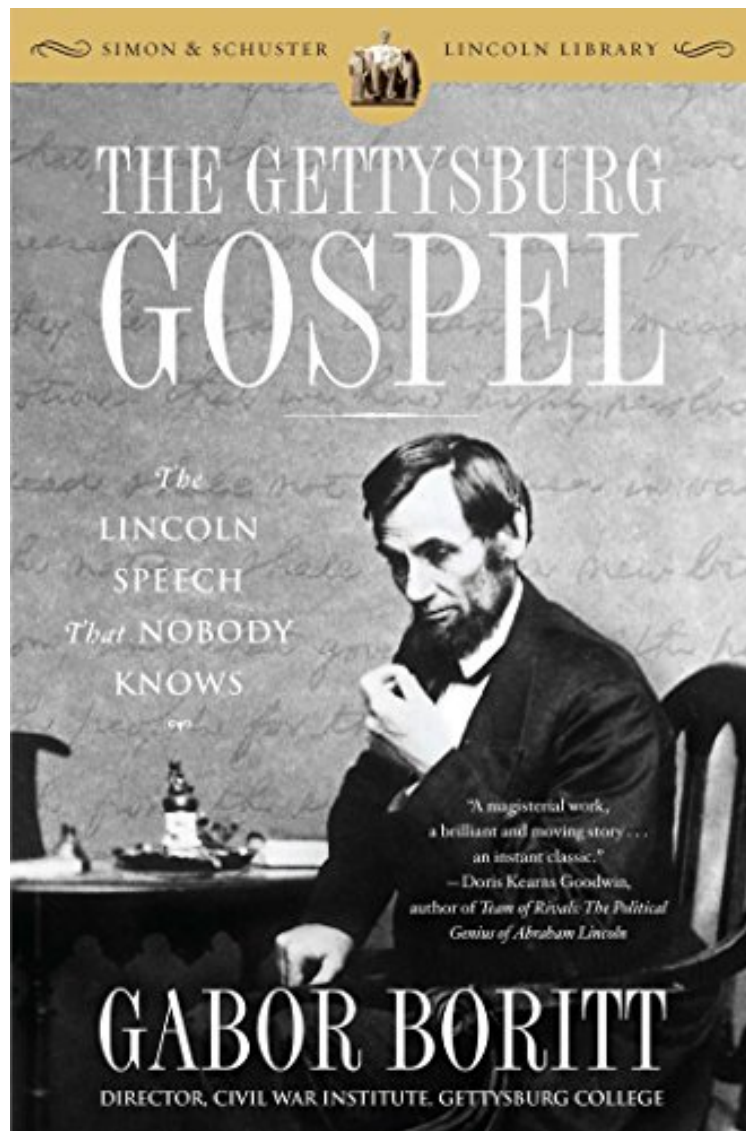


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Gabor Boritt

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Gabor Boritt : The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows (Simon Schuster Lincoln Library) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows (Simon Schuster Lincoln Library):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A New Interpretation of the Gettysburg Address By Paul After reading this book, I have a new appreciation of the Gettysburg Address. While many people have an understanding of what Lincoln said, Gabor Boritt provides us a solid background on what Gettysburg went through after the battle. There was not adequate resources to care for the wounded, bury the dead, and dispose of the thousands of horses and mules that were killed in the battle. There was great courage displayed by many of the women of the town, and from outside of Gettysburg, but the first few days after the battle, Gettysburg was nothing more than a makeshift hospital. Every home had wounded; every church and public building converted to help the wounded, and doctors working at amputations until they had to be held up. And, when Lincoln did come to the dedication on Nov 19 1863, the primary speaker was Edward Everett and it was his masterful oration that made the greatest impact on the audience and the press. Lincoln's spoken words were not fully appreciated until decades after the event. If you read a book and get nothing new out of it, you have wasted your time. That is not the case here. This book will give you a new insight on Lincoln and his words at Gettysburg that will live for centuries.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Boritt delivers a lot of information about everything Gettysburg... except Lincoln's speech itself. By Gary Hogatt I recently read Ronald C. White, Jr.'s excellent Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural, and was motivated to read more about Abraham Lincoln's other great speeches. That brought me to Gabor Boritt's 2006 history The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows. While interesting, I was expecting something more like White's work, which focuses on analysis of the speech with some info on the lead-up and reaction to the speech. Instead, Boritt devotes his book to the period between the Battle of Gettysburg and the time Lincoln takes the stage at Gettysburg and the time he gets off the stage and people start reacting to the speech. Of the speech itself, you might conceivably miss it if you blink. To be fair to Boritt, I learned a lot about the Battle of Gettysburg and what happened at Gettysburg between the battle and the dedication of the national cemetery. This is interesting stuff, and does a good job of giving you a context of Lincoln's speech. Boritt is also thorough in his analysis of the Gettysburg Address in American culture and how it vied with the Emancipation Proclamation as the single message of the martyred president. Unfortunately, there's very little analysis of Lincoln's actual Gettysburg address. Much more time is spent on how and when he wrote it than why he wrote what he wrote. It just seems odd to that Boritt left this entire topic unexplored when devoting so much effort to every other facet of the Gettysburg story. Boritt actually spends a lot more time talking about the content of other Gettysburg speech that nobody knows, the main oration from Edward Everett. You get a fair amount how and why Everett wrote the speech he wrote, and an entire appendix is dedicated to presenting Everett's speech in full. I actually appreciate this part of the book, as - while I had known Lincoln's speech was really a short message delivered after Everett's - I had known little of Everett's speech myself. It's actually a pretty good speech, if not in a class with Lincoln's. I listened to Tantor Media's unabridged 2006 production of The Gettysburg Gospel, as read by Michael Kramer. The production was solid, and Kramer's steady and straightforward narration fit the historical nature of the book well. The production runs approximately 10 hours. Overall, I learned quite a bit about every part of the Gettysburg story except Lincoln's speech. While I appreciate that, I feel like Boritt missed the mark by, I can only assume, taking for granted everyone coming to The Gettysburg Gospel already had a detailed knowledge of the actual Gettysburg Address itself and that he didn't need to directly address that topic himself. While Boritt's book is a solid background on the story of the speech, don't expect to learn much about why Lincoln gave the speech he did.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A New Birth Of Freedom By Konrei We all know---or think we know---the story of the Gettysburg Address; how Abraham Lincoln jotted a few words on the back of an envelope while on a train en route to dedicate the new military cemetery at Gettysburg; how he gave the speech and the crowd was moved to reverent silence; and how, ever after, the Gettysburg Address has been a mainstay of the secular religion that is the idea of America. Except, as Gabor Boritt, the Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College shows us, that story is all wrong---no, not wrong; myth. And myths do not have to have happened in order to be true. The hard core of that myth comes from a little book called THE PERFECT TRIBUTE by Mary Shipman Andrews, first published in 1906, and republished and reimagined as a stage play, a movie and a TV show many times since. Boritt does not even tell us this until near the end of his text; other parts of the Gettysburg story are more crucial and contributed to the writing of THE PERFECT TRIBUTE, but Andrews' mythologizing has become the accepted history. Even scholarly sources tend to focus on the magnitude of Lincoln's Address: "Lincoln was preceded by a famous orator of the day who droned on for two hours. Nothing is remembered of what he said." Occasionally, a source will identify the "famous orator" as Edward Everett, and change the "nothing" to "little," but Boritt highlights the truth that in 1863 and for years, nay decades, thereafter, when the term "Gettysburg Address" was used, the term referred to Everett's speech. Everett's speech was very well known. A pundit of his day, and a masterful public speaker, Everett did what was common at the time; he republished his speech in numerous newspapers and journals, and so people who were not at Gettysburg experienced the speech indirectly (more so than his live audience, because Everett edited his remarks on the podium). Boritt reproduces Everett's speech in full in one of the numerous appendices to THE GETTYSBURG GOSPEL. At over 11,000 words, it is ponderous for a 21st Century audience, but it is just what a 19th Century audience would have expected and loved, full of allusions to Athenian democracy, a detailed (if glorified) version of the battle, and a paean to the honored dead who'd fallen on the field. (The other

appendices analyze the different written versions of the Lincoln speech in scholarly detail, and comprise 50% of the entire book.) Lincoln's remarks were not pre-published. They ran to only 276 words. And though newspapers of the day published Everett's remarks in full (often having a supplied printed copy to work with) far fewer papers published the President's remarks, which were described as "rough and unpolished," minimized as "a few suitable dedicatory remarks," outright attacked in the Copperhead press and the South, since "In speaking of 'a new birth of freedom' the President proved he must have negro blood," and absurdly misquoted: "The refinished work" ('as in furniture?' Boritt asks parenthetically) and "The dead will not remember what we say here." You think? Indeed, Boritt shows us that public criticism of Lincoln was, if anything, uglier and less restrained than public criticism of any modern President, including Barack Obama. The reality of Lincoln's speech is that, as Professor Boritt shows us, it did not come to the fore until after the end of Reconstruction and after the systemic re-disenfranchisement of African-Americans through Jim Crow was accomplished at the end of the 19th Century. As "The Great Emancipator" faded from the (White) American consciousness, the "Gettysburg Lincoln" took his place. The scroll that Lincoln grasps or reads from in innumerable paintings and sculptures is often now identified as the Address, where it was originally identified (and usually meant to be) the Emancipation Proclamation. The effective erasure of the Proclamation became a part of the reunification process for the country. Not for nothing does the great Lincoln Memorial in Washington have carved in its walls the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural, but it lacks the Proclamation, which affected millions of human beings immediately and forever. But if it supplanted the idea of the Emancipator, the Gettysburg Address added immeasurably to the dignity in which the Office of the President is cloaked (if not always the men who fill that office). While Lincoln was invited to Gettysburg as an adjunct speaker to Everett, any President would now be the keynote speaker, and his words would be faithfully reported and thoroughly discussed. The iconic Lincoln who arose after Gettysburg (aided and abetted by his martyrdom at war's end) redefined the Presidency forever as a magisterial office of great power, an office commanding a bully pulpit, and an office, which, when filled by flawed humans of good intent, can elevate both the man and the nation to greater things. In that sense, every President since Abraham Lincoln IS Abraham Lincoln.

The words Abraham Lincoln spoke at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg comprise perhaps the most famous speech in history. Many books have been written about the Gettysburg Address and yet, as Lincoln scholar Gabor Boritt shows, there is much that we don't know about the speech. In *The Gettysburg Gospel* he tears away a century of myths, lies, and legends to give us a clear understanding of the greatest American's greatest speech. In the aftermath of the bloodiest battle ever fought in North America, the little town of Gettysburg was overwhelmed. This was where Lincoln had to come to explain why the horror of war must continue. Boritt shows how Lincoln responded to the politics of the time, as well as how and when he wrote the various versions of his remarks. Few people initially recognized the importance of the speech, but over the years it would grow into American scripture, acquiring new and broader meanings. Based on years of scholarship as well as a deep understanding of Lincoln and of Gettysburg itself, *The Gettysburg Gospel* is an indispensable book for anyone interested in the Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, or American history

From Publishers Weekly Starred . In this engrossing study, Civil War scholar Boritt (editor of *The Lincoln Enigma*) offers a revealing history of that most famous piece of American oratory, the Gettysburg Address. Boritt opens with an evocative description of a stench-filled, corpse-strewn Gettysburg on July 4, 1863, after the battle. When Lincoln arrived a few months later to dedicate the national cemetery, he had an important task: "to explain to the people," writes Boritt, in plain, powerful prose, "why the bloodletting must go on." After vividly recreating the delivery of the address, Boritt discusses the speech's mixed reception. Republican newspapers praised it; Democrats, viewing it as the beginning of Lincoln's re-election campaign, belittled or tried to ignore it; one Democratic newspaper called the speech a "mawkish harangue." Just as bad, Lincoln's graceful oratory was garbled in transmission to newspapers. Most interesting is Boritt's recounting of how, after Lincoln's assassination, the speech was mostly forgotten until the 1880s, when Gettysburg increasingly became a symbol of a reunion between North and South, and the Gettysburg Address took on the sheen of America's "sacred scriptures." Lincoln's poetic language, says Boritt, helps the speech live on, and the message of "sacrificial redemption" still speaks to Americans today. This elegant account will delight readers who enjoyed Garry Wills's *Lincoln at Gettysburg*. (Lengthy appendixes parsing drafts of the speech, however, will interest mainly aficionados.) 16 pages of bw illus., and bw illus. throughout. (Nov. 19) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Like Garry Wills in *Lincoln at Gettysburg* (1992), Boritt explores the circumstances of the Gettysburg Address. Setting the stage for his rhetorical analysis, Boritt describes the Gettysburg area in the months following the July 1863 battle. Corpses, burial workers, and field hospitals reminded visitors of the battle's scale of devastation and, so it appeared, the incompleteness of the Union victory. To comfort and encourage, then, was the agenda of the cemetery ceremony at which Lincoln spoke the following November. Famously preceded by a conventionally orotund funeral oration, Lincoln's remarks possessed such austerity and aspiration that they became a consecrated credo of American democracy. Existing in several

variants in Lincoln's hand and in contemporaneous news accounts, the remarks prompt questions about which text contains the authentic Gettysburg Address, an intriguing but ultimately inconclusive endeavor that Boritt works over in appendixes. With his narrative focus on the dedication of November 19, 1863, Boritt's account has a freshness appealing in such an exhaustively examined subject. Gilbert Taylor Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "Elegant and absorbing...a definitive book." -- David Herbert Donald, author of Lincoln "Revelatory...After Boritt, the Gettysburg Address can never be read, heard, or interpreted the same way again." -- Harold Holzer, author of Lincoln at Cooper Union "A magisterial work, a brilliant and moving story...an instant classic." -- Doris Kearns Goodwin, author of Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln