



Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President (Library of Religious Biography (LRB))

By Allen C. Guelzo



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An enlightening "intellectual biography" of Lincoln, Allen Guelzo's peerless account of America's most celebrated president explores the role of ideas in Lincoln's life, treating him as a serious thinker deeply involved in the nineteenth-century debates over politics, religion, and culture. Written with passion and dramatic impact, Guelzo's masterful study offers a revealing new perspective on a man whose life was in many ways a paradox.

Since its original publication in 1999, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* has garnered numerous accolades, not least the prestigious 2000 Lincoln Prize. As journalist Richard N. Ostling has noted, "Much has been written about Lincoln's belief and disbelief," but Guelzo's extraordinary account "goes deeper."

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Bibliography

- Rank: #513446 in Books
- Published on: 2002-12-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.04" w x 6.00" l, 1.54 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 528 pages

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Guelzo's Abraham Lincoln tackles the president's moral and religious beliefs and focuses on the emancipation of slaves. It's a curious, even fascinating book because Lincoln, a 19th-century liberal, did not adhere to an organized religion, although he frequently used biblical language to express himself. Guelzo believes Lincoln's freeing of the slaves was an act that had economic roots and superseded morality to lay down the foundations of modern capitalism as well as the Republican Party. Except for an awkward introduction, the work is easy listening a narrative of Lincoln's life that spells out his beliefs in the context of the times. Narrator Edward Lewis tries hard but is held back by the author's turgid prose. For large libraries with big budgets. James L. Dudley, Westhampton, NY
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Review

The Historical Journal

"Guelzo's is a satisfying portrait, perhaps because he has been a scholar of Jonathan Edwards, so is more conscious of the intellectual and political contexts that preceded and made Lincoln, but less concerned with the retrospective usefulness of Lincoln as a national icon."

Times Literary Supplement

"*Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* is the best study of Lincoln's religious thought, and all the better because it situates that thought in the context of Lincoln's whole career. Guelzo's purpose is to take Lincoln seriously 'as a man of ideas.' He succeeds admirably. . . .But it is in his analysis of Lincoln's religious ideas that Guelzo makes his most important contribution."

Choice

"Guelzo's book, the first true intellectual biography of the man the author calls America's 'redeemer president,' ranks among the most significant half-dozen studies of Lincoln during a remarkable decade of scholarship. . . . Especially perceptive is Guelzo's portrayal of Lincoln's odyssey from youthful scoffer to perhaps most religious of US presidents, ever rejecting the ritual and denominational dogma of public worship but increasingly taken with a personal form of Calvinist spirituality culminating in his immortal Second Inaugural Address, arguably the most profound exploration of religious values ever penned by an American author. . . . Recommended for literate readers at all levels."

>Publishers Weekly

"Is it possible that amid the voluminous literature on Abraham Lincoln, there is room for yet another study? Allen Guelzo's *Abraham Lincoln* eloquently proves that there is, since religion has been sorely neglected by historians of Lincoln and the Civil War."

The Wall Street Journal

"The number of books about Abraham Lincoln is almost beyond counting. . . . Unique among this outpouring is Allen C. Guelzo's 'Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President,' an intellectual biography of a president who was, at bottom, a man of ideas. . . . Interestingly, for Lincoln the mixing of moralism and politics came rather late. . . . With the approach of the Civil War, he began to make use of religious imagery in his public statements, while the war itself seemed to provoke in him something close to a religious quest to discover its

meaning. Dissecting this quest forms the core of 'Redeemer President,' and the job Mr. Guelzo does of it is masterly. . . It is a testament to the strength of 'Redeemer President' that the matters it addresses resist easy summary. The value of the book itself, however, is easy enough to state: Out of the countless volumes written about our 16th president, it ranks quite simply among the best."

The Weekly Standard

"One of the subtlest and deepest studies of Lincoln's faith and thought in many years. . . Seldom has the complex connection between Lincoln's predispositions and Lincoln's achievements been more insightfully studied than in Allen Guelzo's superb book."

Wilson Quarterly

"This rich and subtle study of Lincoln's intellectual life well deserves to have received the prestigious Lincoln Prize; it is superb."

The Historian

"With the freshness of insight often afforded scholars who cross disciplinary boundaries, the author, a student of intellectual and religious history, makes an important contribution to the field of Lincoln studies. . . This is a thoughtful, engaging, and provocative book that will enlighten both Civil War specialists and students of American history."

>The Filson Club History Quarterly

"This co-winner of the 1999 Lincoln Prize is a subtle, insightful, and convincing analysis of Abraham Lincoln. . . Guelzo's analysis is sound and generally convincing. . . This is one of the most important books in a decade rich in Lincoln scholarship."

The Journal of Southern History

"Is there really a place for yet another wo

From the Publisher

Allen Guelzo's major new biography *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) has won the prestigious Lincoln Prize, the annual award given to the best work in the Civil War field. Sharing the award is a book on slavery, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels in the Plantation*, by John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger.

Guelzo's book breaks new ground in exploring the role of ideas in Lincoln's life, treating him for the first time as a serious thinker deeply involved in the struggles of 19th-century thought. Lincoln emerges from Guelzo's portrait as a creative yet profoundly paradoxical man—possessing deep moral and religious character yet not adhering to any organized form of religion, a classic nineteenth century liberal who yet came to realize that the liberal state could not survive without an appeal to natural law and natural theology.

Guelzo is dean of the Templeton Honors College and Grace F. Kea Professor of American History at Eastern College in Pennsylvania, and a former fellow of the Charles Warren Center at Harvard University.

Presented by the Lincoln and Soldiers Institute of Gettysburg College, the Lincoln Prize is the most generous award in the field of American history. Each of the winning books will earn a \$20,000 prize and a bronze bust of Lincoln. The awards, announced on Lincoln's birthday, will be presented at an April 18, 2000 banquet in New York City.

Users Review

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