

36. Anthony, 1990 and 1991; Rosebush, 1987; Rosenthal, 1994; Winfield, 1994.
37. Rosenthal, 1994; Troy, 1997.
38. Ibid.
39. A. Borrelli and J. M. Martin, *The Other Elites*, 1997.
40. See Troy, 1997.
41. See Rosenthal, 1994.
42. See Greer, 1995.
43. Weisberger, 1993.
44. Abigail Adams regularly provided political advice to her husband. In fact, he solicited it, recognizing and valuing her opinion. She appears to have had good political instincts with the exception of her support of the Alien and Sedition Acts and her bickering with critics.
45. Quote appears in M. Truman, 1996.
46. See Gutin, 1989.
47. See Troy, 1997.
48. See Greer, 1995, and Troy, 1997.
49. The record is mixed, but it appears that Margaret Taylor did not smoke a pipe. Some scholars feel that she was too ill to have smoked. For a further discussion of the matter, see H. Holman, *Zachary Taylor*, 1966; Gould, 1996; M. O. Whitton, *First First Ladies*, 1948.
50. For instance, the *Mobile Press*, in an article titled "The White House Tea," complained that these acts "offered to the south and to the nation an arrogant insult." The *Commercial Appeal* (a Memphis-based newspaper) suggested on June 17, 1929, that the nation should "drop the 'White' from the White House." The *Birmingham Age-Herald* criticized First Lady Hoover on June 14, 1929, in an article titled "What Do They Say?" Relatedly, the Georgia House of Representatives passed a resolution expressing "regret over recent occurrences in the official and social life of the national capitol, which have a tendency to revive and intensify racial discord." See Gutin, 1989, for a further discussion of these racially based attacks. A. M. Black provides a nice discussion of Eleanor Roosevelt's response to the question of racism in the South in her article "Championing and Champion," 1990.
51. "The Last Word on First Ladies," 1992.
52. J. E. Fields, "Worthy Partner," 1994.
53. Abigail's complaints about life in the White House are discussed in C. W. Akers, *Abigail Adams*, 1980; P. L. Leven, *Abigail Adams*, 1987; L. E. Richards, *Abigail Adams*, 1928; and L. Withey, *Dearest Friend*, 1981.
54. S. Mitchell, ed., *New Letters of Abigail Adams*, 1947.
55. H. L. Gates, "Hating Hillary," 1996; A. Mundy, "The Two Mrs. Clintons," 1996.
56. William Safire repeatedly attacked Hillary Clinton during the 1992 campaign and in 1993.
57. Ted Koppel devoted two shows of ABC's *Nightline* to Hillary Clinton in March 1993.
58. I conducted a questionnaire/interview with Rosalynn Carter. The information was provided by Deanna Congileo, associate director of public information at the Carter Center on February 25, 1997.

## 3

*History of the First Lady*

*The president's spouse has the potential to become an important component of the contemporary presidency.*

—George Edwards and Stephen J. Wayne,  
*Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making*

The history of the first ladyship provides a good starting point by which begin formulating theories and models to guide the scholarly study of office. Unfortunately, little is known about the historical development of the office of first lady and the roles and responsibilities of early first ladies. Scholarly study of the subject typically commences with Eleanor Roosevelt (first lady from 1933 to 1945) or dates back only to around the start of the twentieth century. However, in order to understand the contemporary office fully, it is necessary to study all first ladies serving since the founding of the nation. Indeed, nineteenth- and even eighteenth-century first ladies precedents that shaped the early office, many of which are followed to the present day. Moreover, the development of the office of first lady as an institution of power and influence as well as an office responsible for social hosting and the advent of a presidential partnership in the White House predate women's suffrage, the rise of modern feminism, and the tenure of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

**Challenges to the Office**

One of the first themes that becomes apparent in a study of the history of the institution is the great challenges that the office poses for its occupants. As I discussed in Chapter 2, many spouses felt overwhelmed by the numerous demands of the first ladyship, the sudden and intense public attention

### An Office Under Siege

It is not surprising that the office of first lady has been and remains under attack. Such hostility comes from a variety of sources and institutions. The critiques pertain to almost anything the first lady does (or does not do), but many of the attacks appear to be related to the first lady having power and influence, or at least the perception of such. The paradox is that the public seems to admire strong and visible first ladies, yet when the first lady exercises or even gives the appearance of exercising real power, she is attacked for it. This is the case even when such power arises from actions and roles demanded by the public or when she is acting in support or defense of the president, something spouses are otherwise supposed to do.

Every first lady seems to have been subjected to criticism. It comes with the "job." Even the strong and intelligent **Abigail Adams was criticized for (what else but) being strong and intelligent. She was derogatorily called "Madame President" and "Her Majesty" by powerful enemies of her husband, such as Albert Gallatin.**<sup>43</sup> Abigail was thought to be too political, and politics was not something in which a lady of the times was supposed to participate. Abigail was an exception for her times; she often fought back against her critics and her husband's political enemies. She was even critical of venerable figures like Gallatin and Thomas Jefferson. So upset was the first lady with the attacks from the press that they drove her to support censoring the press and argue in favor of the Alien and Sedition Acts (which were passed in 1798), one of the rare lapses in political judgment for the otherwise intelligent and astute Mrs. Adams.<sup>44</sup>

More recently, **Nancy Reagan was vilified as the "Dragon Lady" and "Queen Nancy."** In part such criticism was due to the first lady's extravagant, high-society lifestyle, something that seemed odd juxtaposed with the austere cuts in social programs advocated by her husband. But the attacks were also **a result of the perception that she wielded real political power in the Reagan administration.** Interestingly, the attacks came not just from Democrats and Ronald Reagan's opponents but were echoed by Republicans and Reagan insiders concerned about the first lady's influence over the president. Of course, the same ugly and personal epithets were not hurled at the president's most influential advisers, Donald Regan, Michael Deaver, Cap Weinberger, and George Shultz. Similarly, **Sarah Polk, who served back in the 1840s, was accused of "ruling" her husband and influencing his political decisions.** Even James Polk's vice president, George Dallas, complained that "she is certainly mistress of herself and I suspect of somebody else also."<sup>45</sup> Sarah Polk's obvious interest in politics and role as adviser to her husband even landed her in hot water with women. Female guests at the Polk White House were often put off when the first lady failed

to remain with the ladies after dinner, preferring instead to adjourn with men to discuss politics.

Even today the first lady is forced to juggle the roles of traditional and modern woman, seeking an elusive balance between the two. The lady is caught between the unease many Americans have with women's power and the reality of contemporary society whereby women work in households, and lead corporations. As first lady scholar Myra Gutin states: "The first lady treads a narrow line," and even the social causes she is expected to champion had better be safe, conservative, and "feminine nature."<sup>46</sup> Not only do active, strong first ladies run the risk of breaching some narrow parameter of what constitutes the proper role for spouses of a president. It is more likely that an unpopular first lady will be a political liability to the president than that an immensely popular first lady will benefit the president. Some historians feel that the perception of a strong, successful first lady could negatively affect public opinion toward the president; such a spouse leads the public to assume that the president is "overpecked," does not "wear the pants," or is weak.<sup>47</sup> Ronald Reagan, for example, was perceived as being too dependent on his wife. Much of this attitude stemmed from Nancy Reagan's perceived overprotective and demeaning manner. Regardless of how they approach the first ladyship, presidential spouses must also be careful not to "threaten, eclipse, or overwhelm" the president.<sup>48</sup> First ladies must be concerned with their appearance, style of dress, social events, and so on, all the while balancing the catch-22 of not being too overwhelming or too underwhelming.

The problem is that the variety and scope of criticism seem limitless. Moreover, the range of faultfinding covers the entire realm of options for actions, leaving first ladies to face blame no matter what they do or do not do. For instance, first ladies have been attacked for being too uppity, yet at the same time too bland. They have been criticized as too active and too passive. In recent years, **Barbara Bush was seen as too old-fashioned and frumpy; Nancy Reagan, too powerful; Rosalynn Carter, too tough; Elizabeth Ford, too outspoken; Pat Nixon, too passive; and Hillary Clinton, too active.** Whereas Nancy Reagan, Mary Lincoln, and Elizabeth Monroe were criticized for their excessive tastes in clothing, Edith Roosevelt and Rosalynn Carter were judged harshly for just the opposite. Even the popular Dolley Madison, who was widely admired for her impressive social hosting, was at the same time criticized for her impressive entertaining style. Julia Tyler was thought to be too young (she was in her early thirties), and Martha Washington, too old (she was in her late fifties). Mrs. Washington was even criticized for the number of horses pulling her carriage and the type of food she served at official and unofficial events. Many accu-

## MARY TODD LINCOLN AND CLAIRVOYANCE

During the 1850's there was a spiritualist movement in the United States, and cities like New York and Boston had hundreds of mediums who allegedly were putting the living in touch with the dead. Mary Todd probably became interested in the subject during the 1850's in Springfield when prophets appeared in the Midwest. News from Europe that Empress Eugenie and Queen Victoria practiced spiritualism probably helped confirm Mary's interest.



The photograph of Mary is from the National Life Foundation.



After Willie's death in the White House in 1862, Mary often visited the home of the Lauries who were well-known Georgetown mediums. Here a clairvoyant would darken the parlor and arrange the patrons in a circle with their hands on the table. The goal was to attain communication with invisible beings; in Mary's case, it was Eddie and Willie, her two dead sons.

There were possibly as many as eight seances held in the White House itself. Abraham accepted gifts and read books and letters from mediums, but he never became a believer. According to *Lincoln Day By Day* edited by Earl Schenck Miers, the President "allegedly attended a spiritualist seance in the White House" on April 23, 1863. Mary was the real spiritualist in the family. In October, 1863, Mary said to her half sister (Emilie Todd Helm):

*"Willie lives. He comes to me every night and stands at the foot of the bed with the same sweet adorable smile he always has had. He does not always come alone. Little Eddie is sometimes with him, and twice he has come with our brother, Alex."\**

After her husband's assassination, Mary was visited in the White House by several spiritualists. They attempted to console the grieving widow. Years later, while living in Chicago, Mary went to seances under an assumed name. She liked to 'test' the mediums' skills. Once, on a trip to Boston, she attended a seance using the name "Mrs. Tundall" to avoid recognition. Abraham 'appeared' before her during the seance. She then visited William Mumler's studio. Mumler was a spirit photographer. He produced a photograph of Mary with Abraham superimposed in the background with his hands on her shoulders. (The print is from the Lloyd Ostendorf collection). This photograph gave Mary great comfort that Abraham was hovering over her.

Subsequent to her White House years the former first lady really appreciated her spiritualistic friends. She felt they never abandoned her as so many other people had done after the assassination.

For added information on Mary Todd's Lincoln's spiritualism, see Jean H. Baker's 1987 biography entitled "Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography." Katherine Helm's "Mary, Wife of Lincoln" discusses Mary's vision of Willie, Eddie, and Alex. Additional evidence of Mary's interest in spiritualism was recently acquired by The Lincoln Museum in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. That institution purchased a book entitled *The Disowned* written by Sir Edward Bulwer and published in 1862. The book belonged to Mary (it's signed 'Mary Lincoln, 1864') and is a novel about spiritualism.



\*\*Mary's half brother, Lieutenant Alexander H. Todd, 23, had been killed while fighting for the Confederates at Baton Rouge. According to the Official Records of the War, he was mortally wounded in a friendly fire incident before dawn on August 5, 1862, and died 2 weeks later.

## Mary Todd Lincoln Research Site

### Mary Lincoln Biography



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This website has had:

## A Ghost in the White House??



White House Historical Association Photograph

### *THE LINCOLN BEDROOM*

THE ONLY ROOM IN THE EXECUTIVE MANSION DEDICATED TO A SINGLE PRESIDENT

"It was the one room in the White House with a link to the past. It gave me great comfort. I love the Lincoln Room the most, even though it isn't really Lincoln's bedroom. But it has his things in it. When you see that great bed, it looks like a cathedral. To touch something I knew he had touched was a real link with him. The kind of peace I felt in that room was what you feel when going into a church. I used to feel his strength. I'd sort of be talking with him."\*\*

Young Willie Lincoln (age 11) died in the White House in the bed now in the Lincoln Bedroom at about 5:00 P.M. on February 20, 1862. Both Theodore Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower claimed they felt the powerful presence of Abraham Lincoln in this room. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Sometimes when I worked at my desk late at night I'd get a feeling that someone was standing behind me. I'd have to turn around and look." Rumors were that Winston Churchill had a Lincoln sighting in the room. Amy Carter, during sleepovers with her friends, waited up at night for the ghost of Mr. Lincoln to appear. Once the girls tried to get in touch with him with a Ouija board to no avail. Ronald Reagan's dog would bark outside the room but never enter. Maureen Reagan said she saw mysterious apparitions there. Actor Richard Dreyfuss reported having scary dreams about a portrait of Mr. Lincoln that hangs in the room. "A high percentage of people who work here won't go in the Lincoln Bedroom," said President Clinton's

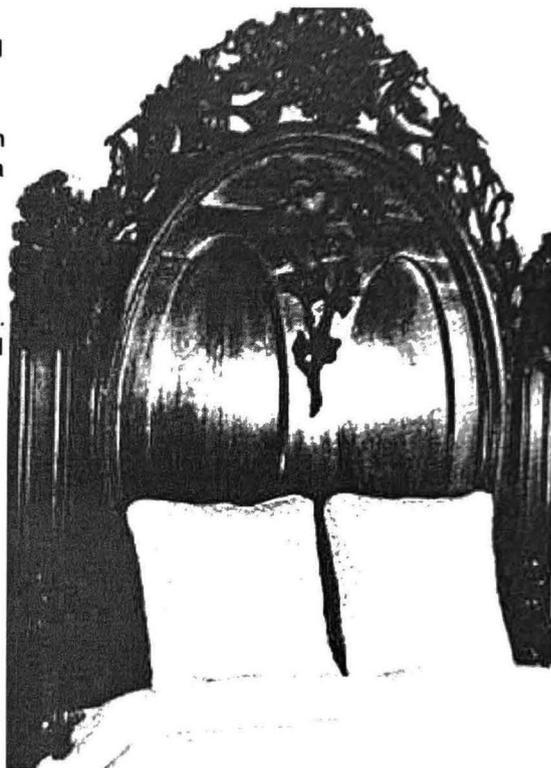
**White House social secretary, Capricia Marshall. White House maids and butlers have sworn they had seen Lincoln's ghost.**

The Lincoln Bedroom was in the news during Bill Clinton's term because of its use as a bedroom for White House guests. But it wasn't always used as a bedroom. When Abraham Lincoln was President, it was used as his personal office and Cabinet room (it was used in this manner by all Presidents between 1830 and 1902). During the Lincoln presidency, the walls were covered with Civil War maps. It had dark green wallpaper, and the carpeting was also dark green. Newspapers were stacked on the desk and tables along with large amounts of mail and requests from office seekers. Two large wicker wastebaskets were filled with debris. Mr. Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in this room on January 1, 1863.

In 1902 the room became a bedroom when all the second floor offices were moved to the West Wing during the Roosevelt renovation. It was named the Lincoln Bedroom in 1945 when President and Mrs. Truman moved in the bed and other furniture. The large bed, measuring 8 feet long by 6 feet wide, was purchased in 1861 by Mary Todd Lincoln as part of her refurbishing of the White House. (The photograph of the bed is from the Meserve-Kunhardt Collection). It was a part of a set of furniture she purchased for the Prince of Wales Room (besides the bed which had purple-and-gold satin curtains, the set included matching draperies, a marble-topped table, and 6 chairs). Several Presidents used the bed including Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Never used by Abraham Lincoln himself, it is made of carved rosewood. The original mattress was made of horsehair. Barbara Bush replaced the mattress, but guests still report it's lumpy.

Many of the Victorian pieces in the bedroom were placed there by the Trumans when the Brussels carpet and the Lincoln bed were installed in 1945. The chandelier, which was acquired in 1972, resembles the one hanging there when Lincoln was President. The sofa and matching chairs, a gift to the White House in 1954, are believed to have been there during Lincoln's presidency. One of the chairs in the room, upholstered in antique yellow-and-green Morris velvet, was sold after Lincoln's assassination but was returned to the White House as a gift in 1961. The rocking chair near the window is similar to the one Lincoln was sitting in when he was shot by John Wilkes Booth.

Along the west wall are four chairs used by Lincoln's Cabinet members. They are believed to have been purchased for the White House when James Polk was President. To the left of the fireplace is a desk that Lincoln used at the Soldiers' Home (where he often stayed to escape the heat of Washington's summers).





The Anderson Cottage at the Soldiers' Home (where the Lincolns often stayed)

On this desk is a copy of the Gettysburg Address that is signed, dated, and titled by Abraham Lincoln. This copy was originally given by Lincoln to Colonel Alexander Bliss.

To the left of the bed is a portrait of Andrew Jackson that was a favorite of Lincoln's. The portrait of Mary Todd Lincoln, hanging to the right of the bed, was given to the White House by Mrs. Robert Todd Lincoln. It was painted from photographs by Katherine Helm, daughter of Mary Todd's half-sister, Emily Todd Helm. To the right of the mantel is an engraving of Francis B. Carpenter's 1864 painting titled "First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation before Lincoln's Cabinet."

Hanging above the desk is an 1865 lithograph titled "Abraham Lincoln's Last Reception." It depicts Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln greeting guests, including Cabinet members, in the East Room. On the north wall hangs a portrait of Lincoln by Stephen Arnold Douglas Volk based on a bust his father (Leonard Volk) had done from real life. Other objects associated with Lincoln, including books he read, have also been placed about the room.

\*\* Mrs. John F. Kennedy



Thank you to Sarah Norton for creating the idea for this page. Sources used: "The White House: An Historic Guide" by the White House Historical Association in cooperation with The National Geographic Society; "How the White House Works" by George Sullivan; "Lincoln in American Memory" by Merrill D. Peterson; "The White House: Cornerstone of a Nation" by Judith St. George; "The White House" by Patricia Ryon Quiri; March 17th, 1997, issue of *People Weekly*. Although the bed was not actually used by President Lincoln, author Merrill D. Peterson reports on p. 324 of *Lincoln in American Memory*: "When President Truman told his aged mother, an unreconstructed Confederate, that she would sleep in Lincoln's bed when visiting him in the capital, she told him in no uncertain terms that she would sleep on the floor instead."

Abraham Lincoln's Research Site      Mary Todd Lincoln Research Site

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This website has had:

Peter David Gergen "Eyewitness to Power: Essence of Leadership  
Nixon to Clinton" Simon & Schuster NY 2000

Robert P. Watson "The Presidents' Wives: Reassessing the  
Office of FIRST LADY. (Lyons Pioneer Publishers, Inc Boulder,  
Colorado 2000)

Betty Ford outspokenness and open support of women's rights  
Daniel Patrick "Secrecy"  
Meynikan, Yale University Press, New Haven 1998

Turner, Stansfield "Caging the Genies: A Workable Solution  
for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Weapons (Westview  
Press Boulder, Co. 1999)

CIA Director Walter B. Smith and was REJECTED by him.

- a) Therefore it is misleading to say this REJECTED DRAFT represented the QUOTE "Director's opinion" on anything.
- b) And note the draft doesn't even have a DATE, it's undated, never approved.
- c) This document has been misused by numbers of UFOlogists to prove that the NSC was involved or had in turn approved the UFO directive, which was in fact NOT true.

22. Gersten article: Typo: Ft. Ritchie (not "Richie").