in late September and midterm elections were in early November. Combined with the continued inaction by General McClellan and the Union army and the resentment by conservatives concerning the Emancipation Proclamation, the election results were a huge loss for the Lincoln administration and the Republican Party (Goodwin 2005, 485). The Republicans still held a small majority in Congress, but "Peace Democrats" made large gains in Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana (Goodwin 2005). Even Lincoln's own home district elected the Democratic candidate over the Republican one and the *New York Times* concluded that the elections amounted to a "vote of want of confidence" in the President (Donald 1995, 383). The Republican Party had several different explanations for this political rebuttal, including the administration's policy of arbitrary arrests and the "ill-success of the war" due to Lincoln's military decisions (Donald 1995). It wasn't only the issue of the Emancipation Proclamation that prompted voters to reject Lincoln and the Republican Party, but it is clear that it was a factor in the 1862 election losses, so public opinion during this time of Lincoln's presidency was not at its highest.

Professional reputation and public prestige both do not seem to have been important factors in Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. And in terms of these factors influencing the ability to persuade, Lincoln didn't have to use any persuasive ability within this decision because he had conceived of and decided to issue the proclamation on his

own, and didn't feel the need to try and persuade those in his cabinet to agree with him. The views of the public and of the Washington community were quite divided during this time and according to the theoretical framework, it is essential for a president to have strong professional reputation and high public prestige in order to gain political power and make successful decisions. However, these two factors were not evident in Lincoln's decision-making surrounding the Emancipation Proclamation, therefore I believe that most of the strategic action framework cannot help in explaining the success of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Conclusion

In this particular case, I believe that the character framework is more useful in terms of understanding why Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation was a successful decision. It is evident that Lincoln's decision to issue the proclamation was largely his own, and he internalized much of his thought process and rationale. For most of the spring and summer of 1862, Lincoln told very few individuals of his plan, and once he told those individuals of his plans to issue the proclamation, he had already made up his mind and was unwilling to change it. The character theoretical framework better captures the true essence of the decision, in that it was **Lincoln's** decision and his decision alone. There were situational factors that led him to make that decision, but I believe I have shown it to be evident that his character was a large factor in the success of the decision. The strategic action framework revolves around how a president bargains and persuades those around him in order to make successful decisions, but because this particular decision was such a solitary one, it is unable to provide a helpful theoretical explanation for the success of the Emancipation Proclamation.

CHAPTER 6: THE MANAGEMENT OF GENERAL McCLELLAN

The events of the Civil War presented specific military constraints and challenges that any president would find daunting, regardless of individual military experience. Lincoln himself had little military experience, only serving as a captain in the Blackhawk War for several months and, as president, he was tasked with making extremely difficult military and strategic decisions. Possibly due to his lack of military experience, as commander in chief Lincoln struggled to appoint effective military leaders. Historian Ronald White writes that,

Lincoln quickly learned that his own military leaders were often the greatest obstacles to military policy. The professional military leaders, almost all graduates of West Point, were trained for the battlefield. Used to operating within a chain of command that did not include political leaders and certainly not the president, many did not take kindly to Lincoln's growing involvement with in what they saw as their field of expertise. As Lincoln would become more and more a hands-on commander in chief, tensions with some of his military leaders would grow (2008, 443).

Throughout the Civil War the Union army had a number of leadership changes and it wasn't until Lincoln appointed General Ulysses Grant in early 1864 that the Union army was significantly more successful. Arguably one of the most problematic commanders of the Union army was General George B. McClellan. McClellan, a West Point graduate from a Democratic, wealthy family in Philadelphia, had had previous military experience in the Mexican War and was seen by many as a hero and a charismatic leader (White 2008). Despite the admiration that his soldiers and much of the country had for him and his abilities, militarily McClellan held some significant faults, being best known for his over-cautiousness and military "paralysis" while in the field. Throughout the majority of 1862 when McClellan was in command, Lincoln became frustrated with McClellan's defiant behavior and his numerous excuses for refusing to advance his army, however Lincoln kept him in his position (as both General in Chief and commander of the Army of the Potomac) (McPherson 1988, 365). Many Union battle failures or missed opportunities can be attributed to McClellan's hesitations and excuses, and it is important

to understand why Lincoln didn't remove McClellan from command sooner and attempt to put someone in command that would give the Union army a better chance of success.

Lincoln's Failure with General McClellan: A Narrative

As mentioned previously, Lincoln did not have a strong background in military experience and, as president, he delegated much of the military tasks and strategic planning to his General in Chief Winfield Scott (White 2009, 437). Prior to the Battle of Bull Run in July 1861, Lincoln took a passive stance toward his role as commander in chief, however, following the humiliating Union defeat at Bull Run, Lincoln felt he could no longer defer to the opinions of his generals and other senior military officers. White writes that, "After the humiliating defeat, Lincoln turned his full attention to the military strategy that would carry out his national policy. Although he would, at times, vacillate between deference and decision with his new military leaders, as summer turned into fall he began to assume responsibilities that had never been wielded before by an American president. By early 1862, he would become a hands-on commander in chief" (438).

Immediately following the Battle of Bull Run, Lincoln replaced General Irvin McDowell, who had been commanding the Union army, with General McClellan and placed McClellan in command of the Union Army defending Washington, called the Army of the Potomac. McClellan had been involved in some of the only successes that the Union had had thus far in the war, winning several small battles in western Virginia. Lincoln recognized that the Union needed a leader that could inspire the troops and take direct and aggressive action against Confederate forces (White 2009). Goodwin writes that, "Lincoln hoped that between [Winfield] Scott's seasoned wisdom as general-in-chief and McClellan's vitality and force, he would finally have a powerfully effective team" (2008, 378). Upon naming him commander, Lincoln asked

McClellan present to him a strategic plan that he believed would help to win the war.

McClellan's main strategy would involve the training of an army of around 270,000 men whose main goal was to capture Richmond and then move on to occupy other major Southern cities such as New Orleans (McPherson 2008, 45). From the outset of McClellan's promotion, McClellan tried to undermine the authority of General in Chief Winfield Scott, and Lincoln spent much of the fall of 1861 trying to mediate the conflict between the two (White 2009). McClellan viewed Scott as an obstacle to his ambition and his strategic plans, and within the first two weeks of his assumption of the command of the Army of the Potomac, McClellan questioned Scott's judgment in terms of military reinforcements to Washington (Goodwin 2005, 378). In addition to McClellan's disrespect of Scott, he also was, privately, quite disrespectful of Lincoln. After Lincoln ordered McClellan to retract a disrespectful letter he had sent to General in Chief Scott, McClellan wrote to his wife that, "The Presdt is an idiot . . . nothing more than a well meaning baboon" (White 2009, 447). Throughout the fall of 1861, Lincoln spent more time with McClellan than any of his other generals, as White writes, "It was as if he saw potential greatness in this young man and hoped that he could nurture his abilities. Lincoln encouraged him and tried to reason with him. McClellan, for his part, was never able to take advantage of the leadership and the insight that the president was only too willing to offer" (White 2009, 447).

The conflict between General Scott and General McClellan came to a climax at the end of September when Scott complained to Lincoln that he was always the last person to know of McClellan's plans (White 2009). At this point, Lincoln had been dealing with the conflict between the two military commanders for over two months and he was fed up with their antics. General Scott, a man in his early 70s, was a well-respected general who had devoted himself to a life of service, but, militarily, he represented the past, and Lincoln recognized that McClellan

represented the future (White 2009). General Scott, feeling that his efforts to work with McClellan were futile, submitted his resignation, citing “reasons of health”, effective October 31st. On November 1, 1861, Lincoln appointed the thirty-four year old McClellan to General in Chief of the United States Army, the youngest man to have had this position (McPherson 2008, 51). In addition to this title, McClellan still retained his title as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Not all within Washington were happy with this decision and there were several Congressional leaders that were particularly upset with McClellan, especially following his October defeat at Ball’s Bluff, where Colonel Edward Baker, a close friend of Lincoln’s and other Republicans, was killed. They also believed that the Union troops were largely stagnant and inactive. Despite these frustrations Lincoln defended McClellan and his decision to appoint him to General in Chief (Goodwin 2005, 382). By this time, the heroic aura and admiration of McClellan was fading, as not just politicians, but newspaper journalists and ordinary citizens, started to question McClellan’s capacity to lead his troops (White 2008). Lincoln wanted to continue to support McClellan, but he was anxious and impatient for McClellan to move his army forward (White 2008, 457).

In late December of 1861, McClellan fell dangerously ill with typhoid fever and during the following weeks, Lincoln’s spirit concerning the war wavered. Making matters worse, the Committee on the Conduct of the War questioned Lincoln’s military leadership and in his choice of General McClellan. The Committee on the Conduct of the War (also called the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War), was formed in early December by veteran congressman who were determined to exercise greater congressional oversight over the war, especially following the Union defeat at Ball’s Bluff and Lincoln’s firing of General Frémont (White 2008, 460). Historian Bruce Tap writes that, “Dissatisfied with the state of the war, less confident in

Lincoln, and convinced that treason lurked within the innermost circles of the North's military establishment, Congress moved quickly to establish a special joint committee to investigate Northern military setbacks and to reinvigorate the war effort” (2002). Essentially the committee was authorized to explore all that was happening within military affairs. It was a committee that was made of up seven individuals, of which five ended up being Republicans (White 2008). Interestingly, none of the members of the committee had any substantial military experience, and most of them were very suspicious of West Point graduates and military professionals in general (Tap 2002). Lincoln gave the members easy access to both himself and the War Department, knowing that even when the committee could be excessive at times, they could be used to support his own positions as commander in chief (White 2008, 460).

At the outset, the Committee was quick to denounce McClellan and they were frustrated with Lincoln for keeping him in command. Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio told Lincoln that, “You are murdering your country by inches in consequence of the inactivity of the military and want of a distinct policy in regard to slavery” (Perret 2004, 113). Some members of the committee wanted Lincoln to remove McClellan from command and Lincoln rejected that suggestion, citing that “it is my duty to defer to General McClellan” (Perret 2004). Starting in the new year of 1862, many within Congress were frustrated with McClellan’s announcement that all was “quiet on the Potomac” as they viewed it as another example of his procrastination (White 2009, 470). Still Lincoln continued to defend McClellan. When confronted by the increasingly vehement criticism of McClellan’s tardiness in attacking the Confederates, Lincoln responded that, ‘there was probably but one man in the country more anxious for a battle than himself, and that man was McClellan . . . He insisted that ‘McClellan is not a traitor; his difficulty is that he always prefers to-morrow to to-day. He is never ready to move. I think the

immense importance of the interests at stake affects him thus. In this he is very much like myself.” (Burlingame 2008, 290).

Another challenge that Lincoln was facing at this time in regards to the war was his Secretary of War Simon Cameron. By the end of 1861, Cameron was proving to be the most problematic member of Lincoln’s cabinet (White 2008, 460). Cameron perhaps had the most difficult position of all of the cabinet members, as he was expected to support a large, constantly growing army, yet he had such a small staff within the War Department (White 2008). As the army grew in numbers, Cameron became tense and ineffective, quickly losing control of his own department. After a considerable period of time, Lincoln responded giving Cameron a new position as the minister to Russia, however there were individuals who believed that Lincoln should have fired or relocated Cameron earlier. White writes that, “Lincoln took his time when it came to people . . . Lincoln’s loyalty was a strong character trait that sometimes overrode judgment” (2008, 462). One can see a consistency within Lincoln’s character here, in that Lincoln dealt with Cameron in the same way that he would deal with McClellan, offering his unwavering support and encouragement until it was clear that a change must be made. In early January of 1862 Lincoln chose Edwin Stanton to replace Cameron, an individual who quickly assumed total control of his department and imposed new order and leadership within the War Department (White 2008).

As January was coming to an end and still McClellan had not made any military progress, Lincoln could wait no longer and he issued the President’s General Order No. 1 on January 27th. It stated that, “ Ordered, that on the 22nd day of February 1862, be the day for a general movement of the Land and Naval forces of the United States against the insurgent forces” (Perret 2004, 123). This was quite a interesting order, as four days later Lincoln issued the President’s

Special War Order Number One in which he stated to McClellan that the immediate object should be the “seizing and occupying” of Manassas Junction, the details of which were to be “at the discretion of the general-in-chief” (White 2009, 471). Following this order, McClellan asked for permission to submit objections to Lincoln’s plan and propose his own, which Lincoln allowed (McPherson 2008). McClellan’s plan, called the Urbana Plan, proposed to take the Army of the Potomac down the Potomac River and set up a secure base to launch a fifty-mile ground campaign to the Confederate capital at Richmond (McPherson 2008). Lincoln was skeptical of McClellan’s plan and wasn’t convinced of its chances of success. He thought that the plan would involve extra time and money and that his own plan offered a safer retreat if needed. However he tentatively agreed on the plan anyway, despite deep reservations, as his respect for military professionals still outweighed his knowledge about military strategy (White 2009, 472).

In late February tragedy struck the White House, as Lincoln’s son Willie, only eleven years old, died of typhoid fever. Lincoln was devastated, and while he fiercely engaged himself in his work, he suffered a profound sense of loss (Goodwin 2005, 422). Dealing with grief, Lincoln left the ultimate decision of McClellan’s proposed plan to the general’s senior division commanders, who voted 8-4 in favor of McClellan’s plan (Perret 2004, 125). Unfortunately McClellan’s plan failed, as an attempt to advance Union boats across the Potomac were not able to pass through a lock in the canal, stalling the Union’s ability to move forward (Perret 2004). It can be argued whether Lincoln should have rejected the majority vote by the division commanders to allow McClellan to move forward with his plan, but Lincoln assented to the majority opinion against his better judgment (White 2009). If Lincoln would have rejected McClellan’s Urbana Plan it could have provoked McClellan’s resignation, demoralization of the

Union Army, and further military delay, so despite Lincoln's concerns, McClellan remained in control (McPherson 2008, 78).

As February turned to March, Lincoln became more frustrated with McClellan and he met with the Joint Committee on the Conduct of War on March 3. Lincoln was aware of the buzz around Washington that McClellan was secretly a Confederate sympathizer, as he had received numerous letters from people accusing McClellan of treason. In the meeting several members of the committee once again advised Lincoln to remove McClellan from command. Senator Wade from Ohio said that anybody would be better in command than McClellan and Lincoln told him, "Wade, *anybody* will do for you, but not for me. I must have somebody" (McPherson 2008, 77). At the time, the committee had two possible candidates in mind, Irvin McDowell and John Frémont, but Lincoln believed that these generals carried too much negative baggage from previous battle failures. Already at this time, Lincoln had been considering the removal of McClellan, but it seems that he felt trapped, as there was nobody that he felt confident with in replacing him.

Lincoln, in order to put some pressure on McClellan, issued President's War Order No. 2, which essentially organized the army into five corps, and, much to McClellan's anger, Lincoln personally selected the commander of each of the corps (Perret 2004, 127). He also issued President's General Order No. 3, which called for the Army of the Potomac to advance south on March 18th (Perret 2004). Continued pressure by Secretary of War Stanton and the Committee on the Conduct of War moved Lincoln into relieving McClellan of his command, and on March 11th Lincoln decided to relieve McClellan of his command as General in Chief, but kept him still in charge of the Army of the Potomac (Thomas 2008, 308). Lincoln cited reasons that, as commander of the Army of the Potomac about to take the field, McClellan could no longer "do it

all” (McPherson 2008, 79). Interestingly, Lincoln, knowing no one fit for supreme command, undertook military control as General in Chief himself, aided by Secretary Stanton and veteran General Ethan Allen Hitchcock, both of whom proved to be of little help (Thomas 2008, 308).

Throughout the spring and summer of 1862, McClellan continued to give excuses for not advancing on Confederate forces. He griped about bridges needing to be built, bad roads, and a need for the reorganization of regiments (Goodwin 2008, 443). In early April, McClellan began his Peninsula Campaign, pushing forward towards Yorktown. McClellan and the Potomac Army enjoyed a manpower advantage of four to one (Perret 2004). McClellan overestimated the strength and numbers of the Confederate forces and stalled, despite having a clear opening for an attack (Thomas 2008, 316). While McClellan dawdled, the Confederate forces ramped up their reinforcements. In early May, when McClellan was finally ready to advance on Yorktown, having run out of excuses of needing more men and asking for specific types of weaponry, he discovered that the Confederates had evacuated their positions, a humiliation for him and his army (Thomas 2008). In late June to early July, a series of battles, named the Seven Days Battles was waged between General McClellan and General Robert E. Lee. On the second day, Lee won a costly victory that greatly affected McClellan, who wrote to Secretary Stanton, “Have had a terrible contest. Attacked by greatly superior numbers from all directions on this side . . . Had I 20,000 fresh and good troops, we would be sure of a splendid victory tomorrow” (Thomas 2008, 326). McClellan was not so outnumbered in this battle outnumbering Confederate troops three to one on the south side of the river, yet he was still unable to advance towards Richmond (Thomas 2008). He failed to take responsibility for the failure saying that, “I have lost this battle because my force was too small. I again repeat that I am not responsible for this” (Goodwin 2008, 443). Throughout the summer of 1862, Lincoln was still in support of McClellan, possibly because he

wanted to cling to some type of military stability or possibly he still believed in McClellan's potential, visiting him in multiple different field locations and continuing to send reinforcements when asked. However, as Union forces continued to suffer defeat after defeat throughout the summer, Lincoln felt unsure of how to proceed (Goodwin 2008).

Lincoln's cabinet, following the Union defeat at the Second Battle of Bull Run in late August 1862, began to vigorously pursue a way to oust McClellan (Goodwin 2008, 478). Stanton, Chase, Smith, Welles, and Bates all signed a protest document that would impress upon Lincoln that McClellan must be dismissed. Lincoln was deeply troubled by the knowledge that his cabinet so strongly opposed him, however he reasoned that, "McClellan knows this whole ground and can be trusted to act on the defensive" maintaining that there was "no better organizer" (Goodwin 2008, 479). The small victory that was achieved from the Battle of Antietam on September 17th was the military success that Lincoln needed to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, but it was not the decisive victory it could have been. McClellan, following the immediate victory, had failed to pursue the retreating Confederate forces, and he allowed them to cross the Potomac into Virginia, where they would have the location and the resources to regroup and replenish (Goodwin 2008, 481).

On October 1st, Lincoln went to Sharpsburg to visit McClellan to urge him to pursue the Confederate forces. Lincoln chided McClellan concerning his overcautiousness, and upon returning to Washington he ordered McClellan to cross the Potomac and attack (Thomas 2008, 345). McClellan denied to Lincoln that he was overcautious, citing that there was a lack of supplies, a lack of shoes, and tired horses. This final excuse irritated Lincoln immensely, who asked him, "Will you pardon me for asking what the horses of your army have done since the battle of Antietam that fatigue anything?" (Goodwin 2008, 485). Lincoln concluded that if

McClellan did not mobilize in the pursuit of Lee's troops by the end of October, he would be relieved from duty.

Finally, on November 11th, a day after Lincoln and the Republicans suffered a heavy defeat in the midterm elections, Lincoln relieved McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Lincoln told his secretary John Hay that, "I began to fear he was playing false- that he did not want to hurt the enemy. I saw how he could intercept the enemy on the way to Richmond. I determined to make the test. If he let them get away, I would remove him. He did so & I relieved him" (Goodwin 2008, 485). It seemed that Lincoln felt that he had reached the end of his rope with McClellan, however another possible, more strategic reason, was that Lincoln only kept McClellan in his post for as long as he did in the hopes that having a Democratic general at the head of the army would help in the polls. It did not, and this combined with McClellan's poor handlings of the war effort after Antietam doomed him (Masur 2012). This is only a speculation of Masur, however it certainly is a plausible explanation. While Lincoln would have several consecutive failures of military leaders following McClellan, he would eventually promote General Ulysses Grant to be commander of the Union Army, i.e. General in Chief, in March 1864, who would ultimately help the Union win the war. It is important to understand why Lincoln kept McClellan in command for so long, as there were numerous Union defeats and failures due to inaction that can be attributed to McClellan and that severely jeopardized the Union's ability to win the war.

Analysis Using the Character Framework

In looking at the failure of Lincoln to manage General McClellan, can one identify specific elements of his character, i.e. ambition, relatedness, integrity and emotional intelligence that influenced or affected his failed decision to keep McClellan in command? One could also

say it demonstrates a lack of a decision, at least until Lincoln ultimately removes McClellan from command in November of 1862. What makes this case interesting is the fact that, unlike the Emancipation Proclamation, this decision is more of a series of small decisions, not one big decision. Concerning Lincoln's role as commander in chief, there are several scholars that believe that Lincoln was a hands-on commander in chief, who was extremely active in his engagement with the army (McPherson 2008; Burlingame 2008; White 2008). McPherson writes that, "At all levels of policy, strategy, and operations, however, Lincoln was a hands-on commander in chief who persisted through a terrible ordeal of defeats and disappointments to final triumph- and tragedy-at the end" (2008, 8). And Burlingame echoes that sentiment, writing that, "Until time and trial brought forth the man he needed, the very force of circumstances obliged him to plan grand strategy himself. And his plans were invariably sound-failure came from faulty execution by his generals. In averting disaster until he found a general he could trust, Lincoln became a master of the art of war" (2008, 332). These are scholars that believe that Lincoln was an extremely engaged and adept military leader, but that the execution by his generals, especially McClellan, was a failure. Yet the question remains, if Lincoln was such a hands-on, capable commander then why didn't he remove McClellan from command earlier?

From my initial assessment, I believe that the character theoretical framework may not be as useful in understanding this decision, however a closer analysis may indicate otherwise. In first looking at ambition, it seems evident that ambition did not play a strong role within Lincoln's decisions concerning McClellan. Ambition encompasses the motivational element that individuals possess and the set of skills they use in the pursuit of their goals, including enacting transformational policy, demonstrating strong inner drive and self-initiative, and being highly active and engaged. If one looks to when Lincoln promoted McClellan, it doesn't seem to be for

Lincoln's own ambitious reasons of creating a historical legacy. Although one could argue that Lincoln did hope that McClellan would be a transformational figure that would help to breathe new life into the Union army and make it a more successful force against the Confederacy.

Facing the defeat at Bull Run, Lincoln recognized the need for a new commanding general and he promoted McClellan based upon his small successes in western Virginia, and the hope that McClellan would bring vitality to the Union army. The only part of ambition that is clearly evident within Lincoln's decisions concerning McClellan is that he was highly involved and engaged in his communications with him. Lincoln was a frequent visitor to McClellan's headquarters within Washington, and he also visited McClellan and his soldiers in the field numerous times (White 2009). White writes that, "Over the next months [in the fall of 1861], Lincoln would spend far more time with McClellan than any of his generals" (2008, 447).

Lincoln sought out McClellan for military news and strategy, and while McClellan found these visits from the president an annoyance, Lincoln actually used them to size up the general (White 2009, 446). Lincoln was ambitious in keeping up with McClellan, however I don't believe that ambition entered into Lincoln's decision in terms of keeping McClellan in command and when he removed him from command.

Concerning Lincoln's integrity in the failure of his management of General McClellan, I believe this trait is not very relevant within the decision. A possible explanation for this is the case involves a decision about means, not ends or values, and, because integrity deals with personal ideals and values, it is not as relevant. Lincoln's personal ideals and values did not seem to play a part in his decisions concerning McClellan. One of the characteristics of integrity is that a president is willing to stick their convictions despite ultimate loss. If one sees McClellan as a sort of "conviction" of Lincoln's, then one could argue that Lincoln stuck with McClellan even

despite loss and he kept in command despite others telling him not too. Despite this possible rationale, I don't believe that there is enough strong evidence to indicate the element of integrity within this decision.

In considering relatedness, one could argue that a lack of relatedness had an effect on Lincoln's failure to manage General McClellan. One of the characteristics of relatedness is the way in which a president treats his staff and advisers. While Lincoln never overtly mistreated those around him, including military leaders and his cabinet, he ignored numerous requests from both his cabinet and the Committee on the Conduct of War to remove General McClellan from command. Several members of the cabinet had signed a petition asking for Lincoln to fire McClellan and members on the Committee on the Conduct of War vehemently attacked McClellan and his military tactics and demanded his removal. Senator Fessenden said about Lincoln not removing McClellan that, "It is no longer doubtful that General McClellan is utterly unfit for his position . . . And yet the President will keep him in command, and leave our destiny in his hands . . . Well it cannot be helped. We went for a rail-splitter and we have got one" (Thomas 2008, 308). Despite these criticisms, Lincoln still would not remove McClellan from command until at least several months after multiple complaints. It is likely that many within the cabinet and the war committee felt disrespected by Lincoln's inability to take their opinions into consideration. Lincoln seemed to have included many individuals within his military sphere, and while he understood why some of these individuals would want McClellan removed, he felt that he had no other option than to keep McClellan in command. As mentioned earlier, Lincoln identified with McClellan and saw great potential in him, so he spent a lot of his energy and time trying to harness that potential. Lincoln so badly wanted to be able to relate to McClellan and he wanted him to be successful, but McClellan was largely unreceptive and wanted to do things his

own way, much to the disappointment of Lincoln. In this sense, I believe that one could say Lincoln demonstrated too much relatedness towards McClellan, in that his empathy and his desire to be able to relate to McClellan caused a lack of relatedness with the rest of his cabinet.

Concerning the element of emotional intelligence, I believe that Lincoln's lack of emotional intelligence did play a role in the failure to manage General McClellan. To reiterate, emotional intelligence involves the ability of a president to not let negative feelings or personal hardships affect the way that a president does their job. The death of Willie Lincoln was devastating for Lincoln, and it does seem to have had an effect on Lincoln's management of McClellan. Lincoln, dealing with grief following Willie's death in late February of 1862, allowed a council of division commanders to have a final vote on McClellan's Urbana plan. This council was mostly made up of generals that McClellan himself had appointed, so not surprisingly they voted in favor of McClellan's plan (Perret 2004). Lincoln himself had skeptically agreed with this plan, but he had developed his own, less risky and less costly plan, that could also have been implemented. It is impossible to know if Lincoln's plan would have fared better than McClellan's or if McClellan's behavior and "paralysis" would have thwarted both plans, but it is evident that Lincoln, dealing with grief, was unable to manage McClellan during his time of mourning and let others around him make important military decisions. The way that Lincoln dealt with this is not necessarily a personal flaw, as many people would have a hard time doing their job after the death of their child and it is certainly understandable why Lincoln acted in the way that he did, but I do believe that this event certainly affected Lincoln's behavior concerning McClellan.

From my conclusions, ambition and integrity appear to not have played a role in this failed decision, but a lack of relatedness and emotional intelligence did seem to affect Lincoln's

decision. Next I turn to the element of judgment, which involves a president's ability to match solutions to circumstances, in that he can identify a problem, see it for what it is, and devise an appropriate solution. Presidents employing good judgment are curious and seek out information regarding how to solve problems and are realistic risk assessors. In looking at judgment, Lincoln employed good judgment in that he sought out information regarding how to deal with military problems. White writes that, "As commander in chief, Lincoln understood that he faced a steep learning curve. Yet his whole adult life had consisted of self-education, and he welcomed the challenge. Just as he had become a self-taught lawyer in rural Illinois, he now set out to teach himself military theory and strategy" (2008, 441). Lincoln seemingly was able to assess the risk of different military plans of both his own and his generals, but yet he also allowed McClellan to pursue his own plans instead of following the plans that he himself had made. Here one can identify a contradiction in the fact that Lincoln, following the Battle of Bull Run, wanted to no longer defer to his generals and military advisers, yet he deferred numerous times to the command of General McClellan. It seemed that his rationale was that the military professionals knew best, but Lincoln had been learning military strategy and spending the majority of his time in the War Department, so he had acquired quite a bit of knowledge of military tactics and strategy by this time.

Concerning his political leadership, Lincoln didn't need to mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate the public, as military strategic issues are generally handled by the political elite, but nonetheless political leadership was largely absent in this decision. Another element of political leadership is a president's use of their political skills to strengthen political relationships and I believe that Lincoln was clearly lacking in leadership in this category. Many of his political relationships suffered because of his failure to manage McClellan and his other generals. So I

believe that there is enough evidence to conclude that a lack of both good judgment and political leadership did have an effect that can help to provide a plausible rationale for Lincoln's failed decision.

Analysis of Strategic Action Framework

Turning to the strategic action framework it will be important to answer the question: is it evident that a lack of a strategic use of resources through persuasion and bargaining led to the failure of Lincoln's ability to manage McClellan? My initial assessment is that the framework will, in part, be able to help explain why Lincoln's decisions regarding General McClellan were a failure. In first looking at vantage points, the way that a president uses the powers that are built into the Constitution, Lincoln did take his constitutional role as the commander in chief seriously. He did utilize his powers to make leadership appointments and issue war orders, however he doesn't bargain with others using these vantage points, and that is an area where I think Lincoln failed. This demonstrates the limit of what orders can do, as Lincoln orders McClellan to act but these orders can't make McClellan take initiative in an enthusiastic and vigorous way, which would seem to be necessary for one to enter into battle. Lincoln rarely tried to bargain with others concerning McClellan and with McClellan himself, and while Lincoln defended McClellan to all that wanted him relieved from command, he never tried to use his status as commander in chief or his powers to bargain and this greatly affected Lincoln's professional reputation. Lincoln failed to recognize that letting McClellan defy his orders but remain in command weakened his reputation, as those around him did not agree with his decisions concerning the general. Concerning the element of an individual's sense of power, I do not find this element relevant within this decision. In this instance, I do not think that Lincoln

necessarily viewed power as essential nor did he attempt to amass power in the hopes of better managing McClellan.

Concerning the element of professional reputation, it seems quite evident that Lincoln lacked a strong professional reputation in regards to his decisions concerning McClellan. As evidenced from the narrative, there were many individuals within the Washington community that believed that McClellan was not completely loyal to the Union and was not acting in good faith. They also believed that Lincoln was inept in the handling of McClellan and they did not respect the way that he was using his presidential powers as commander in chief. Secretary of War Stanton was especially disenchanted with Lincoln's behavior towards McClellan, and at one point he was so agitated that he stated that, "he knew of no particular obligations he was under to the President who had called him to a difficult position and imposed upon him labors and responsibilities which no could carry . . . He could not and would not submit to a continuance of this state of things" (Goodwin 2008, 477). Clearly this indicates a lack of respect of the way that Lincoln was making decisions and there were many others besides Stanton that felt similarly. Lincoln also did little to try and protect his professional reputation. He didn't punish his friends or reward his enemies, he simply let people think and say what they felt about McClellan and did little to try and convince them otherwise.

Turning to public prestige, which is how favorable the Washington community thinks the public is towards the president, Lincoln's public prestige seems to not have been a factor in this failed decision. As most military decisions are largely isolated within the political sphere, the Washington community's view of public opinion surrounding Lincoln as commander in chief is not an important or evident factor within the decision. The only fact worth mentioning is the 1862-midterm elections in which Lincoln and the Republican Party lost a number of seats. While

this is not direct evidence of low public prestige, the electorate did not view Lincoln's handling of military matters positively and Lincoln and his party paid the price for that in the polls.

From my analysis of the framework, Lincoln's lack of the use of his vantage points and his resulting low professional reputation affected his political power and his ability to persuade those around him. Political power deals with how a president demonstrates control and authority dealing with each specific decision that they face. They are able to persuade those around them and have the ability to convince others to act in ways compatible with the president's policy needs. From the details within the narrative, Lincoln clearly did not protect his political power in this instance. He wasn't able to act authoritatively enough, as McClellan often disobeyed Lincoln's war orders and commands and Lincoln wasn't able to convince or persuade his cabinet and other individuals within Washington that McClellan should stay in command. A more powerful Lincoln might have been able to persuade McClellan, however McClellan continued to disobey Lincoln's orders even after Lincoln relieves him from position as General in Chief. An important point that can be understood from Neustadt is that Lincoln's protection of his vantage points would have given him clues to good policy, which would have been firing McClellan, however Lincoln wasn't able to protect his vantage points, showing that a lack of political power can lead to bad policy.

As one can see, Lincoln does not act in the way that the framework suggests would lead to a successful decision, and this can explain why the decision was a failure. If Lincoln had successfully utilized his vantage points then his professional reputation would have been higher, giving him greater political power and the ability to bargain, which potentially could have lead to a more successful decision. This theoretical framework can't explain why Lincoln made the decisions that he did, but it can explain why it was a failure. If Lincoln had better used his

authority to persuade and bargain with those around him, especially McClellan, perhaps the outcome of the Union Army in the beginning years of the Civil War would have been different.

Conclusion

Both of the theoretical frameworks offer plausible explanations for why Lincoln's decisions concerning McClellan were failures. The character framework indicates that Lincoln's both lack of and excessive relatedness and a lack of good judgment can help to explain why there was a failed decision and the strategic action framework indicates that lack of the use of vantage points, low professional reputation and absence of political power help explain the failed decision. Regarding both frameworks, Lincoln didn't act in the way that the framework indicates should lead to a successful decision. The two frameworks complement each other in terms of explaining the decision, as the strategic action framework better explains why the decision was a failure, and the character framework better helps to explain why Lincoln made the failed decisions that he did. Within the decision, one can see Lincoln's streak of passivity that David Donald mentions, as well as an element of stubbornness. Lincoln's sense of personal loyalty to those around him also overlaps with this element of stubbornness. Lincoln felt loyal to McClellan and he was stubborn to relieve him of command because of his allegiance. Also, the absence of integrity within this decision eliminated one of Lincoln's strongest character elements. In this particular situation, Lincoln's integrity did not tell him what to do, unlike his decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, and this forced Lincoln to try and rationalize his decision in other ways.

One of the most interesting elements that Lincoln demonstrates is his empathetic nature towards McClellan. As mentioned earlier, there was something within Lincoln that made him strongly identify with McClellan and this seemed to cloud his judgment in how he dealt with

McClellan's disobedience and disrespect. The problem was that Lincoln tried to relate to McClellan, but McClellan disliked Lincoln and had no sympathy towards him. He insulted Lincoln in letters to his wife and he didn't respect Lincoln's orders or commands, yet Lincoln continued to try and build a functioning relationship. This can explain why Lincoln defended McClellan in numerous instances while it seemed everybody else around him knew that McClellan was unable to give the Union military success. One also saw that type of loyalty with Lincoln's former Secretary of War Simon Cameron. Lincoln was an individual that wanted to give everyone the benefit of the doubt and he gave ample opportunities to those he felt loyal to. These numerous factors, Lincoln's stubbornness, empathetic nature, willingness to give the benefit of the doubt, and sense of loyalty all affected the way that Lincoln handled McClellan. These elements of character influenced the way in which he interacted with his advisers and cabinet, and a poor professional reputation and the inability to persuade others can certainly help to explain Lincoln's failure. In the end, Lincoln did relieve McClellan of his command, but had he better been able to manage McClellan and persuade those around Washington to trust in his decisions, the Union might have had greater successes earlier on in the war and the Civil War might have been a shorter war.

CHAPTER 7: SUSPENSION OF HABEAS CORPUS

From the moment that Lincoln was inaugurated as the 16th president of the United States, he was thrust into a tense world of military decision-making. The way in which he conceived of his executive powers and made important military decisions largely defined his presidency and one of the most prominent examples of this is Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, which he suspended both in 1861 and again in 1863. This paper will principally be examining Lincoln's decision to suspend habeas corpus in 1861. Similar to Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, his rationale of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus was largely out of military necessity. Author Brian McGinty writes that, "Lincoln's decision to suspend habeas corpus was not made in isolation. It was part of an overall strategy to resist the Southern rebellion. It was a military, not a judicial, measure . . . He ordered the suspension of habeas corpus pursuant to what he called the "war power," and believed the suspension was as necessary to the war effort as his orders sending troops into battle" (2011, 5). Despite this rationale, there were individuals that believed that Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus was an extreme violation of citizen's civil liberties. Historian Mark Neely Jr. writes that, "The Democratic depiction of Lincoln as a tyrant was to have more influence on history than it merited, but like many political caricatures, it contained a certain element of truth" (210). In this sense, one can understand Lincoln's decision as a success, in that it was an emergency military measure that allowed Lincoln to take action he believed to be necessary without the immediate approval of Congress, or as a failure, in that it was an extreme violation of American's civil liberties.

Lincoln's Suspension of Habeas Corpus: The Narrative

Lincoln was inaugurated on March 4, 1861 and he would make the decision to suspend the writ of habeas corpus only a little over a month later, on April 27th. No inauguration had taken place in such turbulent times, as seven states had already seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America and there were rumors of threats of attacks of Lincoln and on Washington (White 2009, 388). One of the immediate factors that is important to know is that at the beginning of Lincoln's presidency Congress was not yet in session. This is a factor that served to both benefit and restrain Lincoln, as he had the freedom to act without limitations from Congress, but he also didn't believe that he could act alone (White 2009, 408). Congress was not supposed to reconvene until the first Monday in December, which was a long eight months away. It had also soon become apparent in the spring of 1861 that the conflict between the North and the South had reached the point of no return, especially following the Union surrender at Fort Sumter (McGinty 2011, 34).

Lincoln recognized that if the Union was to be more fully involved in the conflict, which it was clear that they needed to at least have better defense, there needed to be a larger and more organized militia. Lincoln conferred with his cabinet, military advisers, and members of Congress following the surrender at Fort Sumter to decide what action to take. As of spring 1861, there were only sixteen thousand men in the army, most of who were stationed on the Western frontier (McGinty 2011). Lincoln understood that the capital was extremely vulnerable and he wanted to summon militia volunteers to help defend the city; a course of action with which his advisers agreed upon (McGinty 2011, 39). Also within this meeting, the group of Lincoln and his advisers discussed calling a special session of Congress due to the dire circumstances that the Union was facing. In response to both of these issues, Lincoln issued a

proclamation on April 15th for a special session of Congress to be convened on July 4, 1861 and a call for an additional seventy-five thousand militiamen (McGinty 2011, 40). In addition to these demands, he stated that, “the first service assigned to the forces hereby called forth will probably be to re- possess the forts, places, and property which have been seized from the Union” (McGinty 2011, 40). Response to his proclamation was largely divided. In the North, governors of Maine, Ohio, and Indiana all agreed to send troops, with Governor of Ohio William Dennison assuring Lincoln that he would, “furnish the largest number you will receive” (White 2009, 413). Meanwhile, there were border states, such as Kentucky, that acted defiantly. Kentucky governor Beriah Magoffin replied that, “Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern states” (White 2009, 413). Lincoln’s proclamation also seemed to push Virginia over the edge, as they had been debating secession for several weeks, but following this news, on April 17th, they joined the Confederacy (McGinty 2011, 41). The largest concern came from Massachusetts governor John Andrew, who was willing to provide troops, but was wondering as to what route that should he send them, as they would have to pass through Maryland, which was proving to be a volatile state (White 2009).

Maryland posed an interesting situation during the spring of 1861. It was a bit of an anomaly in that it had strong cultural ties to the South, but had both strong pro-Union sentiment and strong Southern sympathizers (McGinty 2011). Following the secession of Virginia, the only railroad lines for supplies, communications, and troops to pass ran through Baltimore (Dueholm 2008, 48). Within Baltimore, there were numerous Confederate sympathizers who were greatly upset that there would be Union troops passing through (Dueholm 2008). The reason that Governor Andrew was so concerned about the route to send his troops was that the Massachusetts regiment would have to pass through Baltimore where there was fear of riots and

attacks on Union volunteer militias. These fears were confirmed, when, on April 19th, the Sixth Massachusetts regiment reached Baltimore en route to defend Washington and were attacked by a secessionist mob, where four soldiers and nine civilians were killed (Goodwin 2005, 352). The mayor of Baltimore, George Brown, and the governor of Maryland, Thomas Hicks, made a statement that same day, stating they would not comply with Lincoln's request to send volunteer militiamen. Governor Hicks stated that, "I am a Marylander. I love my State and I love the Union, but I will suffer my right arm to be torn from my body before I will raise it to strike a sister State" (McGinty 2011, 47). Mayor Brown also sent a coalition of delegates from Baltimore to Washington on April 22nd to ask Lincoln that Union troops be kept not only out of just Baltimore, but the whole state of Maryland (Goodwin 2005). Lincoln adamantly refused to comply with this request. He stated that, "I must have troops to defend this Capital. Geographically it lies surrounded by the soil of Maryland . . . Our men are not moles, and can't dig under the earth; they are not birds and can't fly through the air. There is no way but to march across, and that they must do" (Goodwin 2005, 352). Lincoln also summoned Governor Hicks and Mayor Brown to the capital, and they met with General Winfield Scott and the cabinet. Lincoln assured Brown and Hicks that he would do his best to move federal troops around Baltimore rather than through it and that his sole purpose was to protect Washington, not attack Maryland (McGinty 2011, 48).

Also on April 22nd, Governor Hicks called for a special session of the Maryland state legislature to convene on April 26th (Neely 1991, 6). Many individuals, including Lincoln and his cabinet, feared that the legislators would commence proceedings for a secession ordinance (Neely 1991). Following this announcement, General Benjamin Butler, commander of the Massachusetts regiments, and General in Chief Winfield Scott, had considered threatening the

arrests of any “secession-minded Maryland politicians” in order to try and prohibit possible secession (Neely 1991, 6). Lincoln did not think that that course of action would be justifiable, as the Maryland legislators had a right to assemble and it was impossible to know what they would decide and what actions they would take (McGinty 2011). Lincoln wrote to General Scott on April 25th, ordering that, “I therefore conclude that it is only left to the commanding General to watch, and await their action, which, if it shall be to arm their people against the United States, he is to adopt the most prompt, and efficient means to counteract, even, if necessary, to the bombardment of their cities— and in the extremest necessity, the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus” (Neely 1991, 7). It is interesting to note, according to Sherrill Halbert, that even in this most desperate situation, Lincoln hesitated to suspend habeas corpus, looking at the bombardment of Maryland cities as preferable to the suspension of habeas corpus (1958, 99).

The situation within Maryland became even more intense, as Southern sympathizers in Maryland began to cut telegraph wires and burn bridges in an attempt to cut off all communication between the North and the capital (White 2009, 416). For days this rioting continued, and Lincoln began to receive word that the mobs intended to destroy railroad tracks between Annapolis and Philadelphia in order to prevent troops from reaching the capital (Goodwin 2005, 354). Lincoln then made the controversial decision, writing to General Scott on April 27th that, “You are engaged in repressing an insurrection against the laws of the United States. If at any point on or in the vicinity of the military line, which is now being used between the City of Philadelphia and the City of Washington . . . you find resistance which renders it necessary to suspend the Writ of Habeas Corpus for the public safety, you, personally or through an office in command at the point where the resistance occurs, are authorized to suspend the writ” (Neely 1991, 8). In Lincoln’s words, General Scott had the power to arrest and detain any

individuals, between Philadelphia and Washington, deemed dangerous to the public safety (Goodwin 2005). Historian James Dueholm clarifies that, under the Constitution, the federal government can unquestionably suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus if the public safety requires it during times of rebellion. The issue was whether Congress or the president held this power (2008, 47). Technically, from the document of the Constitution itself, the right to suspend habeas corpus is located in Article I, which enumerates the powers of Congress and the legislative branch, and therefore Congress had that power. Lincoln was reluctant to claim this power for himself, but as Congress was not in session and were not able to suspend habeas corpus themselves, he felt that he had to take direct action himself in the interest of the public. Secretary of State Seward later claimed that he had urged a wavering Lincoln to order this, convincing him that “perdition was the sure penalty of further hesitation” (McGinty 2011, 84; Goodwin 2005, 355).

The test of the legality of the suspension of habeas corpus came about a month later, when an individual named John Merryman was arrested in Cockeysville, Maryland on May 25, 1861 for treason, allegedly organizing the burning of bridges, and for drilling troops to aid the secessionist movement against the U.S. government (White 2009, 416). Following his arrest, Merryman’s attorney’s immediately petitioned the federal court in Baltimore to examine the charges against Merryman under the writ of habeas corpus (White 2009). A legal concept developed by common law in England, habeas corpus, Latin for “to have the body”, allowed for a special judicial proceeding that enabled a person deprived of their liberty to obtain a prompt determination as to the legality of their deprivation, essentially protecting innocent persons from unlawful and illegal detention (McGinty 2011, 73). The federal judge who heard the case happened to be Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, who also served as the circuit

judge for the Fourth Circuit and had written the famous decision in the *Dred Scott* case. On May 26th Taney issued a writ to Fort McHenry, where Merryman was being detained, to produce Merryman before the court the following morning (Halbert 1958, 99). The general in command, at Fort McHenry, General George Cadwallader, refused to produce Merryman on the grounds that Lincoln had authorized the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus (Halbert 1958).

In the famous decision that Taney issued, *Ex parte Merryman*, he cited various provisions within the Constitution that proved, in his judgment, that the president had no power to suspend habeas corpus (McGinty 2011). Essentially those powers only belonged to Congress. Citing Article I of the Constitution, Taney wrote that, “The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it. This article is devoted to the legislative department of the United States, and has not the slightest reference to the executive department” (McGinty 2011, 87). Taney emphasized that the suspension clause is located in Article I, dealing with the powers of the legislative branch, not Article II, dealing with executive power (Neely 2011, 65). He further wrote that the president “is not empowered to arrest any one charged with an offence against the United States, and whom he may, from the evidence before him, believe to be guilty; nor can he authorize any officer, civil or military, to exercise this power” (McGinty 2011, 88). This rationale by Taney is unfounded, as Lincoln himself did not order the arrest of John Merryman and, furthermore, the issue of arresting someone is separate from the suspension of an individual’s writ of habeas corpus. He also cited that previous judicial authorities, such as Chief Justice Marshall, had described the suspension clause as a congressional power (Neely 2011, 65). Thus, according to Taney, Lincoln had clearly acted unconstitutionally and only Congress, not the president, had the power to suspend the writ of habeas corpus.

There were many that agreed with Taney's argument that Lincoln was usurping power and playing the role of both Congress and executive in pursuit of his own purposes (White 2009, 417). Many Democrats or southern sympathizers accused Lincoln of many things including labeling him as a despot, tyrant, and dictator (Halbert 1958, 101). The *Baltimore Sun* revered Taney as a hero writing that, "it is not possible to read the opinion of Chief Justice Taney, in the Merryman case, without an impressive sense of the power of truth, and the convincing logic of the constitution and laws" (McGinty 2011, 92). Republicans mostly applauded the president's decisive action and denounced Taney's decision. Horace Greely wrote that, "no judge whose heart was loyal to the Constitution would have given such aid and comfort to public enemies. Of all the tyrannies that afflict mankind, that of the judiciary is the most insidious, the most intolerable, the most dangerous" (McGinty 2011, 92).

Lincoln would essentially do nothing following Taney's decision, neither responding to Taney's opinion nor releasing Merryman. Lincoln declined to submit to Taney's *Ex parte Merryman* opinion, not only because it challenged his decision to suspend habeas corpus, but also because he believed that the Constitution forbade him to submit to Taney's decision. He recognized that his duty was "to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution," not to follow judicial dictates, and if there was a conflict between these two, he would follow his duty based upon his own considered sense of what the Constitution required of him (McGinty 2011, 5). He believed that decisions of the courts were entitled to great respect, however he did not believe that government policy could be fixed by Supreme Court decisions (McGinty 2011, 4). Lincoln did not believe that Taney's decision in *Ex parte Merryman* controlled his actions as president of the United States. If Taney derived his power from the judicial article of the Constitution,

Lincoln derived his power from the executive article of the same founding document (McGinty 2011, 4).

Following the *Ex parte Merryman* decision, Attorney General Bates, though reluctant to oppose Taney, supported Lincoln's suspension. The next few weeks following the decision, he drafted an argument in favor of Lincoln's decision, writing that, "in a time like the present, when the very existence of the Nation is assailed, by a great and dangerous insurrection, the President has the lawful discretionary power to arrest and hold in custody, persons known to have criminal intercourse with the insurgents" (Goodwin 2005, 355). It appears that Bates partly wrote this opinion based upon his position as Attorney General, serving as the chief legal authority for the country. Also Lincoln has asked Bates to confer with Reverdy Johnson, who strongly supported Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, to publish an opinion (McGinty 2011, 105). Bates worked with both Johnson and his assistant attorney general to draft his opinion. From a legal standpoint, Bates stated that the president's powers to suspend habeas corpus derived from his duty to "take care that laws be faithfully executed". Furthermore, if the executive abused his power, the remedy would be to impeach him, not to subject him to certain decisions of the court (McGinty 2011).

During the next several weeks into June, Lincoln began drafting the message that he would be giving to the special session of Congress on July 4th. He worked out his own thoughts, at times seeking advice from his cabinet members, but mostly writing it himself (McGinty 2011). Lincoln believed that this message was very important; as it would allow him to both explain to Congress and to the nation his reasoning behind his decisions thus far into the war. Lincoln originally wrote the document in a personal voice, but later decided to switch to a more passive voice in order to give a more objective justification of his actions (McGinty 2011, 98). McGinty

writes that, “He did not want it to seem that he had assumed the role of a tyrant, for ‘the appearance of military dictatorship was a matter of deep concern’ to him. He was a constitutional officer— the president, the chief executive, the commander in chief— and he wanted the public to know that he understood his role” (98). In Lincoln’s address to Congress, he defended his actions saying that, as chief executive, he alone was responsible for ensuring that the laws were executed faithfully (Goodwin 2005). He stated that,

"Now it is insisted that Congress, and not the Executive, is vested with this power. But the Constitution itself, is silent as to which, or who, is to exercise the power; and as the provision was plainly made for a dangerous emergency, it cannot be believed the framers of the instrument intended, that, in every case, the danger should run its course, until Congress could be called together; the very assembling of which might be prevented... by the rebellion”
(Dueholm 2008, 50).

His famous line at the conclusion of his address was, “are all the laws, but *one*, to go unexecuted, and the government itself to go to pieces, lest that one be violated?” (Goodwin 2005, 355).

Lincoln’s reasoning was that it didn’t make sense to elevate one law, the law that defined who had the power to suspend habeas corpus, over all other laws (McGinty 2011). He implicitly asks Congress to authorize his actions, stating that, “In full view of his great responsibility he has so far done what he has deemed his duty. You will now, according to your own judgment, perform yours” (Miller Center). Lincoln’s speech showed that he had paid attention and did his best to interpret what his constitutional duty was. He had given serious thought to potentially suspending habeas corpus before he gave his order to General Scott and he believed that his order helped the effort to take care that the laws be faithfully executed (McGinty 2011, 102). Furthermore, he made the decision that he did because Congress was not in session and he had to make an emergency military decision in the interest of public safety.

Members of Congress were mostly supportive of Lincoln’s decision. Some believed that Lincoln’s decision to suspend habeas corpus had been necessary but questioned its legality.

Republican Senator John Sherman from Ohio stated that, “I approve the action of the President. I believe the President did right. He did precisely what I would have done if I had been in his place . . . but I cannot here, in my place, under oath, declare that it was strictly legal” (McGinty 2011, 118). There were several Democratic congressmen that did not approve of Lincoln’s decision, as Democrat John C. Breckinridge denied that one branch of government could “indemnify” another branch for a violation of the Constitution (McGinty 2011). At this special session of Congress, Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, who was the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs and the Militia, attached a measure to a larger bill that raised the pay of troops, which stated that,

And be it further enacted, That all the acts, proclamations, and orders of the President of the United States, after the fourth of March, eighteen hundred and sixty- one, respecting the army and navy of the United States, and calling out or relating to the militia or volunteers from the States, are hereby approved and in all respects legalized and made valid, to the same intent and with the same effect as if they had been issued and done under the previous express authority and direction of the Congress of the United States (McGinty 2011, 119).

This bill was passed on August 6, 1861 and it essentially retroactively legalized the president’s military actions thus far into his presidency, including his suspension of habeas corpus. Congress showed further support of Lincoln’s decision when it passed the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act in March of 1863. Congress took action to eliminate doubt about the legality of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus (Neely 1991, 68). Senator Lyman Trumbull drafted the bill, and Lincoln signed it into law on March 3, 1863. It read that, "during the present rebellion, the President of the United States, whenever, in his judgment, the public safety may require it, is authorized to suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in any case throughout the United States, or any part thereof" (Halbert 1958, 103). The act also established procedures that had to be followed whenever the writ was suspended (McGinty 2011, 122). The secretary of state and the secretary of war had to give lists to all federal judges of all of the prisoners detained

without habeas corpus and also that prisoners were to be held without habeas corpus within a specific timeline, not indefinitely, and they would be set free if their charges were not addressed within the timeline (McGinty 2011).

Ultimately, an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 individuals were detained without a prompt trial due to this suspension (Greenberg 2011). However it is not quite clear whether these detentions helped the Union in the war or successfully removed threats to public safety as Lincoln intended it to. For some, this decision represents a clear violation of personal civil liberties, but others see Lincoln's decision as a military emergency that he had to make within a unique situation. There were plenty of individuals that denounced Lincoln as a dictator and a tyrant and said that he was usurping his presidential power. However Halbert believes that those were unfounded accusations as he writes, "Lincoln always looked to giving up rather than seeking power. As early as 1862, he issued an order through the War Department in which he noted that conditions had improved, and stated that he desired a return to normal procedures. At that time he directed that all political or state prisoners held by the military be released on their subscribing to a parole by which they agreed not to aid or comfort the enemy" (1958, 105). Lincoln lifted his suspension of habeas corpus in February of 1862, although he would ultimately suspend it again in September of 1863 following the passage of the Habeas Corpus Act in March of 1863. As controversial as the decision was, Lincoln took his suspension of the writ of habeas corpus very seriously, relating his feelings by saying that, "I fear you do not fully comprehend the danger of abridging the *liberties* of the people. Nothing but the very sternest necessity can ever justify it. A government had better go to the very extreme of toleration, than to aught that could be construed into an interference with . . . the common rights of its citizens" (Goodwin 2005, 523).

Analysis Using the Character Framework

In looking at Lincoln's decision to suspend habeas corpus in the spring of 1861, can one identify specific elements of his character that influenced or affected this particular decision? Some regard this decision as successful and others regard it as a failure, so if this framework could offer reasoning as to why Lincoln made the decision he did, perhaps it can also tell us whether, based upon the framework, Lincoln's behavior led to a successful or unsuccessful decision. In looking first at the character element of ambition, which involves the motivational element that a president will use in pursuit of their goals, including enacting transformational policy and demonstrating self-initiative and inner drive, it appears that ambition did play a small role in Lincoln's decision. The suspension of habeas corpus was an extremely transformational military policy, and while Lincoln didn't seem to make the decision solely for his own personal legacy, he certainly demonstrated self-initiative in deciding to suspend it. Lincoln did feel that his legacy was tied to the war, as he would be remembered in history for whether he saved the Union or not, so that is an underlying factor within most of his military decisions. In this situation, he felt that he had to take initiative quickly and because Congress was not yet in session, he had to act on his own.

Concerning Lincoln's integrity, I believe that this character element played a large role in the decision. Integrity deals with one's ability to stick to their values and ideals when making decisions, especially putting their convictions to the ultimate test of loss. Lincoln's integrity was demonstrated through his address to the special session of Congress when he explained his reasoning of why he believed he, as the president, had the right to suspend habeas corpus and also why he ignored Chief Justice Taney's decision. McGinty writes that, "Lincoln was a man of strong convictions and even stronger instincts. Endowed with a rigorously logical mind and keen

powers of analysis and judgment, he was convinced that Taney's decisions in *Dred Scott* and *Ex parte Merryman* were both egregiously wrong, and he was determined to do what he could to see to it that they ultimately did not prevail" (McGinty 2011, 3). Lincoln convinced himself, and also convinced Congress, that his decision was not in violation of the Constitution and he stuck to these beliefs despite criticism from others. Halbert writes that, "Two things are abundantly clear from the record. The first is that Lincoln honestly and sincerely believed that he had the right to do what he did . . . The second thing to be noted is the fact that he exercised the power, which he believed that he had, reluctantly and sparingly" (1958, 105). Lincoln's decision to suspend habeas corpus in April of 1861 could have led to more violent riots in Baltimore, attacks on Washington or on Union troops attempting to get to Washington. It also could have led to the secession of Maryland, which would have been extremely detrimental to the Union. Halbert emphasizes that during this time, Maryland, as a state, was volatile and many feared that it would secede, including Lincoln, but despite Lincoln's decision, Maryland never left the Union and the capital was never attacked (1958, 98). Lincoln made the decision to suspend habeas corpus knowing that it was controversial and possibly detrimental to the Union, but he believed that he had to do everything in his power to faithfully execute the laws and protect the public. It was a risk that he had to take, as he expressed in his address to Congress that he felt that he was justified in violating one law in order to save the Union.

Next I turn to relatedness, which is the way in which a president treats his staff and advisers and how he interacts with them in meaningful ways. This particular situation happened just when Lincoln had been inaugurated, and, because of this, I believe that Lincoln more actively sought out advice from his cabinet and other advisers and he was able to have more meaningful dialogue with them. In making the decision to suspend habeas corpus, Lincoln

solicited the advice of his cabinet members and he spoke to Attorney General Bates, who directed him to individuals that would help him look into legal issues concerning the suspension. The president also conferred with men outside the government whose opinions he respected, such as Reverdy Johnson, who was a prominent Baltimore lawyer (McGinty 2011, 83). After listening to Johnson and others within his cabinet, and also consulting with General Scott on the military necessities he faced, Lincoln made his decision. As Lincoln's biographer James G. Randall later wrote, "few measures of the Lincoln administration were adopted with more reluctance than this suspension of the citizen's safeguard against arbitrary arrest" (McGinty 2011, 84). Despite this reluctance, Lincoln sought out the opinions and advice of many people both within and outside of his cabinet and he clearly took into account their different opinions in making his final decision.

Lincoln's emotional intelligence also seemed to be evident within this decision. Lincoln was inaugurated in early March of 1861 and from the minute that he took his presidential oath, he was plunged into making high-pressure decisions in an attempt to keep the Union from further falling apart. Dealing with the issue of Maryland was not his only problem, as he was constantly conferring with his cabinet and advisers, welcoming state officials to the White House, transforming and improving the Union army, and dealing with other border states that were on the verge of secession (McGinty 2011). Anyone in Lincoln's position would experience a certain amount of stress and pressure, but despite the difficult circumstances that shaped Lincoln's early months of his presidency, he was able to separate his personal feelings or personal hardships from the way that he did his job.

Turning to good judgment, which includes a president's ability to match solutions to circumstances and also how they identify problems and devise appropriate solutions, it is

arguable whether Lincoln employed good judgment. Lincoln felt that he had to make a decision that would be controversial, but he clearly identified the problem that if he allowed the riots in Baltimore to continue, the capital would continue to be threatened and Union troops would continue to be in danger. While he was able to clearly identify this problem, one could argue that his solution to suspend habeas corpus was not the right solution. There were individuals that thought that Lincoln's actions were not legal and that he did not have the authority to suspend habeas corpus. Halbert writes that, "Admittedly, some of the things that happened during the suspension of the writ shock our peace time feelings concerning civil liberties, but how much better it was that Lincoln took the course that he did, rather than to follow the pattern set by some of our modern day governments in dealing with political opponents" (1958, 107). However, one can ask the question what other choices did Lincoln have and did he truly have a viable alternative? He felt it necessary that there be troops within the capital and if he didn't make the decision that he did, then attacks on Union soldiers could have continued and there could have been attacks on a defenseless Washington.

Finally I will look at the element of political leadership, which involves a president's ability to mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate public opinion. The best example demonstrating Lincoln's political leadership is Lincoln's address to the special session of Congress on July 4th. While he gave his message directly to Congress, Lincoln knew that the address also gave him a public platform in which to explain his decisions to the rest of the country (McGinty 2011). Despite this opportunity, opinions regarding Lincoln's decision were mostly divided by political party; with Republicans largely supporting his decision and Democrats disapproving of it. He certainly was able to demonstrate strong charisma in his explanation of his actions, both to Congress and to the public. His decision proved to be polarizing despite his clearly developed

rationale, however that isn't surprising within the context of a war and he did make an effective and widely accepted attempt to defend his actions.

From this analysis of the character framework concerning Lincoln's decision to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, it seems that Lincoln's character offers an explanation for how this decision can be understood as successful. Lincoln's integrity and relatedness seemed to be the most evident factors within this decision, however one could argue that he either demonstrated good judgment or that he failed in this areas. I believe that he did demonstrate good judgment in that he was able to recognize that problem that he faced and he felt that he had no other alternative solution than to suspend habeas corpus. Regarding his political leadership, I believe that it isn't very significant within the decision. Lincoln was largely able to mobilize public opinion through his address to Congress and even though there was not unanimous support or agreement, this element did not strongly affect the outcome of the decision.

Analysis Using the Strategic Action Framework

Turning to the strategic action framework, it will be important to analyze whether this framework can help us to understand whether this decision can be viewed as a success or as a failure. First looking at vantage points, which are the way that a president uses the powers that are built into the Constitution, it is clear that Lincoln understood and fully utilized the powers that were within the Constitution. Lincoln, while reluctant at first to suspend habeas corpus, understood his role as executive authority and commander in chief, and he believed that this gave him the power to make emergency military decisions in order to suppress the rebellion. It seems that Lincoln became more convinced of this role as he gathered information and sought the advice of others around. He was able to convince Congress that he had acted faithfully to the Constitution, but through his decision-making process, he also convinced himself of his decision.

Later in his presidency when asked whether he truly thought he had the power to suspend habeas corpus, he stated that, “By necessary implication, when rebellion or invasion comes, the decision is to be made, from time to time; and I think the man whom, for the time, the people have, under the constitution, made the commander-in-chief of their Army and Navy, is the man who holds the power” (Ducholm 2008, 52). Thus, I believe that Lincoln clearly demonstrated an understanding of his vantage points and used them to his advantage.

Next concerning an individual’s sense of power, which is how necessary a president feels power is to achieving their aims, I believe, in this situation, that Lincoln did feel that he needed a significant amount of power in order to suspend habeas corpus. He sought out the advice of many others in making sure that he had this power, also making sure that he would have their support, and it seems that he recognized that he needed to have power in order to achieve his aims of suppressing the rebellion. From this decision, and with the approval of Congress, Lincoln was able to amass more power than any president has. Halbert writes that, “Congress, in the face of this claim, chose to do nothing to assert the exclusive right, which some claimed for it, until Lincoln had exercised the right, which he claimed, unimpeded for almost two years. When Congress did act, it made no positive claim to an exclusive right, and in fact tendered to Lincoln more power than he had ever indicated he wished in connection with suspending the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus” (1958, 113). Congress did place limitations on the conditions wherein habeas corpus could be suspended, but their authorization still placed a significant amount of power with the executive.

Next I turn to professional reputation, which is how others within the Washington community view how astute the president is in utilizing his powers. Lincoln’s decision was viewed positively for the most part, having the support of his cabinet and most Republicans. The

support of Congress is perhaps the best example of Lincoln's strong professional reputation, as the majority of congressmen felt that Lincoln was adept at using his powers, as they approved of his action to suspend the writ of habeas corpus. Attorney General Bates' opinion concerning Lincoln's decision also is an example of strong professional reputation, as Bates, while apprehensive to disagree with Taney, supported Lincoln and his decision, arguing that the president is authorized to suspend the writ because he is responsible for the preservation of the public safety and that the power of suspension flows from the president's power to make warrantless arrests (Dueholm 2008, 50). Not all agreed with the legality of Lincoln's decision, such as Senator John Sherman from Ohio, but the majority of the Washington community, save for a sector of Democrats, respected the way that Lincoln made his decision. Looking at public prestige, which is how favorable the Washington community believes the public is of a president's decision, it seems that this element was not evident within this decision. With the support of Congress and others within the Washington community, it seems that public opinion was not critical within the situation.

Finally looking at political power, which is a president's ability to demonstrate control and authority when dealing with decision-making and whether they are able to persuade others around them using the bargaining advantages they have. In this particular situation, I believe that Lincoln definitely demonstrated control and authority dealing with the situation to suspend habeas corpus, however I don't think that he necessarily had to persuade or convince others of what he was doing. There is some evidence that shows that Lincoln was more so following the advice of his cabinet and advisers, but ultimately he himself recognized the advice that was given to him and, as a leader, made the ultimate decision to suspend habeas corpus. In Lincoln's conversations with his cabinet and close advisers, he actually seemed to be persuaded by others

to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, as evidenced by Secretary of State Seward's comment that he ultimately persuaded Lincoln to finally make the decision. With the demonstration of the other elements of vantage points, individual sense of power, and professional reputation, I believe that there is enough evidence to conclude that Lincoln's behavior is mostly compatible with the strategic action framework and that it can help to explain how Lincoln's decision can be understood as successful.

Conclusion

From the analysis of these two frameworks, it seems that both of them seem to suggest that, based upon Lincoln's character and use of strategic resources, that his decision was a success. The consensus among most individuals within Washington was that while Lincoln's decision may have been a violation of civil liberties, he did what he thought he had to do not having the ability to go to Congress. Also his intentions were focused upon protecting the public. Lincoln's later decision in September of 1863 to re-suspend habeas corpus may be viewed much more harshly, however his decision in the spring of 1861 was decided out of military necessity and Congress supported and granted Lincoln that power. I believe that the character framework offers important insights concerning Lincoln's integrity and his judgment and that the strategic action framework demonstrates Lincoln's ability to understand his role as executive through his vantage points and his individual sense of power, thus I conclude that both frameworks help us to understand this decision in useful ways.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

One of the central questions that arose when considering these three cases, is what constitutes a successful or unsuccessful decision? The question of what is a successful decision is largely a subjective one, but I believe that, while there will almost always be arguments that can regard the same decision as both successful or unsuccessful, there is usually a consensus reached by the majority of scholars and historians about a decision's outcome. The way that I have defined success within my research is based upon how a particular decision achieved a president's, i.e. Lincoln's, larger aims and whether it was able to positively impact a certain situation, with my research focusing on the situation of the Civil War.

Concerning these cases, an interesting factor to note is that the discussion of the success or failure of these decisions would be very different if the Union had lost the war. Abraham Lincoln is revered by the large majority of scholars as one of our greatest presidents, but it is likely that he would not be viewed in this way if the Union Army had been defeated. Also there could have been many different outcomes from the decisions that have just been discussed. What if the majority of slaves freed from the Emancipation Proclamation had decided to fight for the Confederacy or if the freed slaves had revolted against both sides, Union and Confederate? What if Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus had ultimately led to Maryland seceding from the Union? Of course it is easy to ask these "what if" questions looking retroactively at history, but it is important to acknowledge that Lincoln's success can largely be attributed to the fact that he achieved his larger aim of saving the Union and winning the war.

In looking at my conclusions of each of the three cases, first, with Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation I concluded that the character theoretical framework better captures the essence of Lincoln's decision, especially because the decision was largely conceived

of and developed by Lincoln alone. The presence of Lincoln's ambition and his integrity were important factors that positively affected his political leadership and judgment, and I believe that the presence of these factors within Lincoln's character allow for a plausible explanation of the decision's success. Lincoln demonstrated strong ambition in that he had a strong sense of inner drive and self-initiative and he enacted truly transformational policy in issuing the Emancipation and also demonstrated strong integrity by his willingness to take large political risks. Regarding the strategic action framework, which is based upon persuasion and strategic bargaining with others, because the decision to issue the proclamation was so solitary, this framework was unable to provide a useful theoretical explanation.

Second, regarding Lincoln's mismanagement of General McClellan, I believe that both of the theoretical frameworks can offer credible explanations for why Lincoln's decisions concerning General McClellan can be understood as failures. The lack of relatedness and good judgment within Lincoln's character can be identified as factors that led to the failed decision. Lincoln strongly exerted time and effort in trying to relate to McClellan, and his desire to be able to relate with McClellan caused a lack of relatedness with the rest of his cabinet and advisers. Lincoln's also demonstrated poor judgment in that he deferred numerous times to the judgment of General McClellan, despite his own concerns about McClellan's military actions (or inactions). Within the strategic action framework, Lincoln's failure to use his vantage points well and his resulting poor professional reputation led to a lack of political power. Lincoln's failure to use his vantage points as commander in chief resulted in McClellan defying numerous military orders from Lincoln, which in turn weakened his professional reputation among his cabinet and the Washington community. Lincoln fails to act in the ways that both of these frameworks stipulate are necessary for a successful decision. The use of the two frameworks offer

complementary explanations, as I concluded that the strategic action framework is more useful in explaining why the decision was a failure, and the character framework better explains why Lincoln individually made the decisions that he did.

The third case, Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, at first I believed was a mixed decision, one that could be equally regarded as both a failure and as a success, however after analyzing the case more clearly, I think the decision was largely a success. The character framework offers important insights into the presence of the factors of integrity and good judgment, as Lincoln strongly stuck to his own personal values, despite the potential large risks, regarding his decision to suspend habeas corpus. He also demonstrated good judgment in that he clearly identified the problem he faced for what it was and he decided upon a course of action that he thought would be the most appropriate given the situation. The strategic action framework shows Lincoln's use of his vantage points and his individual sense of power. Lincoln recognized and understood his authority as commander in chief in that he had the ability and the duty to make military decisions in emergency situations. The use of his vantage points influenced his individual sense of power in that Lincoln identified and verified his ability to assert a greater amount of power in an emergency situation at a time when Congress was not in session.

In my initial development of the two theoretical frameworks, the first largely based upon work by Stanley Renshon and the second based upon the work of Richard Neustadt, I was skeptical about the usefulness of solely employing the character framework to explain presidential decision-making, which is why I developed the strategic action framework as a comparative way of examining presidential decisions. The two theoretical frameworks are presented as different ways in which to analyze and understand a decision, but upon employing

them in the use of looking at the three cases, I found that they actually contain some similarities. The persuasive ability that is central to the strategic action framework turned out to be very similar to the factor of political leadership within the character framework. Political leadership entails the ability to mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate the public and much of those tasks entail some level of persuasion. Also political power within the strategic action framework ended up being largely similar to the combined factors of political leadership and good judgment. Political leadership, the ability to mobilize, orchestrate, and consolidate public opinion, and good judgment, involving risk assessment and a clear ability to identify problems, when occurring together, resembled what political power is within the strategic action framework, which is the demonstration of control and authority in dealing with each specific decision and an ability to persuade those around them. In terms of the worth of using each of the models, I believe that my analysis demonstrates the value of the models in understanding the success or failure of presidential decision-making. The models were able to provide plausible explanations for why decisions were successful or unsuccessful, as when Lincoln acted accordingly to the models his decisions were largely successful and when he did not act in ways that were outlined by the models his decisions were largely unsuccessful. I believe that these frameworks can also be valuable for looking at presidential decision-making in crisis situations. Lincoln made all of the three decisions within the crisis of the Civil War and the war certainly put added challenges and a significant amount of pressure on Lincoln when making decisions.

After analyzing the three separate cases, there are factors within each of the individual frameworks that I believe to have played a larger role in these three decisions. Within the character framework, the factors of integrity and relatedness seemed to be crucial factors that had a substantial effect on good judgment. Ambition and emotional intelligence were not irrelevant

factors, but they seemed to be factors that were underlying each of the decisions simply based upon the situation in which Lincoln was making decisions. Historical legacy, one of the components within ambition, was a significant factor that impacted Lincoln's decision-making, as in each of the decisions there was the question of would he be remembered as the Union's savior or the man that destroyed the Union? Emotional intelligence was also a factor that was a recurring factor in each decision, but didn't significantly impact whether a decision was successful or unsuccessful.

Regarding the strategic action framework, vantage points and professional reputation were factors that appeared to more significantly affect Lincoln's decision-making. When Lincoln more successfully used his vantage points and had a strong professional reputation, Lincoln had more political power, which led to the success of his decisions. The other factors of individual sense of power and public prestige are not irrelevant, but within the decisions that were examined, they did not have as much of an effect.

My research does not come without limitations however. One of the limitations that can be identified is my choice of looking at Lincoln. The unique situation of the Civil War allowed Lincoln the opportunity to redefine his powers and take action in a way that no president had done, but that also means that there is no other president that had to make decisions that Lincoln's can be compared to. A second limitation was the sheer volume of information that has been published about Lincoln. There are certainly other historical biographies and scholarly work that could have been employed; however in order to stay consistent, I tried to refer to several of the most well-known and cited Lincoln biographies and sources.

In conclusion, I believe that my research has provided two valuable frameworks in which to analyze presidential decision-making. While the frameworks cannot predict the success or

failure of decisions, they provide a way in which to better understand the outcomes of decisions, especially when looking at decisions made within crisis situations. Lincoln, as both a president and an individual, provided an extremely unique and fascinating case in which to further analyze. Future research utilizing these models can be employed in examining key decisions of additional presidents in order to better test the applicability of the two frameworks. Can these frameworks be useful when presidents are not making decisions within crisis situations? Will these frameworks be able to better explain certain decisions over others? Would one find different results examining the decisions of additional presidents? All of these questions are future research opportunities. From my individual research, I have discovered that the amount of work that has been published about Lincoln is a true testament to the fascination with which his life and his presidency deserves. While my research may only be a small contribution to the field of study of Lincoln and his presidency, I am humbled by the opportunity to have studied and conducted research on an individual that is as revered as Abraham Lincoln is.

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