



The American Journey of Barack Obama

LIFE Magazine (Editor)

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<!--StartFragment--> For decades Americans have turned to LIFE to see, understand, and remember the most important events and people of our time. Just as LIFE once opened up the glittering Kennedy White House, LIFE now focuses its lens on Barack Obama. *The American Journey of Barack Obama* covers the candidate from his childhood and adolescence to his time as editor of *The Harvard Law Review* and his Chicago activist years, culminating with the excitement and fervor of the historic 2008 Democratic National Convention. The unfolding drama of Obama's life and political career is cinematic in scope, and never has it been presented so compellingly. In addition to a powerful array of photographs that were taken by many of the country's greatest photographers (and some that were snapped, in the quiet moments, by Obama family members themselves), this book also includes a Foreword by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, an incisive narrative biography and original essays by some of our finest writers, including Gay Talese, Charles Johnson, Melissa Fay Greene, Andrei Codrescu, Fay Weldon, Richard Norton Smith, Bob Greene and several others. Many readers will find a new understanding of Obama. All readers will feel that they are bearing witness to a singular, undeniably American story.

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The American Journey of Barack Obama Details

Date : Published October 7th 2008 by Little, Brown and Company (first published 2008)

ISBN :

Author : *LIFE Magazine (Editor)*

Format : Hardcover 176 pages

Genre : Politics, Nonfiction, Biography, History, Presidents

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From Reader Review The American Journey of Barack Obama for online ebook

K.D. Absolutely says

My first book about Barack Obama. I am a Filipino and I have no business meddling in the American politics. However, the United States of America is still the world's greatest superpower so when America sneezes, the whole world gets sick.

I was in Ohio on a business trip during the 2nd and 3rd debates between Obama and McCain in the fall of 2008. I watched those on the television inside my hotel room. I do not religiously follow the politics in the US because if you are in the Philippines, your plate is already overflowing of too much politics everyday. I'd rather follow the US economic situation rather than politics because I work for a multinational US-based company. Somehow, if the US economy is not doing well, my paycheck also is not doing well and my wife's passion towards me is also not doing well.

Looking at the TV screen, I could not imagine a non-white man becoming the next US President. All my life, I had been used to the image of a white man delivering speeches in the White House. So, I thought I was rooting for McCain: a Vietnam hero and who fitted the role to a T. But when I heard Obama answered the questions also eloquently and brilliantly, I thought it would be a tight race. After seeing a white man on the TV screen all my life, Obama seemed like a new menu in my favorite restaurant that was too hard to pass up.

I have both read the hardbound copy of this book (that my brother passed on to me) and listened to its audio version (for four days in my car to and from the office). It was a quick entertaining read because of the beautiful *so very-Life* pictures of Obama's life including of course his family. At the end of the book are essays about Obama by well-known authors. My favorites are those of Gay Talese and Bob Greene. Their writings are easier to understand even for someone like me who did not follow the events that led Obama to the White House.

Things I learned from this book:

1. Michelle is also a lawyer. Some people voted for Obama because they felt that Michelle would be a good president someday.
2. Obama has 2 half-sisters and 5 half-brothers. What I knew prior to this book was that Obama's mother was white and his father was black but I did not know that "he has siblings scattered all around the world."
3. Obama became the US president at the age of 45. Prior to that, his only experience in the government was his 6 years stay in the *Illinois Senate* as the Senator from the 13th district and his 3 years and 10 months stay in the *US Senate*. Well, of course he was the President of Harvard Law Review, a professor, civil rights attorney, etc.
4. He graduated valedictorian in high school and earned scholarship at Harvard Law School where he graduated as J.D. magna cum laude. His father, Obama senior, left Obama junior (2 years old then) and his wife in Hawaii when Obama senior earned Harvard scholarship. Obama senior only visited Obama junior once when the latter was 9 years old. Senior died in an automobile accident in 1982.

5. Obama's white mother, Ann Dunham, died of ovarian cancer at the age of 52. She was still able to read the draft of Obama's first book *Dreams From My Father*.

6. Obama played basketball very well in high school. He was called **Barry O'Bomber** because he was a sharpshooter.

Incidentally, Obama is now campaigning for his re-election. I did not time my reading of this book and writing this review for that. I only saw this audio book being sold brand new for P45 (\$1) when a big bookstore near my office participated in a mall-wide weekend payday sale. It felt too irresistible because I remembered that my brother passed on to me his coffee table edition a couple of years ago and it was already gathering dust in my bookshelf so I said why not listen to the audio and browse at the pictures? However, the narration was beautiful yet short and I ended up reading the whole book.

Did this book made me think whether Obama deserves his second term? As I said, I follow the news about the US economy. So, I'd rather not give my opinion. The US Politics is not my business as a Filipino. As I said, we already have too much politics going on in our country and that's more than enough for me.

Wendi says

Perfect for : Personal reading, Gift book, Great coffee table/office book

In a nutshell: This is an absolutely beautiful book. The pictures are wonderfully candid and bright, and the information contained within the book gives us some wonderful information on the life of our soon-to-be 44th President of the United States. With an inspirational foreword by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, the book starts by allowing readers to see Obama's family tree, showing an impressive seven half-brothers and half-sisters! We then get to see photos (and read information) of his family, his childhood, his school years, and his early career and his entry into politics. As readers, we also get the opportunity to see him as a boy, a man, a teacher, a husband, a father, a politician, etc. This is a wonderful look at a fascinating life. There is no doubt that readers will learn a lot about our 44th President, and they will get to see the many sides of Barack Obama!

My Review:

This is a beautiful book, which contains a multitude of pictures and facts about the 44th President of the United States. It was a joy to leaf through the pages of the book, pausing to read the captions of the pictures, or the information contained on the pages. Regardless of your political views, this is an interesting book, which I certainly recommend!

Characters: As a non-fiction book, the "characters" are Barack Obama and his family. We get to have a candid look at his life growing up, and as an adult. We also get to learn tidbits of the rest of his family, making his story that much more interesting.

Story-Line: This is the story of Barack Obama's life. It is amazing in that his father is from Kenya, and he has had to work hard to achieve his accomplishments.

Readability: The information in the book is easy to read, and broken up into a great time-line with lots of pictures. The pictures within the book are amazing, and fun to look through.

Overall: I highly recommend this book. It is a beautiful representation of an amazing life. Regardless of your

political views, this is a wonderful way to gain some insight into the life of the 44th President of the United States. I particularly loved the photographs of him with his wife and/or girls. He seems to be a wonderful family man. This book would be a great addition to a personal book collection, as well as a professional/business collection (why not put a copy in your office or lobby?).

Andi M. says

A beautiful quality book about the life of 44th president, Barack Obama. While I didn't expect to learn any new info about Obama considering all the reading I've done about him, I did learn quite a lot; more info about his family in Africa, especially. It's an even-keel kind of book. It's not all roses and daisies, as it critiques him and his candidacy to some extent as well. Very good book for those who want a keepsake to remember this election or a good biography on Obama.

Teddy says

This book is what you would expect from Life books! There are photographs of just about every stage of Obama's life. As a young boy, teenager, and as an adult. There are photos of him with each of his parents and grandmother and many of him with his beautiful family. There is even a photo of Barack and ...

[Read the full review Here:](#)

<http://teddyrose.blogspot.com/2008/12...>

Daniel says

He is

Bobbie Crawford says

The American Journey of Barack Obama

Written By: The Editors of Time LIFE

Published By: Little, Brown and Company, a Division of the Hachette Book Group Inc., 2008, First Edition, 176 pages, over-sized hardcover
ISBN 978-0316045605

The American Journey of Barack Obama is a rich collection of photographs and information about the new US President! I really enjoyed reading this book as there is not an over abundance of detailed political information and strategising, though it still talks about President Obama's rise in the political arena. This book focuses on President Obama's family and his diverse upbringing. It tells of his multiculturalism and his strong desire to unite the United States, for the betterment of all.

I was so pleased by the overabundance of the large, colourful photographs, which were so telling, all on their own. I was delighted to see...

**Please follow the link to read the whole review:

<http://bookreviewsbybobbie.wordpress....>

Doree Burt says

I'll admit it--I'm a fan of the First Family. This would have received more stars from me if the book included more photos and a little less text. It's a LIFE book, so I expected more visuals and, let's face it, he's cute (no disrespect) and the camera loves him.

Jeanette "Astute Crabbist" says

Yippee, we now have a president I want to read about!

OOSA says

Timely

“The American Journey of Barack Obama” is excellent and relevant! It detailed some of the controversial things in his campaign and destroyed a lot of myths before they got started...like how he entered politics, his role as editor/reviewer of the “Harvard Law Review” and a general tenacity to be the best of multiple worlds without insulting others. “The American Journey of Barack Obama” is highly recommended, definitely deserving of 5 stars and greater because it was published before the election. This book has universal appeal to inform!

Reviewed by: Gail

Freda Mans-Labianca says

I enjoyed listening to this audiobook about Barack Obama. What a fascinating man he is, and there was so much I had no idea of.

It's odd how being Canadian I am so fascinated by him. I think that when he got elected it struck a cord with the whole world, and not just America. For me, I see someone who wants to do the right thing for all people, not just America, though being president it is a priority. I have learned through listening to this story, that family is very important, as well as morality, truth and humanity. I feel like there is more we can all do in our lives and worlds, and maybe Obama is the leader who can show everyone the way. Live by example you know.

If you enjoy audiobooks, then get a copy and give it a listen. I am sure it will have a profound effect on you too. If you prefer books, then grab a copy that way.

Kelly says

A gorgeous coffee table book; nothing more, nothing less.

(Full disclosure: I received a free copy of this book for review through Library Thing's Early Reviewer program.)

I've long been a fan of the Time/Life glossy pictorial hardcovers (e.g., the Time Annual Year in Review and Life Album: Pictures of the Year series), so when Life's THE AMERICAN JOURNEY OF BARACK OBAMA became available through Library Thing's Early Reviewer program, I jumped at the chance to review a copy. Though I'm not an Obama voter – I supported Kucinich in the primaries, McKinney/Clemente in the general election – I found myself moved by the historic nature of his campaign (and victory) nonetheless. In particular, the photos and speeches which came out of the 2008 campaign cycle have proven poignant and inspirational; considering previous Life volumes, I hoped that this book might capture some of the more memorable campaign moments.

Since THE AMERICAN JOURNEY OF BARACK OBAMA is largely a work of photojournalism, let's start with the photographs. TAJOBO is a gorgeous, colorful book, filled to the brim with photos: Obama/Dunham and, later, Obama/Robinson family snapshots; photos of Barack Obama during his college years; pictures taken throughout Obama's political career; candid shots of Barack and Michelle with children Sasha and Malia; and, of course, a number of photos from the campaign trail, including a few stills of the Obamas working the daytime talk show circuit. If you followed the 2008 elections, no doubt you'll recognize some of the more iconic photographs, such as the one of Obama, leaning back in an office chair, with a phone nestled snugly between ear and shoulder, feet propped up on a desk - showing two very beaten, worn soles.

Sadly, Life only includes a few photos of Obama's supporters, taken during his speeches and rallies; of the shots they do include, most are of the stadium-sized crowds, rather than of individual supporters. For me, these have been some of the most moving and emotional images from the campaign trail: seeing African American children and adults interact with Obama and react to his speeches. It's a shame that Life didn't feature more of these photographs.

In regards to the biographical text of TAJOBO, the book is primarily divided into five sections: Roots, Boyhood, A Young Man on the Rise, Chicago and Washington. The biographical section is largely

laudatory, as you might expect; after all, one purchases Life pictorials for the photos – the hard hitting journalism, not so much.

The final section, Aspects of Obama, features twelve essays from “fine thinkers” (while I probably take in more CSPAN than your average American, none of the names ring a bell), with the goal of examining how Obama is viewed “by the black man and the white, the cultural anthropologist and the historian, the northerner and the southerner, the immigrant and the foreigner, the woman who suffered when Hillary got beat.” While this section practically begs for an essay critical of Obama – just one, mind you! – the editors at Life wouldn’t hear of it. Likewise, the specter of racism is discussed in depth, as it should be – as I noted above, this was a historic election cycle. However, 2008 was notable not just because it saw the first African American presidential candidate on a major party ticket – but because he was competing against the first viable female candidate in the Democratic primaries. Just as race(ism) was at the forefront in 2008, so too was sex(ism) – but the misogyny directed at Hillary Clinton and her supporters (and later, Sarah Palin and her supporters), is barely given a nod. But again, I expected as much when I requested the book from LT; a masterpiece of political journalism, TAJOBO is not.

To be fair, THE AMERICAN JOURNEY OF BARACK OBAMA doesn’t claim to be a comprehensive biography or exhaustive journalistic endeavor. Rather, it’s a pretty book, meant to commemorate the first African American President of the United States. (I somewhat doubt that Life would have released THE AMERICAN JOURNEY OF JOHN MCCAIN, had Obama lost the election, you know?) In this, the editors at Life largely succeed; and yet, because Obama’s American journey is also a journey shared by the many people of color who supported Obama, campaigned on his behalf, braved harsh weather and crushing throngs in order to hear him speak, and celebrated with him when he won the election, I can’t help but feel as though more of the photos in this (photo)essay could have – should have – been dedicated to them: “Yes WE Can.”

[http://www.easyvegan.info/2008/12/17/...](http://www.easyvegan.info/2008/12/17/)

Wisteria Leigh says

This colorful chronological compilation of stunning, photos and candid text makes this book an enjoyable read. This is no simple coffee table book. It is a chapter by chapter biography starting with Barack Obama's intriguing family tree to his rocket rise to top political ranks.[return][return]The introduction by Ted Kennedy is inspiring. He sets the tone and theme of the book when he says of Barack Obama,[return][return]"he refuses to be trapped in the patterns of the past." [return][return]How many of us have put our hope and faith in this man to lead our country during these tenuous time?[return][return]Published in October 2008, prior to knowing the election outcome, this beautifully crafted book follows the life of Barack Obama and his orbital spin from Senator in 2004 to Presidential Candidate in 2008. His personality shines through each chapter with dialog and exceptional photography capturing just right moments in time.[return][return]He admits being shaped by his maternal grandparents and mother. It was fascinating to read that his mother was a child of the 60's who had a Utopian view of a better life common to youth of the time. She instilled in him her ideals of fairness and freedom. It was noted that Barack remembers his mother's lessons of tolerance, equality and standing up for the disadvantaged. Themes he echoed in his campaigning.[return][return]This is the type of short biographical stories, snippets and sketches of Barack Obama that are presented in this multi-chapter book. The chapters are, The Family Tree, Roots, Boyhood, Young Man on the Rise, Chicago, Washington, Aspects of Obama, and lastly, The Journey Continues.[return][return]Fascinating stories, captivating pictures and a compelling subject will make everyone want this on their Christmas Wish List. Highly recommended.

Ice says

For decades Americans have turned to LIFE to see, understand, and remember the most important events and people of our time. Just as LIFE once opened up the glittering Kennedy White House, LIFE now focuses its lens on Barack Obama.

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Kathy (Bermudaonion) says

The American Journey of Barack Obama by the Editors of Life is a beautiful coffee table book. It tells the story of Barack Obama from birth through the Presidential race, but it was printed before Election Day. This book doesn't really introduce any new material but it does a nice job of presenting Barack's history in a easily read, conversational tone. As would be expected from Life, the book is filled with beautiful, full-color photographs, some of which were not previously published.

My favorite part of the book is the essays in the back from "12 fine thinkers and writers," including Gay Talese and Andrei Codresu. These essays and the photographs make this book unique among the Barack Obama books.

Mom (Tash) says

I decided I should learn a little about our new President. This book was a good choice for me. It was very informative, especially in its explanation of Obama's family history, quite a genealogical potpourri. The pictures, true to the LIFE tradition, were great! After reading about him, I can't help but be impressed with Obama's self confidence and drive.
