



Looking for Lincoln: The Making of an American Icon

Philip B. Kunhardt III , Peter W. Kunhardt , Peter W. Kunhardt Jr.

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In honor of the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, an extensively researched, lavishly illustrated consideration of the myths, memories, and questions that gathered around our most beloved—and our most enigmatic—president in the years between his assassination and the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial in 1922. A sequel to the enormously successful *Lincoln: An Illustrated Biography*, *Looking for Lincoln* picks up where the previous book left off, examining how our sixteenth president's legend came into being.

Availing themselves of a vast collection of both published and never-before-seen materials, the authors—the fourth and fifth generations of a family of Lincoln scholars—bring into focus the posthumous portrait of Lincoln that took hold in the American imagination, becoming synonymous with the nation's very understanding of itself. Told through the voices of those who knew the man—Northerners and Southerners, blacks and whites, neighbors and family members, adversaries and colleagues—and through stories carefully selected from long-forgotten newspapers, magazines, and family scrapbooks, *Looking for Lincoln* charts the dramatic epilogue to Lincoln's extraordinary life when, in a process fraught with jealousy, greed, and the struggle for power, the scope of his historical significance was taking shape.

In vibrant and immediate detail, the authors chart the years when Americans struggled to understand their loss and rebuild their country. Here is a chronicle of the immediate aftermath of the assassination; the private memories of those closest to the slain president; the difficult period between 1876 and 1908, when a tired nation turned its back on the former slaves and betrayed Lincoln's teachings; and the early years of the twentieth century when Lincoln's popularity soared as African Americans fought to reclaim the ideals he espoused.

Looking for Lincoln will deeply enhance our understanding of the statesman and his legacy, at a moment when the timeless example of his leadership is more crucial than ever.

Looking for Lincoln: The Making of an American Icon Details

Date : Published November 18th 2008 by Knopf

ISBN : 9780307267139

Author : Philip B. Kunhardt III , Peter W. Kunhardt , Peter W. Kunhardt Jr.

Format : Hardcover 512 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Biography, Politics, Presidents, Military History, Civil War, Historical

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Dick says

Terrific book. Got it from my wife Shari for Valentine's Day - and have literally savored reading each. A few photos I either forgot about or had not seen before. Individuals interviewed who knew Lincoln provided a rich text to this book. As my father used to say it is already a family "hairloom."

Vincent Desjardins says

Reading this amazing book, about how Lincoln's legend grew in the years after his death, is like taking a ride in a time machine. For one thing, it is profusely illustrated with photographs and artwork from the period. But more than that, the text itself brings the period alive. It is filled with first hand accounts from people who had connections to Lincoln. There are newspaper articles, diary entries, book excerpts, letters and more from the time after Lincoln's death, all of which give a vivid portrait of how one of our greatest President's was remembered by the people who knew him. This book, like a good encyclopedia can be opened on to any page and you'll find something interesting. Some of the most fascinating information details the immediate aftermath of Lincoln's assassination - what happened to the other couple that were with Lincoln in the theater, the manhunt and killing of John Wilkes Booth, the trial of the conspirators, the arguments over where Lincoln was to be buried, the various artists, photographers and sculptors who captured the president's likeness both during his life and after his death, Mary Lincoln's inconsolable grief, and in later years, the creation of the Lincoln memorial, and even a look at those like, Lyon Gardiner Tyler who wrote anti-Lincoln articles. This is a thorough and fascinating look at events that resonate today with our current battles over the display of the confederate flag and the revisionists who wish to erase and rewrite the causes of the Civil War.

Riley says

This is a really big book (not in thickness, in size). It's kind of a combination history book/coffee table book, lots of pictures, but plenty of writing also. I took it on a trip with me and got some weird looks as I was reading this great big book while walking on the treadmill in the hotel. I learned a lot more about Lincoln, his cabinet, and the personalities he dealt with there and in his family. It's a very readable insight into a high profile president, and the amount of pictures really helped keep my attention. Very enjoyable.

Janis says

I spent many happy hours reading this book. It begins with the assassination, then tells Lincoln's story by going forward in time, examining the different ways we came to understand and look at this great man. As time passed, Lincoln's legend grew, viewpoints changed, and new interpretations of his actions and ideas emerged. The book is full of fascinating detail and amazing photographs -- a Lincolnphile's dream come true.

Jean says

I'm loving this book and its really a "coffee table book". This authors ancestors acquired Matthew Brady's negatives and they take Lincoln's story from his assassination forward, filling in the impact and "what happened next" with a huge catalog of photos to accompany very informative text. So cool.

HBalikov says

A magnificent compendium of all things Lincoln. This remarkable melding of text and photo traces the influence of Lincoln in the subsequent years and decades. If it doesn't distinguish among the substantial and the trivial, it is comprehensive in its coverage.

Among the things you will learn:

- Why Lincoln did not attend his father's death bed
- Why he appointed his most ambitious rival as Chief Justice a few months after throwing him out of the Cabinet
- The mis-intentions of Mary Lincoln's seamstress in her "tell-all" book.
- How Abraham Lincoln II died

The photos are the best I have ever seen collected and the gallery of Lincoln portraits is remarkably revealing after having seen the recent movie, "Lincoln"

Tara says

Going to be HUGE as a hot topic with Lincoln's 200th birthday coming up. This illustrated biography is the size of a coffee table book and incredibly detailed in the photos, newspaper clippings and other ephemera that litter this impressive work. Not surprising since it the accumulation of several generations of passionate Lincoln researchers. The companion piece to a PBS special coming out next year, it uses a unique chronology - starting with the assassination and then progressing as items were uncovered or demanded by the public therefore experiencing the work as the American People experienced their President.

Scott Klemm says

When I first saw this book I merely gave it a quick glance over, and concluded I didn't need another Lincoln picture book. I already had a copy of Twenty Days co-authored by Philip Kunhardt Jr. (I didn't realize at the time that the authors of Looking for Lincoln were the sons and grandson of Philip Kunhardt.) Later when I looked at the book more closely, I realized that the book was not just another rehash of the life of Lincoln from log cabin to assassination. Instead this book begins with the assassination and ends with the start of Mt. Rushmore and the death of Robert Lincoln.

The book is lavishly illustrated and arranged chronologically from 1865 to 1926. Reminiscences of people who knew Lincoln include his former law partner, William Herndon, members of his cabinet, Generals Sherman and Grant, Frederick Douglass, and even Lincoln's black barber. The book is packed full of

interesting trivial such as Lincoln's dog, the collapse of Ford's theatre resulting in the death of twenty-two people, the plot to steal Lincoln's body, and the Lincoln Logs children's toy was invented by the son of the famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Jeff says

Having read a number of biographies about Lincoln, I was intrigued by this book that looked at the Lincoln legacy from the date of his assassination until 1926. The pictures in the book are amazing, and the stories of the many biographers of Lincoln and of the later lives of those who knew him are interesting. The timeline of the book shows the development of the Lincoln legacy both in the North and the South. Very interesting and enjoyable. Apparently there is a PBS series that came out to go along with the book ... or the book went along with the series. Either way I'd be interested in seeing the series.

Amy says

A fascinating look at how and why Lincoln is so important to us! Lots of photos, drawings and personal accounts by the people who knew him best!

My only issue or question is in regards to a photo on pg. 417. The caption says that Lincoln is waiting to deliver his Second Inaugural Address, but I find that hard to believe because Lincoln has no sideburns or facial hair in the photo. All other photos of him (from this time period) show him with facial hair.

Kristen says

When I got this book from the library I intended to just open it and browse through it for a few minutes. I ended up staying on that couch and spending a couple HOURS with this book. It begins at Lincoln's assassination and everything that happened after, and Lincoln's legacy, all told with fascinating pictures. I learned a lot of interesting things...what happened to those involved in the assassination, what happened to Mary (a sad story), and how his son Robert fought to come to terms with Lincoln's death and his new life trying to care for an unappreciative mother.

And then, when nearly everyone who was close to Lincoln sees their story completed, the book grinds to a halt. And there are still hundreds of pages left (it goes through the early 1900s). For the true history buff this is great news. For a casual reader like me it was too, too much. There is a reward at the end of the book...every picture ever taken of Lincoln. Those pictures themselves tell the story of a complicated, fascinating man with every wrinkle, line, and unkempt thatch of hair. I recommend the book, but depending on what you're looking for, you'll get different results.

Sarah says

A visual arts heavy biography that starts with Lincoln's assassination, and moved forward through time, exploring what information was released or discovered when. Largely about the historiography and mythologizing of Lincoln over time.

It's a huge, unwieldy, coffee table book, so it wasn't exactly one I could carry around with me, and even finding a comfortable position to read it in for long periods of time was a bit of a struggle.

And it does sort of peter out at the end, post WWI. I was hoping for a little more of a continuation into the 20th century.

On the whole, though, a visually stunning book with a lot of interesting research in it.

Benjamin says

If I were to construct a photo book about someone, this is the way I'd like to do it. Loads of photographs from the time of the Civil War starting with Lincoln's assassination on April 14, 1865. It depicts the events and people significant to the Lincoln administration, and it displays it's photos with explanations often rendered in the words of the subjects.

It's a wonderful Christmas gift from my sister Donna.

A wealth of information about the various characters associated with Lincoln's death. It answers such questions as "Whatever became of Robert, Lincoln's only surviving child?; Why was Mary Todd Lincoln so reviled by the press, and what caused the schism between her and Robert?; What influenced Lincoln's growth as an icon and revered father figure to the American Public?; What is Lincoln's standing in other countries?"

You will learn that Lincoln had over 100 pictures that survived, that an attempt to steal his entombed body in Springfield, IL for ransom occurred, and that dozens of Lincoln's friends and acquaintances reminisced in print about their association.

It was great fun

Brian S. Wise says

"Looking for Lincoln" carries on the fine Kunhardt family tradition of publishing large, notable books on Lincoln (including also "Twenty Days," first released in 1965, a masterpiece of the genre still used as a research tool; and "Lincoln" (1992), the book I can blame for getting me hooked on both Lincoln and the War Between the States. (Less known, but still noteworthy, is the 1999 book "The American President." All four books can be found at great hardcover prices on any one of the numerous used book websites. Asked to pick one, I would recommend "Lincoln," though "Twenty Days" is an exceptional work.)

"Looking for Lincoln" covers Lincoln related events and people beginning from the day Lincoln was shot in

1865 and ending the day the direct Lincoln line ended, when son Robert died in 1926. This is a mammoth book, and the only thing keeping it from being a five star effort is that it sometimes under-explains events. As always, the pictures chosen are exceptional, and included many I've never seen before despite years of Lincoln reading and research.

Robert Vincent says

This book gave a narrative and pictorial of remembrances of Lincoln from his death to his son, Robert's death in 1926. There were many accounts from people who knew him or of him from family, friends, enemies, biographers, photographers and more. Many that haven't been heard or seen before. This was an easy large volume with new facts about Lincoln and his impact on American history. Also it was good to learn more about his associates and the developing American culture Lincoln influenced. The photographs, paintings, illustrations and charts enhanced the reading experience.
