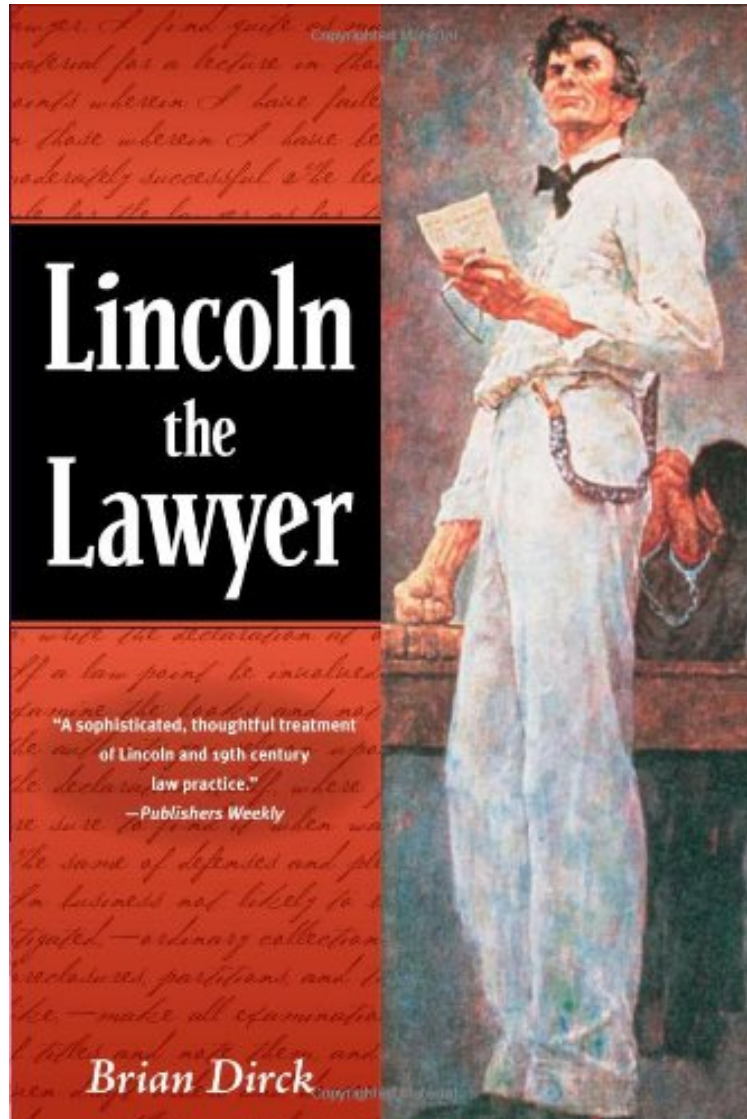


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Lincoln the Lawyer

Brian R. Dirck

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Brian R. Dirck : Lincoln the Lawyer before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lincoln the Lawyer:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed this bookBy Judith A. ArnoldI enjoyed this book! It is an exceptionally fine book on Lincoln as a lawyer and very fascinating! It shows how Lincoln had great integrity.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Lawyer in the White HouseBy ADBrownThe key to understanding Lincoln as president is to understand his decades as a lawyer. This book lays that out in fascinating detail. It's a real contribution to Lincoln scholarship.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Exceptional - Scholarly, yet

Accessible, Look at Lincoln's Legal Career By Jim Schmidt 4.51 stars - A terrific book by Lincoln scholar Brian Dirck - several points in its favor: 1) Dirck's knowledge/grasp of the large body of Lincoln biography really comes through, and he draws on numerous accounts, while weighing their probity judiciously; 2) great book not just for Lincoln enthusiasts but also for a look at legal education (such as it was) and practice, generally, in early/mid-1800s; 3) the discussion of the importance of his days on the 8th circuit was especially enjoyable; 4) his overall assessment of Lincoln's career is very fair and reasoned; 5) the excellent Bibliography will happily provide me with much additional reading on this subject. When possible, I recommend reading the book with a computer at hand and consulting the freely available online collection of the "Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln" at hand so you can refer to the available documentation of cases, litigants, etc., as they are mentioned. Criticisms of this book are very few... would like to have seen more on two points: a) readers of law under Lincoln - a brief mention is made of Elmer Ellsworth, but who else? The Lincoln Papers and/or Collected works include interesting inquiries from young men wanting to read under Lincoln, e.g. - he generally replied w/ advice but not with an invitation to join - why not? and b) how did Lincoln's presidency change the legal profession? It's interesting to note the single pension case mentioned in the book (and a very interesting one at that) - the Civil War launched an entire industry of pension attorneys - were there other changes as well? One of the best last lines of a book I've read in some time. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

This fascinating history explores Abraham Lincoln's legal career, investigating the origins of his desire to practice law, his legal education, his partnerships with John Stuart, Stephen Logan, and William Herndon, and the maturation of his far-flung practice in the 1840s and 1850s. Brian Dirck also examines Lincoln's clientele, how he charged his clients, and how he addressed judge and jury, as well as his views on legal ethics and the supposition that he never defended a client he knew to be guilty.

From Publishers Weekly This meticulous study of Lincoln leaves aside his well-covered presidency to spotlight his rather pedestrian career as an Illinois lawyer. Lincoln spent roughly 25 years practicing law, and most studies of this period cast it in terms of his later accomplishments: "admirers have done what they can to inject a little excitement into his legal life." Using the recently completed Lincoln Legal Papers Project, fourteen years of "unearthing every available primary source on Lincoln's law practice," history professor and author Dirck (Lincoln and Davis) applies the corrections, unearthing a more mundane, and more human, Lincoln. The vast majority of his nearly 4,000 cases were run-of-the-mill debt litigation, fairly standard for the growing credit economy. And although he had a few high-profile cases (murders, railroad lawsuits), Dirck's technique is to show more about Lincoln through everyday details - the masculine squalor of his Springfield office, the rough-and-tumble camaraderie of the circuit courts, and the quiet exactitude of his paperwork - than more sensational (and largely apocryphal) stories. Historians, legal scholars and practicing lawyers will find a sophisticated, thoughtful treatment of Lincoln and 19th century law practice, but Dirck's command of legal theory and straightforward prose make this book appropriate even for those without prior knowledge of the law or Lincoln's life. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist From the several thousand cases Abraham Lincoln litigated at the bar, historian Dirck delineates the categories of Lincoln's practice. He does so as a means of modulating the adulation for Lincoln - the lawyer that he detects in memoirists and early biographers. Although a few of Lincoln's cases wend their way into modern biographies, most do not, and for good reason: they were dreary instances of debt. On the cash-poor frontier of 1830s Illinois, promissory notes proliferated. Consequently, overextensions, with which Lincoln was personally familiar as a formerly indebted storeowner, were chronic on the legal landscape. With the advent of railroads, Lincoln diversified into defending them against liability, his chief area of historical legal significance, but credit and debt were his daily grind. Dirck also relates the custom of "riding the circuit" by way of developing the regard in which Lincoln was held by his colleagues: an amiable but remote companion, an able speaker in the courtroom. Dirck's is a readably nontechnical study, searchable for hints of the presidential persona in that of the practicing lawyer. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Dirck sheds light on how the original Great Commoner would become one of America's greatest lawyers in the presidential mansion. Readable and insightful, this volume deserves a place on every library shelf." --Journal of American History