

Discussion Questions for *The Madness of Mary Lincoln* by Jason Emerson

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. Did this book alter your opinion of Mary Todd Lincoln? Of Robert Todd Lincoln? Do you admire or dislike Mary and Robert? Why?
3. Did you learn anything? If so, what information in the book was new to you? What was the one most interesting thing that you learned?
4. Did any parts of the book surprise you? If so, what?
5. Was the author's diagnosis of Mary Lincoln as suffering bipolar disorder convincing?
6. Do you think Robert Lincoln acted responsibly toward his mother, or was he the villain as he is typically portrayed?
7. Why do you think the Bradwells got involved in Mary Lincoln's case?
8. Do you think Mary affected Abraham Lincoln, or was affected by him, in significant ways?
9. Do you think the newly discovered Mary Lincoln letters add much to the understanding of her life and mental illness?
10. Does the author present information in a way that is interesting and insightful, and if so, how does he achieve this? Did the book increase your interest in Mary Todd Lincoln? Is the book objective, or do you think the author has an agenda?
11. Do any of you have experience with a family member or friend with Bipolar Disorder?
12. Are there questions you would like to ask?