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# Lincoln's Quest for Union

*Charles B. Strozier*

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**Charles B. Strozier : Lincoln's Quest for Union** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lincoln's Quest for Union:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. BRILLIANT...one of the best Lincoln books!By LeaJacqueline23This is one of the most well-rounded, well researched books on Abraham Lincoln's "inner" self I have ever read. In fact I actually think it's the best. It goes beyond facile pop psychology and actually examines every important relationship in the great man's life beginning with his parents. Wife Mary gets a very long chapter of her own and I must say it's fascinating.Lincoln struggled with intimacy issues his entire life. Author Strozier very effectively writes of the often painful push/pull cycle of his personal relationships...how Lincoln struggled with the very real need for intimacy and love that characterizes all human beings, with an equally intense need for distance and freedom. Strozier even shows how a part of him actually NEEDED to be idealized in the lives of the people he chose to allow closeness with him...in order to maintain a certain distance from them at the same time he was engaging and loving them.And indeed, everyone in his circle of family and friends was somewhat in awe of him, even before his rise to prominence and greatness. But they were also frustrated at the ways he purposefully created distance in those relationships, by withdrawing. Sometimes quite literally disappearing for weeks and months from the family who adored him to pursue his career as a circuit lawyer and later as a politician. The explosive effect of his behavior on his complicated relationship with Mary Todd is analyzed very effectively and in great detail. The possible explanation and reasons Strozier gives for the couples' broken engagement and long separation-as well as what drew them to one another and kept them together-makes more sense to me than anything I have ever read yet. And I have more books on

Abraham and Mary Lincoln than I can count. I wish everyone who is truly interested in why Abraham Lincoln was who he was would pick up this book. I cannot recommend it highly enough. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very enjoyable. By mattoz Excellent, enjoyable book. Focuses mostly on psychology, but has lots of references if you want more historical detail. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The 16th American President on the therapist's couch. By The Straw Man This book is a wonder insight into the psyche of Abraham Lincoln. This book focuses on the history of Lincoln, not so much the history of his political terms as president, rather the history behind the morals and personality of the man himself. Charles Strozier does a wonderful job in piecing together the facts and fables in order to tell the tale of Lincoln. There are so many folk tales on Lincoln that it can be hard to figure out what really happened and what didn't. There are myriad sources used in order to give this book the depth needed to paint a lush illustration of such an interesting person. Abraham Lincoln is easily connected to the American Civil War. However in this book, not much of the war is really mentioned. Nor are detailed aspects of his political policies. The book traces the lifeline of Lincoln as child all the way to his death. Many psychological depictions are utilized in understanding the soul, mind, emotion and motivation behind the spirit of Abe Lincoln. I found it very interesting and satisfying to have such a blend of history and psychology, which is a wonderful way to do a case study on a person.

"Surpassingly eloquent." Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, New York Times "This is a remarkable book with extraordinary insights about the inner life of Abraham Lincoln. It will be read and studied for years to come, for Charles Strozier brings to every chapter the very qualities that Lincoln himself possessed: empathy, wisdom, balance, and creativity." Doris Kearns Goodwin, Author of No Ordinary Time "When Lincoln's Quest for Union was first published, it was immediately recognized as the best-informed and most perceptive analysis of Lincoln's inner life. This new edition, extensively revised and expanded, is even more rewarding. This is a basic book in the Lincoln canon: a work of great intelligence, written with sensitivity and literary grace. I cannot recommend it highly enough." Prof. David Herbert Donald, Author of Lincoln "Provocative and persuasive when it originally appeared in 1982, this new edition is even better. Strozier incorporates recent scholarship, fortifies his arguments, answers his critics, and offers a compelling psychological portrait of our most admired and enigmatic president." Cullom Davis, University of Illinois at Springfield "Eighteen years after it first appeared, Lincoln's Quest for Union still does what only the very best books about Lincoln do: It makes us think afresh about how so great a man could have grown from such meager beginnings." from Geoffrey Ward's Foreword In Lincoln's Quest for Union, Charles Strozier gives the most probing account available of Lincoln's inner life: from the time he was a young man in Illinois, just finding himself, through his ascent to the presidency when he guided the nation and articulated for the country the meaning of the Civil War. With the probity of an open-minded historian and the skills of a trained therapist (he is both), Strozier examines Lincoln's relationships to women: his mother, stepmother, two young loves, and Mary Todd. He also considers Lincoln's feelings toward his father and male friends and colleagues. For this revised edition, Professor Strozier has incorporated new sources: most important, the writings of William Herndon, Lincoln's long-time law partner to update and expand his psychological portrait of our 16th president. Charles B. Strozier, a historian and practicing psychoanalyst, is a professor of history at John Jay College and the Graduate Center, CUNY, and faculty and Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst at TRISP in New York. Strozier is the author of Until The Fires Stopped Burning: 9/11 in the Words and Experiences of Survivors and Witnesses; Heinz Kohut: The Making of a Psychoanalyst; and Apocalypse: On the Psychology of Fundamentalism in America, among other books. His forthcoming book is Young Man Lincoln: Joshua Speed and the Crucible of Greatness.

Praise for Charles Strozier and Lincoln's Quest for Union "Surpassingly eloquent." Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, New York Times "This is a remarkable book with extraordinary insights about the inner life of Abraham Lincoln. It will be read and studied for years to come, for Charles Strozier brings to every chapter the very qualities that Lincoln himself possessed: empathy, wisdom, balance, and creativity." Doris Kearns Goodwin, Author of No Ordinary Time "When Lincoln's Quest for Union was first published, it was immediately recognized as the best-informed and most perceptive analysis of Lincoln's inner life. This new edition, extensively revised and expanded, is even more rewarding. This is a basic book in the Lincoln canon: a work of great intelligence, written with sensitivity and literary grace. I cannot recommend it highly enough." Prof. David Herbert Donald, Author of Lincoln "Provocative and persuasive when it originally appeared in 1982, this new edition is even better. Strozier incorporates recent scholarship, fortifies his arguments, answers his critics, and offers a compelling psychological portrait of our most admired and enigmatic president." Cullom Davis, University of Illinois at Springfield "Eighteen years after it first appeared, Lincoln's Quest for Union still does what only the very best books about Lincoln do: It makes us think afresh about how so great a man could have grown from such meager beginnings." Geoffrey Ward