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8. The Lincoln-Douglas debates revisited: The evolution of public argument Introduction ; The rhetorical situation ; The Senatorial campaign ; The conspiracy argument ; The plot against the Whig party ; The plot to forge the platform ; The plot to extend slavery nationwide ; The plot to exploit patronage ; The plot to deny Kansas a referendum ; The legal argument ; What was the status of a Supreme Court decision? ; What did the Dred Scott decision really establish? ; Who owned the territories? ; What was the "tendency" of each candidate's position? ; The interrogatories

The historical argument

Sommario/riassunto

Especially during Barack Obama's first campaign for the presidency, commentators and Obama himself noted several similarities between him and Abraham Lincoln. These comparisons became the premises for arguments from historical analogy. Such arguments can have several purposes, including making a direct comparison, using the past as a new frame of reference for the present, and suggesting teleology. Each of these uses has pitfalls as well as promises. Obama, however, used analogies to make a fortiori arguments, indicating that if Lincoln could surmount greater obstacles, we should be able to su
