

# Abraham lincoln's sexuality



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During the 19th century, the sexuality of a person was not a topic to discuss. Homosexuality was viewed a lot differently than it is in today's world. It was considered an act against God and was punishable by law.

Crimes against homosexual acts have been around for centuries dating back to our forefathers and still exist in the present day. In 1563, Queen Elizabeth I prohibited anal sex (2018). In 1814, sexual behaviors that were deemed to be unnatural were punishable in some countries and parts of the United States (2018). If crimes of such were committed, a man could lose his job, be put in psychiatric hospital, or potentially spend time in prison. Today, the topic of being gay is becoming normal. Gay marriages are now legal, and people are becoming more open with their sexual preference and speaking out about it publicly.

To speak about the sexuality of an American leader is a rather new topic. C. A. Tripp does exactly this in his book called *The Intimate World of Abraham Lincoln*. The book is a debate over Abraham Lincoln's sexuality. Tripp uses his psychiatric knowledge to depict Abraham Lincoln's life. He discusses his relationship with Mary Todd, and his relationships with the men in his life. Another topic that seems to betray Lincoln as a homosexual is the Log Cabin Republicans. These are the main three topics that seem to portray Lincoln as gay.

Abraham Lincoln started his early adulthood off having a hard time associating with women. In Lincoln's early adulthood, he opened a store with a man named William F. Berry. When he would work, he preferred to wait on the male customers over the women (Gienapp). He became a legislature a

couple years later. After leaving New Salem and returning, Lincoln found it easier to associate with women. Around this time, he started to notice a woman named Ann Rutledge. She was engaged to another man at first and this made Lincoln feel more comfortable to talk to her. They become good friends until her fiance left. Lincoln and Ann Rutledge began dating up until she passed away shortly after. He grieved her death for a long time. About one year after, he started seeing another woman named Mary Owens. Although Lincoln proposed to her, she declined his offer after receiving a letter from him.

Later, Abraham Lincoln met Mary Todd. He was mesmerized by Mary and her intelligence. The two were complete opposites. Lincoln was raised poor with very little manners. Mary Todd, on the other hand, was raised with wealth and eloquence. They dated for a while and got engaged in 1840. Shortly after their engagement, Lincoln became depressed. He wasn't sure if he was making the correct decision. Mary Todd and he decided to call off the engagement. This made Lincoln feel ever worse because he did not keep his commitment to her.

A little over a year after Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd broke off their engagement, they started seeing each other again. Lincoln and she got re-engaged and were married in November of 1842. Some people knew how he felt about her, and other people saw this as Lincoln keeping his promise. C. A. Tripp saw their marriage as troubled. Mary Todd, being raised the way she was, gave up a lot to be with him. She was constantly frustrated with Lincoln. She was always trying to teach him proper etiquette and fashion. He did not seem to care. They started out renting a small place above Globe Tavern. It <https://assignbuster.com/abraham-lincolns-sexuality/>

was small and like nothing Mary Todd was used to. However, they made it work. Lincoln later bought a house where they lived and raised their two kids until they moved to Washington.

Another strain in Lincoln's marriage, was the fact he was absent most of the time. He spent a lot of time of the road as a lawyer and politically. While he was not at home, he would travel with the men he worked with. This led some to believe that Lincoln had a more personal relationship with some of these men. C. A. Tripp talks about Joshua Speed, Billy Greene, and David Derickson. Tripp mentions Joshua Speed say that they shared a bed for four years. It was also said that during his presidency, whenever Mary Todd was away, he would share his bed with his bodyguard, David Derickson.

Starting in 1977, a group of republicans got together to show their support for homosexuality. The Log Cabin Republicans (LCR) is the name of the group of republicans that support equal rights for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community in the United States. How does this refer to Abraham Lincoln? Well, originally the group wanted to name themselves the Lincoln Club. This name was already taken so they decided to go with LCR (Piccoli 2015). Some people believed that Lincoln was a gay man, and this is why they chose to name the group after him.

In conclusion, C. A. Tripp ended his debate with Abraham Lincoln, one of America's greatest presidents, as a gay man (Smith). To me, the use of Lincoln in this book is not all appropriate. He is supposed to be among one of the greatest men of America. Portraying him as something he did not show himself may be altering how people see him today. However, the information

used, other than the mere opinion of him, remains faithful to what we are learning about Mary, his friends, and other important people who were in his life. Abraham Lincoln's relationship problems with men and women could have been related to his childhood. He was raised on a farm with his family and moved a lot do to his father. The death of Lincoln's mother may also have had something to do with his relationships with women. Living on a farm minimized his interaction with women other than his sisters, mother, and step-mother. He also did not attend much schooling, so he wasn't meeting and associating with girls his age. His family was the only real interaction he seemed to have with women. His close friendships with men seemed to be nothing more to this man. Lincoln was an intelligent man as well as a God fearing one.