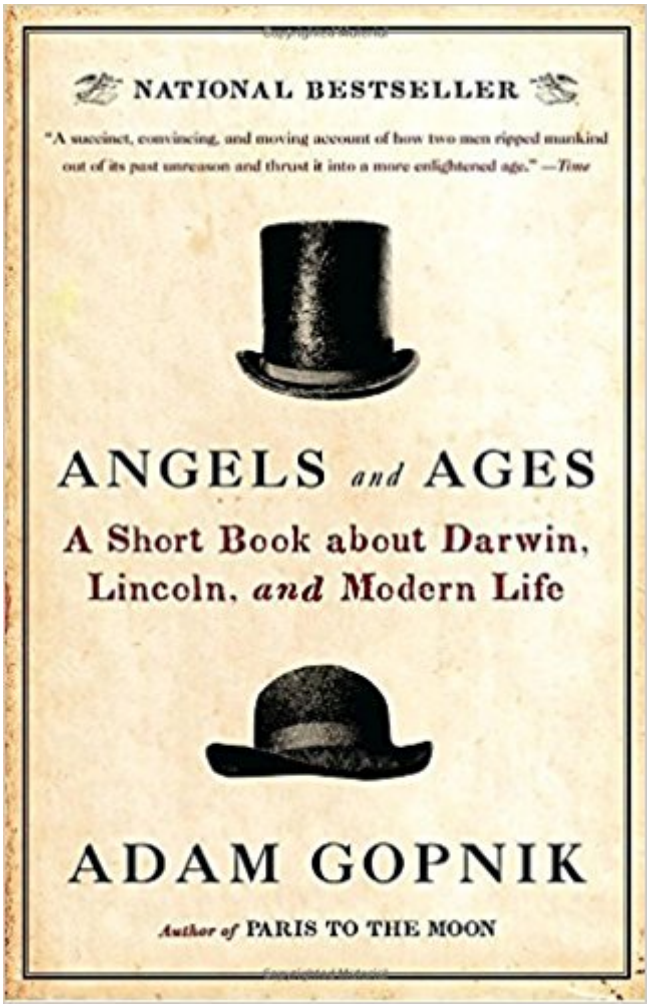
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Angels And Ages: Lincoln, Darwin, And The Birth Of The Modern Age



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Synopsis

In this captivating double life, Adam Gopnik searches for the men behind the icons of emancipation and evolution. Born by cosmic coincidence on the same day in 1809 and separated by an ocean, Lincoln and Darwin coauthored our sense of history and our understanding of manÃ¢â ¬â„¢s place in the world. Here Gopnik reveals these two men as they really were: family men and social climbers, ambitious manipulators and courageous adventurers, grieving parents and brilliant scholars. Above all we see them as thinkers and writers, making and witnessing the great changes in thought that mark truly modern times.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Vintage; 1 Reprint edition (February 9, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0307455300

ISBN-13: 978-0307455307

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.9 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 56 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #165,849 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #135 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Environmentalists & Naturalists #166 inÃ Â Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historiography #386 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Scientists

Customer Reviews

In the year of Darwins and Lincolns bicentennial, New Yorker contributor Gopnik (Through the Childrens Gate) cant resist the temptation to find parallels of cultural impact between the men, born on the same day in 1809, seeing them as twin exemplars of modernity. Gopnik notes that it is not what they have in common with each other that matters; it is what they have in common with us. And that commonality lies in the modern way of speaking (plainly) and thinking (scientific and liberal in the broad sense). But the comparison of the two men feels like a stretch, and Gopniks notion that the very idea of democracy was precarious until Lincoln freed the slaves isnt wholly convincing. In potted biographies of the two, Gopnik emphasizes the influence of Lincoln the lawyer on Lincoln the politician, and Darwins unusual abilities as a writer of science. Most successfully, Gopnik underscores the importance of eloquence in spreading new ideas, and his notion that Lincoln and

Darwin exemplify the modern predicamentÃ¢â ¬â •that humans must live in the space between what we know and what we feelÃ¢â ¬â •is resonant and worth thinking about. (Jan. 30) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Although Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln never met, Adam Gopnik forever links them in this collection of essays (some of the material first appeared in the New Yorker) that emphasizes the importance of two great men and reevaluates the role of 19th-century thinking in the modern world. Gopnik's magazine work and essays have given him a well-deserved reputation as an astute observer and chronicler of modern life, and critics generally view Gopnik's efforts in Angels and Ages as an admirable attempt to breathe new life into some dogmatic ideas. Other reviewers, however, note a familiarity and disjointedness to the pieces and wonder about the tenuous connection between Lincoln and Darwin. The book is worth reading, though, for the author's unquestioned skill as a craftsman and the light he sheds on what has become, for many, settled history.Copyright 2009 Bookmarks Publishing LLC --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The brilliance and insights of Adam Gopnik who makes an unexpected link to Darwin and Abraham Lincoln.

I really liked the comparison of Darwin's and Lincoln's intellectual progress and the ways in which they communicated world-changing ideas.

Adam Gopnik is always worth paying attention to. Reading this book is a wonderful experience.

the thought that these two men were born on the same day and would completely change the way we look at thing is amazing. the book was easy to read and made me want to read more about them both.

The marriage between Darwin and Lincoln which Gopnik makes the uniting principle of this book doesn't work. The essays would have been better off presented separately--say, in a magazine like The New Yorker, which, as it happens, is how they started life. That both men were born on the same day of the same year, and that both were so influential (Darwin particularly so) in their time

and after, is not sufficient to overcome the artificiality of so joining them (and only them).This short book is well worth reading (if you missed it in magazine form) for the truly fascinating and poignant first essay on Darwin--written in such a heartfelt and observant way. (The essays on Lincoln seem less engaging to me--somehow the book feel more devoted to Darwin, and so, a little unbalanced.) Gopnik's explorations of how Darwin and how Lincoln came to view religion and death over the course of their lives--differently from each other--were the most compelling aspect of the book, and seemed the most revealing about the emerging modern world. A curious little book--even if the Darwin/Lincoln aspect fails to achieve its purpose, still full of insight.

An excellent illustration of the sociologic impact of Lincon and Darwin. Angels and Ages relates how these two men stood apart from their contemporaries and the impact these men had in changing social perceptions. This is not a dry, academic book. Perhaps Mr. Gopnik's biggest success is the humanity he imbues to both subjects, introducing the reader to these men on a more personal level. A very enjoyable read!

Excellent for any thoughtful person. Suits as a clue for those with modern notions of absolute truth. Serious thought is warranted.

Gopnik's literary style and superb analysis cover a great deal of ground in comparing historical figures not easily compared and contrasted for insights into "Modern Life."

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