



# The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln (American Presidency (Univ of Kansas Paperback))

*Phillip Shaw Paludan*

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Abraham Lincoln's life and work have inspired more books than any other historical figure except Jesus and Shakespeare and attracted some of America's most renowned writers. But few know him as well as Phillip Paludan, one of our nation's foremost authorities on Lincoln and the Civil War.

In this long-awaited study, Paludan offers us Lincoln in whole a complex, even contradictory personality who found greatness without seeking it and who felt deeply troubled about what he perceived as his failings as a president and person.

Opinion has been divided about the real Lincoln. A conservative. A liberal. The great emancipator. A Union preservationist at all cost. But Paludan's Lincoln is both a constitutionalist and a liberal egalitarian who ultimately saw his efforts to preserve the Union and free the slaves as inseparably linked.

Lincoln, Paludan contends, proved himself a truly great leader in a highly combustible situation. True, he was no saint and could rule with political expediency and a heavy hand. But no other president faced such awesome challenges, and none showed better how the nation could meet them and move toward "a more perfect union."

Filled with new insights and fresh interpretations, Paludan's study presents a genuinely new and compelling portrait of a president and nation at war. It will change the way we look at such things as Lincoln's evolving reconstruction plans, his civil liberties restrictions, and his handling of foreign affairs and enlarge our understanding of the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural, which linked the president's personal feelings with the needs of the nation. It is essential reading for anyone interested in Lincoln, the presidency, and the Civil War.

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