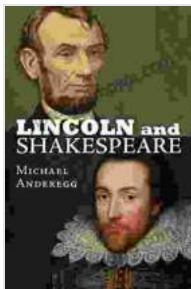


# Lincoln and Shakespeare: A Journey through History and Imagination

In the annals of history and literature, two towering figures stand out as beacons of their respective realms: Abraham Lincoln, the revered president who guided a nation through its darkest hour, and William Shakespeare, the unparalleled literary genius whose words have transcended time and culture. In her captivating book, "Lincoln and Shakespeare: A Journey through History and Imagination," author Sonia Vagliano Eloy delves into the extraordinary connection between these two icons, revealing the profound impact Shakespeare's work had on Lincoln's life and presidency.



## Lincoln and Shakespeare by Sonia Vagliano Eloy

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 5637 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 224 pages  
X-Ray for textbooks : Enabled



Through meticulous research and insightful analysis, Eloy unveils a tapestry of shared experiences, beliefs, and literary affinities that entwined Lincoln and Shakespeare. Lincoln, a man of humble beginnings, found solace and inspiration in Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. Shakespeare's words resonated deeply with Lincoln's own experiences, offering him

solace during times of adversity and giving voice to his deepest aspirations. In turn, Lincoln's reverence for Shakespeare influenced his speeches, writings, and political decisions, weaving a rich tapestry where history and literature intersected.

Eloy's book is not merely a literary exploration; it is a historical investigation that sheds new light on Lincoln's character and leadership. By examining his speeches, writings, and personal letters, Eloy demonstrates how Shakespeare's influence extended far beyond the realm of personal enjoyment. Lincoln's understanding of human nature, his ability to articulate complex ideas, and his unwavering belief in the power of words can all be traced, in part, to his profound connection with Shakespeare's work.

### **The Influence of Shakespeare's Plays**

Among the many Shakespearean plays that captivated Lincoln, "Macbeth" held a particular significance. Lincoln was drawn to the play's exploration of ambition, guilt, and the corrosive nature of unchecked power. In Macbeth's tragic downfall, Lincoln saw a cautionary tale for leaders, a reminder of the importance of integrity and self-restraint. The echoes of "Macbeth" can be found throughout Lincoln's speeches, particularly in his warnings against the perils of tyranny and the need for a government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Another Shakespearean play that deeply resonated with Lincoln was "Julius Caesar." Lincoln's deep understanding of Roman history and his admiration for Caesar's leadership qualities are evident in his own speeches and writings. However, Lincoln also perceived the dangers inherent in unchecked ambition, as depicted in Caesar's tragic end. His famous "House Divided" speech, delivered in 1858, drew parallels between

the United States and the Roman Republic, warning that a nation divided against itself could not stand.

Beyond specific plays, Eloy argues that Shakespeare's overall body of work provided Lincoln with a framework for understanding the human condition. Shakespeare's characters, with their complex motivations and flaws, offered Lincoln a profound insight into the nature of humanity. This understanding, in turn, informed Lincoln's own speeches and writings, allowing him to connect with his audience on a deeply emotional level.

### **Shakespeare's Influence on Lincoln's Speeches**

Eloy's book meticulously examines the ways in which Shakespeare's influence permeated Lincoln's speeches and writings. Lincoln's language, rich in metaphor and imagery, often echoed Shakespeare's own turns of phrase. The famous Gettysburg Address, for example, contains echoes of Shakespeare's "Richard II," particularly in its use of the phrase "a new birth of freedom." Lincoln's speeches are also peppered with allusions to Shakespearean characters and themes, demonstrating his intimate knowledge of the playwright's work.

Beyond mere language, Eloy argues that Lincoln's understanding of rhetoric and the power of persuasion was deeply influenced by Shakespeare's plays. Lincoln's ability to craft speeches that both resonated emotionally and appealed to reason can be traced, in part, to his study of Shakespeare's techniques. The emotional depth and universal truths found in Shakespeare's work provided Lincoln with a reservoir of ideas and emotions that he could draw upon in his own speeches.

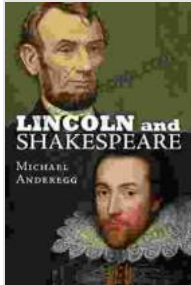
### **Lincoln's Legacy and the Continuing Influence of Shakespeare**

The legacy of Abraham Lincoln is forever intertwined with the influence of William Shakespeare. Lincoln's speeches, his leadership, and his unwavering commitment to the principles of democracy were all shaped, in part, by his deep admiration for Shakespeare's work. Eloy's book serves as a testament to the enduring power of literature and its ability to inspire and guide even the most influential figures in history.

The connection between Lincoln and Shakespeare extends far beyond the realm of historical anecdote. Shakespeare's plays continue to be performed and studied around the world, providing insights into the human condition that are as relevant today as they were in Shakespeare's own time. In the same way that Lincoln found solace and inspiration in Shakespeare's words, so too can readers today find meaning and understanding in the timeless works of the Bard.

Sonia Vagliano Eloy's "Lincoln and Shakespeare: A Journey through History and Imagination" is a captivating and insightful exploration of the extraordinary connection between two iconic figures. Through meticulous research and engaging analysis, Eloy unveils the profound influence of Shakespeare's work on Abraham Lincoln's life and presidency. The book is a testament to the enduring power of literature and its ability to inspire, guide, and shape even the most momentous events in human history.

As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, the lessons we can learn from Lincoln's leadership and Shakespeare's insights are more valuable than ever. By understanding the connection between these two towering figures, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the power of words, the importance of integrity, and the enduring relevance of our shared human experiences.



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