

Lincoln and the Jews: A History

By Jonathan D. Sarna, Benjamin Shapell

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One hundred and fifty years after Abraham Lincoln's death, the full story of his extraordinary relationship with Jews is told here for the first time. *Lincoln and the Jews: A History* provides readers both with a captivating narrative of his interactions with Jews, and with the opportunity to immerse themselves in rare manuscripts and images, many from the Shapell Lincoln Collection, that show Lincoln in a way he has never been seen before.
Lincoln's lifetime coincided with the emergence of Jews on the national scene in the United States. When he was born, in 1809, scarcely 3,000 Jews lived in the entire country. By the time of his assassination in 1865, large-scale immigration, principally from central Europe, had brought that number up to more than 150,000. Many Americans, including members of Lincoln's cabinet and many of his top generals during the Civil War, were alarmed by this development and treated Jews as second-class citizens and religious outsiders. Lincoln, this book shows, exhibited precisely the opposite tendency. He also expressed a uniquely deep knowledge of the Old Testament, employing its language and concepts in some of his most important writings. He befriended Jews from a young age, promoted Jewish equality, appointed numerous Jews to public office, had Jewish advisors and supporters starting already from the early 1850s, as well as later during his two presidential campaigns, and in response to Jewish sensitivities, even changed the way he thought and spoke about America. Through his actions and his rhetoric—replacing "Christian nation," for example, with "this nation under God"—he embraced Jews as insiders.

In this groundbreaking work, the product of meticulous research, historian Jonathan D. Sarna and collector Benjamin Shapell reveal how Lincoln's remarkable relationship with American Jews impacted both his path to the presidency and his policy decisions as president. The volume uncovers a new and previously unknown feature of Abraham Lincoln's life, one that broadened him, and, as a result, broadened America.

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Editorial Review

Review
"Sarna and manuscript collector Shapell offer a vivid, fresh perspective on Lincoln's life and times." --- Kirkus

About the Author
Jonathan D. Sarna is the award-winning author of American Judaism: A History and a leading commentator on American Jewish history, religion, and life. He is the Joseph H. & Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University.

Benjamin Shapell is the founder of the Shapell Manuscript Foundation, an independent educational organization whose collection includes original documents of world-renowned individuals. He has written articles on Lincoln, other American presidents, and Mark Twain.

David Colacci has been an actor and a director for over thirty years, and has worked as a narrator for over fifteen years. He has won AudioFile Earphones Awards, earned Audie nominations, and been included in Best of the Year lists by such publications as Publishers Weekly, AudioFile magazine, and Library Journal.

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