

AT THE MOVIES

Summary of 'Lincoln'

"Lincoln" is a 2012 American epic historical drama film directed by Steven Spielberg. With the nation embroiled in still another year with the high death count of Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln (Daniel Day-Lewis) brings the full measure of his passion, humanity and political skill to what would become his defining legacy: to end the war and permanently abolish slavery through the 13th Amendment. Having great courage, acumen and moral fortitude, Lincoln pushes forward to compel the nation, and those in government who oppose him, to aim toward a greater good for all mankind.

Biography of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution declared that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution officially abolished slavery in America, and was ratified on December 6, 1865, after the conclusion of the United States of America's Civil War, which ran from April 12, 1861 to May 9, 1865.

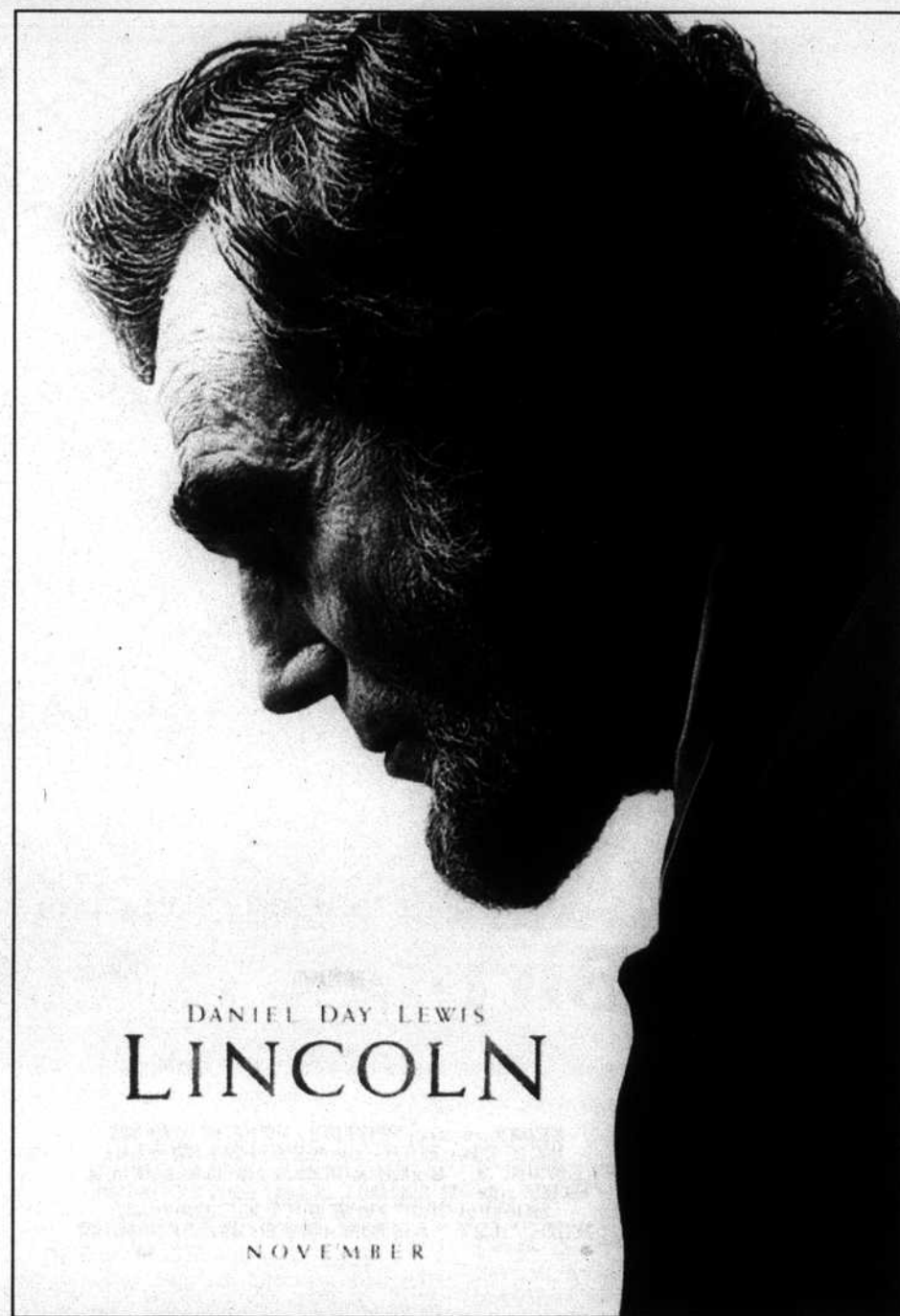
President Abraham Lincoln and his fellow Republicans knew that the Emancipation Proclamation (Lincoln issued the final Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863) might be viewed as a temporary war measure and not outlaw slavery once the Civil War ended, so they focused on passing a constitutional amendment that would do so.

The 13th Amendment was passed by

the U.S. Senate (which was dominated by Republicans) on April 8, 1864. However, the amendment died in the U.S. House of Representatives as Democrats rallied in the name of states' rights.

The presidential election of 1864 brought Lincoln back to the White House along with Republican majorities in both legislative bodies. On Jan. 31, 1865, the amendment passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 119 to 56, seven votes above the necessary two-thirds majority. Several Democrats abstained, but the 13th Amendment was sent to the states for ratification, which came on Dec. 6, 1865. With the passage of the amendment, the "peculiar institution" that had indelibly shaped American history was eradicated.

Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865, eight months before the 13th Amendment was officially adopted in December 1865.



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