

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

b. February 12, 1809

d. April 15, 1865

AMERICAN PRESIDENT

**Widely regarded as the
greatest U.S. president,
he is credited with the
abolition of slavery.**

*“Government of the people, by the people,
for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”*

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States. Credited with emancipating enslaved people, he is widely regarded as the nation's greatest president. Over time, his sexuality has been a subject of interest.

Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Hardin County, Kentucky. Largely self-educated, he attended a few frontier schools and read extensively. As a 20-year-old, he penned a 16-line poem about a marriage between two boys.

In 1830, Lincoln moved to Illinois. In New Salem, he became a shopkeeper and postmaster and entered politics as a Whig, opposing President Andrew Jackson's monarchical style. He won a seat in the Illinois State Legislature in 1834 and served for four terms.

Lincoln maintained intense male friendships. His first close companion was his grammar tutor, Billy Greene. The two shared a cot for 18 months. For an extended period thereafter, Lincoln shared his bed with A.Y. Ellis.

In 1837, Lincoln moved to Springfield, Illinois, to start his law career. For four years, he shared a bed with Joshua Speed, who came from an affluent Louisville, Kentucky, family. They exchanged intimate letters throughout Lincoln's life.

In 1839, Lincoln met Mary Todd, the daughter of a wealthy, politically connected lawyer. They were engaged a year later. When Speed left Springfield in 1840 to return to Louisville, Lincoln suffered from severe depression and canceled his engagement to Mary Todd. In 1841, Lincoln spent a month in Kentucky with Speed, who had married. Speed remained married for 40 years and never had children.

Lincoln returned to Springfield in 1842. At age 33, he married Mary Todd. Mary became increasingly emotionally volatile, especially after the loss of two of their four children, tragedies that left them both heartbroken.

Lincoln was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1847. He served for one term. In 1856, he joined the newly formed Republican Party. In 1860, the Republicans nominated Lincoln for president on a platform to prohibit the expansion of slavery into the Western territories. After Lincoln's election and before his inauguration, seven Southern states seceded from the Union, fearing abolition. After the Civil War began in April 1861, four Upper South states joined the Confederacy.

During the War, when Mary Todd traveled, Lincoln frequently shared his bed with Army Major David Derickson in what is now known as the Lincoln Bedroom.

Lincoln's sexuality is most notably explored in “The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln” (2005) by C.A. Tripp, who holds a Ph.D. in human sexuality. The Log Cabin Republicans, an organization of LGBTQ+ conservatives and allies, was named in Lincoln's memory.

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