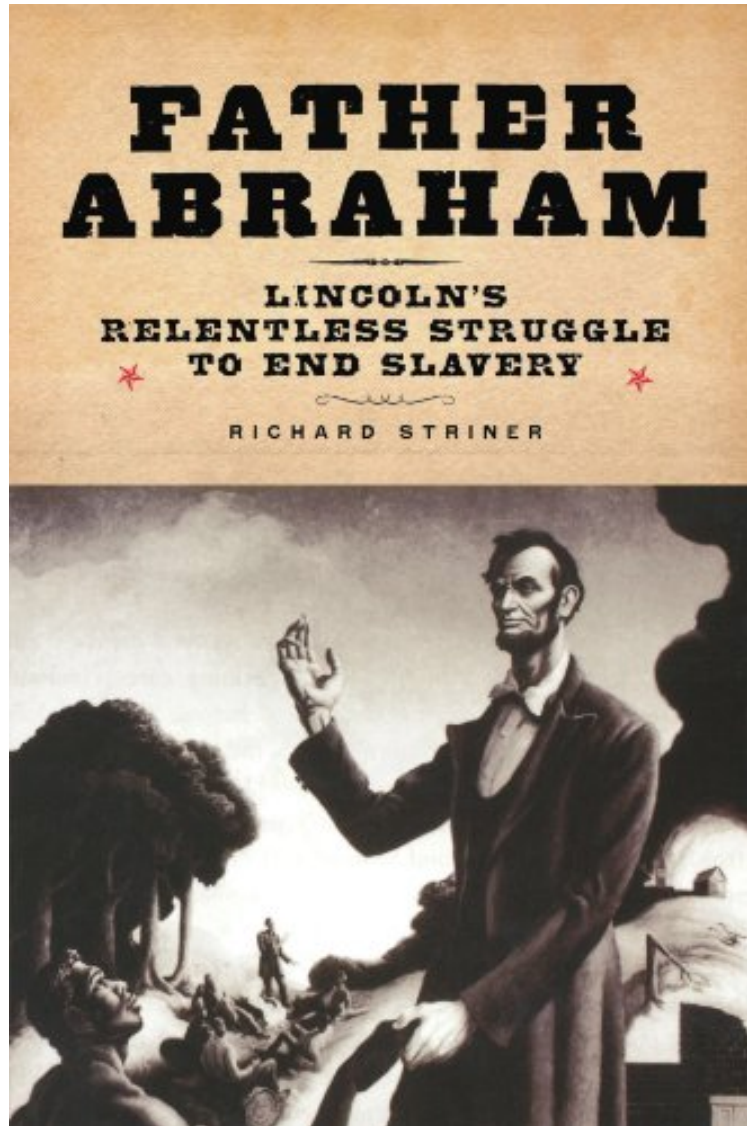


(Pdf free) Father Abraham: Lincoln's Relentless Struggle to End Slavery

Father Abraham: Lincoln's Relentless Struggle to End Slavery

Richard Striner

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32.Mb

Richard Striner : Father Abraham: Lincoln's Relentless Struggle to End Slavery before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Father Abraham: Lincoln's Relentless Struggle to End Slavery:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Lincoln: No Moderate on Slavery By Timothy P. Koerner Was he the "great emancipator" or did his famous Emancipation Proclamation free very few slaves? Was he a friend of

African-Americans or rather a typical 19th century white supremacist? Did he really believe in "colonizing" US-born blacks in Africa or the Caribbean or was this just a diversionary tactic to mask his real intentions? Above all, was his primary goal to kill slavery in the US or to save the Union (country) from those who seceded from it and made war (at Fort Sumter) on it? The person referred to above is, of course, Abraham Lincoln ("AL" or "L" hereafter), sixteenth president of the US, and these questions are ones that people living in the US during the civil war era (roughly 1840s - 1870s) argued over and are questions that historians who study that era are still debating and probably always will. While it is difficult and perhaps dangerous to attempt to describe a consensus among historians about ANY topic, it is possible to state a view of AL that many or most L. historians of the last 40 to 50 years would probably accept or share. This view describes L. as a reluctant emancipator who moved cautiously against slavery. True, his natural inclinations were anti-slavery, but for constitutional reasons, he believed that only individual states could determine the legality of domestic institutions such as slavery. His goal was to contain slavery to existing areas and, in so doing, put it on the road to "ultimate extinction". Later, once the war began, for military and diplomatic reasons, L. issued his limited proclamation of emancipation. And while he never issued an equality proclamation or suffrage proclamation, there is evidence to suggest he was prepared to support at least partial suffrage for African Americans and was moving toward political equality in concept. In the book *FATHER ABRAHAM: LINCOLN'S RELENTLESS STRUGGLE TO END SLAVERY*, historian Richard Striner seeks to partially overturn or at least seriously challenge this (consensus) view of L. For Striner, L. had not only always hated slavery but was, since 1854 at least, strongly committed to trying to get rid of it. He calls AL a "moral visionary", an "ethicist" who was also "an artist in the Machiavellian uses of power". (page 2) L. wasn't only interested in saving a union where slavery was legal. What good was a country wherein a significant segment of the population was owned by others? (He was also a golden rule man.) No, L. would refuse to compromise on slavery once he was elected president and even after a number of slave states left the Union. Sometimes he chose to mask his true intentions and throw white supremacists a bone with talk about colonization of blacks outside the US. And then when the military situation looked slightly brighter for the Union cause (after the horrible battle of Antietam/Sharpsburg), he issued a proclamation to liberate some, not all, slaves. But once this action was taken the only turning back from full liberation might come from one or both of what Striner refers to as "worst-case futures": losing re-election as president in 1864 and/or losing the war itself, in which case all of his antislavery actions would undoubtedly be overturned. Thus, L. strove mightily in 1863-1864 to prevent both of these possibilities, all the while being hard at work planning to "reconstruct" the old slave states without slavery. End of my summary of the Striner argument. How convincing is his argument? Readers will certainly decide for themselves, but this is a very difficult proposition for several reasons, a couple of which are that AL's words were often contradictory and also because L. had a way of telling people what they wanted to hear and not necessarily what he believed. The author definitely caused me, essentially a subscriber to what I've termed the consensus view, to question and think about what I have come to accept about L. over the decades. As such, I think this is a very important book. The book contains not only superb endnotes demonstrating Striner's heavy use of the work of scholars such as LaWanda Cox, Harry Jaffa, James McPherson, William Lee Miller as well as, of course, Basler's *COLLECTED WORKS* of Lincoln, but also, and drum roll please, a (very useful) bibliography, a device which I've thought might be on the way to ultimate extinction. For reasons that puzzle me, this volume is not very well known in the L. literature. This is unfortunate because I found it to be one of the more thoughtful books on L. that I've read during this 200th year of his birth. Strongly recommended. Tim Koerner December 2009 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lincoln's total commitment to Black Americans By Joseph Albani While revisionist history now calls Lincoln a reluctant emancipator and a racist at heart this book shows how wrong that view is. From the time he was first in the state legislature from a racist white supremacist culture Lincoln constantly spoke against slavery which he always regarded as an abomination. While, as a lawyer, he never thought he had the power to eliminate slavery where it was constitutionally protected he always spoke against its expansion. One of his first acts as President was to allow the death sentence for a slave ship captain to proceed in spite of the captain's political friends pleas for mercy. He said he could not abide a man sending hundreds of Africans into perpetual bondage for mere money. While hundreds of previous such cases resulted in few prosecutions and no executions he put his foot down and virtually ended the illicit slave trade that had been going on for decades. It was the first execution for slave trading even though there had been 100 such cases in New York alone in 1860. He paid for the funeral expenses of his valet and had him buried in Arlington cemetery with the single word *CITIZEN* on his tombstone whereas blacks had not been considered citizens until then. He met with Frederick Douglass in the White House and Douglass wrote about how he never met a powerful white man who treated him as an equal until then. Later when it appeared that Lincoln would not be reelected Lincoln asked Douglass to get a group of like minded people to go into the deep South and get as many slaves as possible to get to the Union lines so they could be freed knowing that if McClellan won he would eliminate the emancipation proclamation. Finally in his last speech where he called for blacks to get the vote the racist John Wilkes Booth decided that that was the last straw and he killed Lincoln a few days later. Lincoln was murdered because of this. Lincoln had called for colonization for freed blacks because the country was so racist he could not imagine blacks being treated fairly. It was only his leadership that finally got the country to the point where they would support the emancipation. Lincoln was a giant. The blacks

never had a more powerful and loving friend.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Yes, indeed, Lincoln freed the slaves.By RJBMuch has been written about our 16th president. I found this book very enjoyable to read, and from my perspective, having read quite a few books about Lincoln, factually accurate. However, as a recent addition to the long list of biographers of Lincoln, I was expecting the author to do more to debunk those who've written that Lincoln did NOT pursue a relentless struggle to end slavery. Rather, the author simply chronicled all the steps Lincoln is known to have taken during his life to bring about an end to slavery.

Lincoln is the single most compelling figure in our history, but also one of the most enigmatic. Was he the Great Emancipator, a man of deep convictions who ended slavery in the United States, or simply a reluctant politician compelled by the force of events to free the slaves? In *Father Abraham*, Richard Striner offers a fresh portrait of Lincoln, one that helps us make sense of his many contradictions.Striner shows first that, if you examine the speeches that Lincoln made in the 1850s, you will have no doubt of his passion to end slavery. These speeches illuminate the anger, vehemence, and sheer brilliance of candidate Lincoln, who worked up crowds with charismatic fervor as he gathered a national following. But if he felt so passionately about abolition, why did he wait so long to release the Emancipation Proclamation? As Striner points out, politics is the art of the possible, and Lincoln was a consummate politician, a shrewd manipulator who cloaked his visionary ethics in the more pragmatic garb of the coalition-builder. He was at bottom a Machiavellian prince for a democratic age. When secession began, Lincoln used the battle cry of saving the Union to build a power base, one that would eventually break the slave-holding states forever. Striner argues that Lincoln was a rare man indeed: a fervent idealist and a crafty politician with a remarkable gift for strategy. It was the harmonious blend of these two qualities, Striner concludes, that made Lincoln's role in ending slavery so fundamental.

From *Publishers Weekly*An influential interpretation regards Lincoln as a cautious moderate, encumbered by the bigotries of his day, whose lukewarm antislavery principles took a backseat to the mission of preserving the Union. Passionately rejecting this view, historian Striner (*The Civic Deal: Re-Empowering Our Great Republic*) extols Lincoln as a "moral visionary" and "Machiavellian" genius who advanced the abolitionist cause as fast as political realities allowed. Close readings of Lincoln's speeches and writings, he contends, reveal a steadfast defense of blacks' humanity and fundamental rights; once in office, Lincoln seized every opening afforded by the Civil War to push for emancipation and an increasingly expansive agenda of black political rights. Inverting the conventional wisdom, Striner insists that Lincoln considered the cause of the Union a vehicle for furthering emancipation. Striner confronts some awkward facts, like Lincoln's disavowal of social equality for blacks, his flirtation with schemes to ship free blacks overseas and his public statements that emancipation was less important than saving the Union, but pegs these as purely tactical concessions to white racial animosities. Such resolutions sometimes seem too pat, but Striner's nuanced exploration of Lincoln's words and deeds makes a stimulating case for the greatness of his conscience—resolutely practical, but ever attuned to the better angels of his nature. Photos. (Feb.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Striner's nuanced exploration of Lincoln's words and deeds makes a stimulating case for the greatness of his conscience--resolutely practical, but ever attuned to the better angels of his nature."--*Publishers Weekly*"In this estimable volume, Richard Striner effectively demolishes the fashionable myths of Lincoln the Reluctant Emancipator and Lincoln the White Supremacist.... Striner's readable account is not aimed at specialists, who will discover little new in it, but at the general reader, who will be impressed by the relentless way the author shows how relentless was Lincoln's struggle to end slavery."--Michael Burlingame, *Washington Times*"No one can come away from this book without being deeply affected by it. The writing is forceful and the narrative gripping. The reader stays by Lincoln's side throughout his career, thanks to Striner's gifts both for presenting a political historical panorama and for constantly foregrounding Lincoln."--Richard M. Valeyly, *American Historical* "In contrast to historians and biographers who emphasize Lincoln's pragmatism at the expense of his idealism, or claim that he was a conservative on racial issues who was pushed against his will toward emancipation, Richard Striner presents him as an idealist who employed his superb political skills to further the cause of freedom. The fresh and provocative insights in this book demonstrate that despite all that has been written about Lincoln, there is still something new to learn."--James M. McPherson, author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*"A provocative, richly detailed and exhaustively researched portrait of Lincoln as a zealous and lifelong opponent of slavery. Richard Striner presents a compelling counter-argument to those historians who claim Lincoln was a reluctant emancipator, and demonstrates convincingly that the fate of freedom was very much undecided until the North re-elected Lincoln."--Harold Holzer, author of *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Him President*"Compellingly argued.... A worthy contribution to the ongoing debates about the life and work of Abraham Lincoln." --Myron A. Marty, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*"A superb study of the Machiavellian Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln was shrewd, political and disingenuous. This excellent volume stands on its head the view that Lincoln argued re-Union first, Emancipation second. Richard Striner's analysis demonstrates that Lincoln was more than a moderate in word and action."--Frank J. Williams, Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, and Chair of The Lincoln Forum"A brilliant and

compelling account which reminds us that history, at its best, is a literary art. Reflecting deep understanding of the American political tradition, Striner's masterly study of Lincoln's statesmanship defies the conventions both of contemporary academic scholarship and political culture."--Herman Belz, Professor of History, University of Maryland

About the Author Richard Striner is Professor of History at Washington College and is a Senior Writer with the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission. He has written for numerous publications, including The Washington Post, The Smithsonian Institution Press, and William Mary Quarterly.