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Harold Holzer. *Lincoln Seen and Heard.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000. xi + 216 pp. $29.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-7006-1001-3.

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Nobody knows more about Abraham Lincoln's image than Harold Holzer. For some readers of this list that might not sound like such a stirring achievement, but for anyone seriously interested in politics, Holzer's work on Lincoln's image offers a series of striking insights into the historical uses of visual propaganda.

Holzer is a rare breed in these scholarly times – he is an amateur history buff who has earned the respect of academic professionals. Currently, he serves as a vice-president for communications at New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art. For many years, he was a top aide to New York Governor Mario M. Cuomo. Holzer has written numerous articles and delivered hundreds of speeches on Lincoln and Civil War-era iconography. He is probably best known for a book which he co-authored with historians Mark E. Neely, Jr. and Gabor S. Boritt, *The Lincoln Image: Abraham Lincoln and the Popular Print* (1984). In recent years, he has also edited several important collections of Lincoln documents, including *Lincoln on Democracy* (1990) with Mario Cuomo, *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1993), and *The Lincoln Mailbag* (1998).

Lincoln Seen and Heard brings together ten of Holzer's most important essays and public papers from the last fifteen years. Some have been significantly revised and edited. All concern aspects of Lincoln's presidential career and image, from Confederate cartoons lampooning the "lean-sided Yankee" to descriptions of gifts received by the wartime executive. The heart of the book, however, comes in a series of opening essays that interpret lithographed prints of Lincoln as emancipator, commander-in-chief, and national martyr. There is no overriding theme to this collection, and it does not make any revolutionary claims, but it is almost impossible to put down this book without learning at least something new about a man who has otherwise become the most familiar subject in American history. That alone is an accomplishment worth marveling over.

For students of politics, however, the essays also suggest some important lessons about image-making. Holzer demonstrates how the process of mid-nineteenth-century engraved prints and lithographs created indelible images – akin to modern-day "photo-ops" – that defined political leaders of the era, both positively and negatively, in remarkably durable fashion. He quotes the most famous printmakers of the age, Currier and Ives, informing their clients, "Pictures have become a necessity" (p. 73). Substitute "TV ads" for "Pictures" and the line could be uttered today by any political consultant. Yet while the power of visual images in shaping modern reputations is widely accepted, few students of nineteenth-century political culture ever pull back from the texts of the major orations long enough to recognize that a comparable dynamic existed back then as well. Both political historians and political scientists can benefit from the rich context that Holzer's work provides.

Without diminishing Holzer's astute commentary, however, a review of this work cannot fail to acknowledge that the numerous illustrations are surely the highlight of the reading experience. There are more than fifty-five reproductions here, some extremely rare and not accessible to most readers, who will be delighted and educated by them. For instance, there are several provocative cartoons of Lincoln from southern magazines and newspapers. One crude drawing from the *Southern Illustrated News*, entitled "Master Lincoln Gets a New Toy," shows the president as an ugly child playing with a series of forlorn looking puppets named after failed Union generals (Fig. 6.3, p. 139). On the other hand, Lincoln's counterpart is feature in a stunning illustration that contains the caption, "Jeff. Davis going to War" as it sits right side up (Fig. 4.6, p. 88). However, turned upside down, the illustration reveals a new caption, "Jeff. Returning from War an [Ass]," and what was once a profile of the Confederate president now resembles the head of a jackass. All of the political prints are well selected, emphasizing

less familiar, but still relevant, choices. Out of many fine examples, there is one particularly interesting lithograph for those who study the electoral process. This cartoon from the 1860 election attacks one of Lincoln's alleged "flip-flops," quoting apparently contradictory sentiments from his stump speeches in 1858 and 1860 (Fig. 5.2, p. 110).

This collection deserves an audience from political scientists and professionals who understand the importance of putting their own work into historical context.

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