

Recommended Reading List from the virtual Douglass & Lincoln event: “Race in America: From the Civil War to 21st Century America”

Learn more about **L I N C O L N**

[Lincoln](#)

by David Herbert Donald

Simon & Schuster; 1st edition (November 5, 1996)

Donald brilliantly depicts Lincoln’s gradual ascent from humble beginnings in rural Kentucky to the ever-expanding political circles in Illinois, and finally to the presidency of a country divided by civil war. Donald goes beyond biography, illuminating the gradual development of Lincoln’s character, chronicling his tremendous capacity for evolution and growth, thus illustrating what made it possible for a man so inexperienced and so unprepared for the presidency to become a great moral leader. In the most troubled of times, here was a man who led the country out of slavery and preserved a shattered Union—in short, one of the greatest presidents this country has ever seen.

[Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln](#)

by Doris Kearns Goodwin

Simon & Schuster (September 26, 2006)

Acclaimed historian Doris Kearns Goodwin illuminates Lincoln's political genius in this highly original work, as the one-term congressman and prairie lawyer rises from obscurity to prevail over three gifted rivals of national reputation to become president.

[A. Lincoln: A Biography](#)

by Ronald C. White Jr

Random House Trade Paperbacks; Illustrated edition (May 4, 2010)

In this magnificent book, Ronald C. White, Jr., offers a fresh and compelling definition of Lincoln as a man of integrity—what today’s commentators would call “authenticity”—whose moral compass holds the key to understanding his life.

The Life of Abraham Lincoln

by Henry Ketcham

Empire Books (December 23, 2011)

In his introduction to "The Life of Abraham Lincoln," Henry Ketcham notes that there has been so much written about Lincoln that the legend has begun to obscure, if not to efface, the man. "In this biography the single purpose has been to present the living man with such distinctness of outline that the reader may have a sort of feeling of being acquainted with him." Ketcham's clearly-written, unadorned account of Lincoln's life achieves its stated purpose, never removing its focus from the man who became the 16th President of the United States and led the nation through some of its most turbulent and difficult times.

Abraham Lincoln: A Presidential Life

by James McPherson

Oxford University Press; Illustrated edition (February 1, 2009)

Best-selling author James M. McPherson follows the son of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks from his early years in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, to his highly successful law career, his marriage to Mary Todd, and his one term in Congress. We witness his leadership of the Republican anti-slavery movement, his famous debates with Stephen A. Douglas (a long acquaintance and former rival for the hand of Mary Todd), and his emergence as a candidate for president in 1860.

We Are Lincoln Men: Abraham Lincoln and His Friends

by David Herbert Donald

Simon & Schuster; Reprint edition (November 1, 2004)

Because Lincoln was such an outgoing personality in public, it is interesting that he had such a small, narrow group of close friends. Perhaps it stems from his humble roots. Perhaps it stems from the fact that while he married into high society, he never felt he belonged there. And perhaps it stems from the fact that John Wilkes Booth robbed Lincoln of a post-presidency when he could relax in the company of friends and bask in the glory of his many and varied victories. This book tells the story of that small band who earned the rare descriptor: Friend of Lincoln.

The Great Comeback: How Abraham Lincoln Beat the Odds to Win the 1860 Republican Nomination

by Gary Ecelbarger

Thomas Dunne Books; 1st edition (September 2, 2008)

Independent scholar Ecelbarger (Three Days in the Shenandoah) artfully shows how, from a career in cinders, Lincoln rose in a mere two years to seize the presidential nomination in May 1860. Ecelbarger describes diligent work and ground-laying by Lincoln and various allies. Ecelbarger also reveals a ravenously ambitious Lincoln whistle-stopping across America, railing against the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, and making a national reputation. -Publisher's Weekly

Battle Cry of Freedom:The Civil War Era

by James M. McPherson

Oxford University Press; 1st edition (February 25, 1988)

Likely to become the standard one-volume history of our Civil War, this vivifies, with palpable immediacy, scholarly acumen and interpretive skill, events foreshadowing the conflict, the war itself and its basic issue: slavery. Photos. (Feb.)-Publisher's Weekly

Lincoln at Gettysburg:The Words that Remade America

by Garry Willis

Simon & Schuster; Reissue edition (November 14, 2006)

Memories of the grisly Battle of Gettysburg were hardly faded when, nearly five months later, a cemetery was erected on the site. At that time, against all odds, Lincoln not only brought dignity to this hellish battleground, but ensured forever that Americans would interpret the Constitution and the Civil War fought to preserve it through the egalitarian prism of the Declaration of Independence. He ""revolutionized the Revolution, giving people a new past to live with that would change their future indefinitely."" Here, as in nearly all his other work, Willis recalls the historical setting to argue in a contrarian mode, taking issue with those who exalt Lincoln at the expense of the day's principal speaker, Edward Everett (Lincoln's secretaries Nicolay and Hay devoted more attention to Everett's two-hour address in their biography of Lincoln than to their boss's three-minute remarks, he reminds us).-Kirkus Reviews

Lincoln's Body: A Cultural History

by Richard Wightman Fox

W. W. Norton & Company; 1st edition (February 9, 2015)

In a stunning feat of scholarship, insight and engaging prose, LINCOLN'S BODY explores how a president ungainly in body and downright "ugly" of aspect came to mean so much to us.

The very roughness of Lincoln's appearance made him seem all the more common, one of us ---- as did his sense of humor about his own awkward physical nature. Nineteenth-century African Americans felt deep affection for their "liberator" as a "homely" man who did not hold himself apart. During Reconstruction, Southerners felt a nostalgia for the humility of Lincoln, whom they envisioned as a "conciliator." Later, teachers glorified Lincoln as a symbol of nationhood that would appeal to poor immigrants. Monument makers focused not only on the man's gigantic body but also on his nationalist efforts to save the Union, downplaying his emancipation of the slaves.-Book Reporter

Learn more about
DOUGLASS

[Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave](#)

By Frederick Douglass

Douglass, Frederick, and William Lloyd Garrison. Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass, an American slave. Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1849. Pdf. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/82225385/>.Dover Publications, Incorporated; 1st Edition (August 1, 2016)

"Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass" is a memoir on abolition written by Frederick Douglass. It is held to be the most famous of a number of narratives written by former slaves during the 19th century. In factual detail, the text describes the events of his life and is considered to be one of the most influential pieces of literature to fuel the abolitionist movement of the early 19th century in the United States. Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) was an African-American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. After escaping from slavery in Maryland, he became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York, gaining note for his dazzling oratory and incisive antislavery writings.

[My Bondage and My Freedom](#)

by Frederick Douglass

Douglass, Frederick, 1818-1895. My Bondage and My Freedom. New York :Penguin Books, 2003.

Published in 1855, *My Bondage and My Freedom* is the prominent statesman's second slave narrative. Frederick Douglass prints painfully honest memoirs to document his early life in slavery at the Wye House plantation. His discourses give unique insight into how slaves coped with being owned and brutalized. Douglass tells how he transitioned from bondage to liberty and achieved success in the North's largely white abolitionist movement.

[The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass \(African American\)](#)

by Frederick Douglass

Dover Publications (December 19, 2003)

In this engrossing narrative he recounts early years of abuse; his dramatic escape to the North and eventual freedom, abolitionist campaigns, and his crusade for full civil rights for former slaves. It is also the only of Douglass' autobiographies to discuss his life during and after the Civil War, including his encounters with American Presidents such as Lincoln, Grant, and Garfield.

Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom

by David W. Blight

Simon & Schuster; Reprint edition (January 7, 2020)

Published in 2018, this Pulitzer Prize-winning book by David W. Blight is about how Douglass became the legendary figure that he is. The book explores the origins and growth of Douglass's skill as a writer and speaker and attempts to uncover many of the inner thoughts, motivations and conflicts in Douglass's personal life that Douglass himself neglected to speak of in his own autobiographies.

Frederick Douglass: Self Made Man

by Timothy Sandefur

Published in 2018, this book by Timothy Sandefur is about the ideas, philosophies and personal motivations that drove Frederick Douglass to become the "self-made man" that he was.

The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics

by James Oakes

Published in 2007, this book by James Oakes is about how Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln gradually became friends and allies.

Learn more about
RACE IN AMERICA

Being Black in America

[Between the World and Me](#), by Ta-Nehisi Coates. "As a meditation on race in America, haunted by the bodies of black men, women, and children, Coates's compelling, indeed stunning, work is rare in its power to make you want to slow down and read every word."

[Negroland: A Memoir](#), by Margo Jefferson. "Perceptive, specific, and powerful, Jefferson's work balances themes of race, class, entitlement, and privilege with her own social and cultural awakening."

[No Ashes in the Fire: Coming of Age Black & Free in America](#), by Darnell L. Moore. "Moore's well-crafted book is a stunning tribute to affirmation, forgiveness, and healing—and serves as an invigorating emotional tonic."

[On the Other Side of Freedom: The Case for Hope](#), by DeRay Mckesson. "Activist and podcaster Mckesson reflects on what he's learned from protest, family upheaval, racial inequality, homophobia, community organizing, abuse, and love."

[What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Blacker: A Memoir in Essays](#), by Damon Young (Ecco) "Young uses pop culture references and personal stories to look at a life molded by structural racism, the joy of having a family that holds together in a crisis, and the thrill of succeeding against difficult odds."

Civil Rights Activism

[A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History](#), by Jeanne Theoharis. "Theoharis's lucid and insightful study ...[offers] a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the civil rights movement's legacy, and [shows] how much remains to be done."

[How to Be an Antiracist](#), by Ibram X. Kendi. "Kendi follows his National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* with a boldly articulated, historically informed explanation of what exactly racist ideas and thinking are, and what their antiracist antithesis looks like both systemically and at the level of individual action."

[They Can't Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America's Racial Justice Movement](#), by Wesley Lowery. "Digging beneath the news headlines of police killings and protests, Lowery's timely work gives texture and context to a new era of African-American activism."

[When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir](#), by Patrisse Khan-Cullors and Asha Bandele. "This is an eye-opening and eloquent coming-of-age story from one of the leaders in the new generation of social activists."

Institutional Racism and Police Brutality

[The Black and the Blue: A Cop Reveals the Crimes, Racism, and Injustice in America's Law Enforcement](#), by Matthew Horace and Ron Harris. "Horace, a former agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and a CNN analyst, explores the 'implicit bias' and overt racism that makes black people the targets of profiling, harassment, beatings, and unjustified gunfire from cops."

[Blood at the Root: A Racial Cleansing in America](#), by Patrick Phillips. "This is a gripping, timely, and important examination of American racism, and Phillips tells it with rare clarity and power."

[The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America](#), by Richard Rothstein. "Rothstein's comprehensive and engrossing book reveals just how the U.S. arrived at the 'systematic racial segregation we find in metropolitan areas today,' focusing in particular on the role of government."

[Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights](#), by Gretchen Sorin. "Lucidly written and generously illustrated with photos and artifacts, this rigorous and entertaining history deserves a wide readership."

[Five Days: The Fiery Reckoning of an American City](#), by Wes Moore, with Erica L. Green. "Moore provides important context in the history of Baltimore's racial and income inequality and the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement. Readers will be enthralled by this propulsive account."

[Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption](#), by Bryan Stevenson. "Stevenson, a professor of law at New York University and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal firm providing services for the wrongly condemned, describes in his memoir how he got the call to represent this largely neglected clientele in our justice system."

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[The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness](#), by Michelle Alexander. "Legal scholar Alexander argues vigorously and persuasively that '[w]e have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it.' "

[Open Season: The Legalized Genocide of Colored People](#), by Ben Crump. "Civil rights attorney Crump, who has represented the families of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, delivers a forceful debut exposé of America's 'legalized system of discrimination.'"

[White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#), by Robin Diangelo. "This slim book is impressive in its scope and complexity; Diangelo provides a powerful lens for examining, and practical tools for grappling with, racism today."