



## A. Lincoln: A Biography

By Ronald C. White Jr.

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In this important new biography, Ronald C. White, Jr. offers a fresh and fascinating definition of Lincoln as a man of integrity—what today’s commentators are calling “authenticity”—whose internal moral compass is the key to understanding his life. Through meticulous research, utilizing recently discovered Lincoln letters, legal papers, and photographs, White depicts Lincoln as a person of intellectual curiosity, comfortable with ambiguity, and capable of changing his mind. The reader is treated to an exploration of Lincoln’s compelling words, his changing ideas on slavery, the shaping of the modern role of Commander-in-Chief, and his surprising religious odyssey. *A. Lincoln*, so titled for the way Lincoln signed his name, sheds an innovative and profound light on our nation’s most beloved leader for a new generation of Americans.

“Ronald C. White’s *A. Lincoln* is the best biography of Lincoln since David Donald’s *Lincoln* (1995)... Amid all the books on Lincoln that will be published during the coming year, this one will stand out as one of the best.” —James M. McPherson, author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*, and winner of the Pulitzer Prize

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In this excellent biography, veteran historian White emphasizes that Lincoln was our most likable major president, lacking Washington's aloofness and the deviousness of FDR and Jefferson. Many young men from the frontier overcame the handicaps of poverty and minimal education, but, White says, Lincoln did better than most, becoming floor leader in the Illinois legislature by age 30 and a prosperous lawyer. Contrary to the common view that Lincoln was a dark-horse for the 1860 presidential nomination after a single, undistinguished term in the House of Representatives, White stresses that Lincoln was an experienced politician, popular throughout Illinois, and known to national leaders. Few Republicans thought they had chosen badly. The author makes good use of Lincoln's voluminous private papers and those of his contemporaries to paint a vivid picture of Lincoln's thoughts as he matured and then guided the nation through the four worst years of its existence. White knows his subject cold and writes lucid prose, so readers choosing this as their Lincoln bicentennial reading will not go wrong. Illus., maps, photos.

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Having already written two books on Abraham Lincoln, Ronald C. White, Jr., understands better than most the challenges in bringing a fresh perspective to the most scrutinized president in American history. With 16,000 books, and counting, on Lincoln (as well as several dozen more in the period before the bicentennial celebration of his birth), the ground that remains to be covered is disappearing before scholars' eyes. But White, who draws on his own thorough research of the recently available Lincoln Legal Papers and plenty of other new material, stakes his turf. His weighty, yet readable, tome compares favorably to the popular histories of Doris Kearns Goodwin (*Team of Rivals*) and David McCullough (*John Adams, Truman, The Great Bridge*), making *A. Lincoln* a fine and useful addition to the growing canon of Lincolniana. Copyright 2009 Bookmarks Publishing LLC

From [Booklist](#)

A scholar of Lincoln's rhetoric (*Lincoln's Greatest Speech*, 2002), White offers the full-bodied Lincoln biography, the most recent example of which was David Herbert Donald's highly praised *Lincoln* (1995). Donald's intent was to craft a definitive portrait of Lincoln's enigmatic personality, while White aims for a chronological narrative of Lincoln's public activity. White adheres to a factual tone rather than trying to figure Lincoln out à la Donald. This is an important need for readers seeking the arc of Lincoln's life (rather than an interpretation of it) and is one that White ably fulfills. Recounting Lincoln's beginnings, White informs readers about the importance of Lincoln's stepmother; the rapidity with which Lincoln, once emancipated from his father, gained political standing in Sangamon County, Illinois, in the 1830s; and the rise of his reputation through descriptions of numerous election campaigns that Lincoln conducted from his power base. Capped by his account of Lincoln's Civil War presidency, White's book provides a solid informational foundation. --Gilbert Taylor

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**Diana Sturgill:**

Now a day those who Living in the era wherever everything reachable by match the internet and the

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**Clarine Davidson:**

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**Stephen Stansbury:**

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