

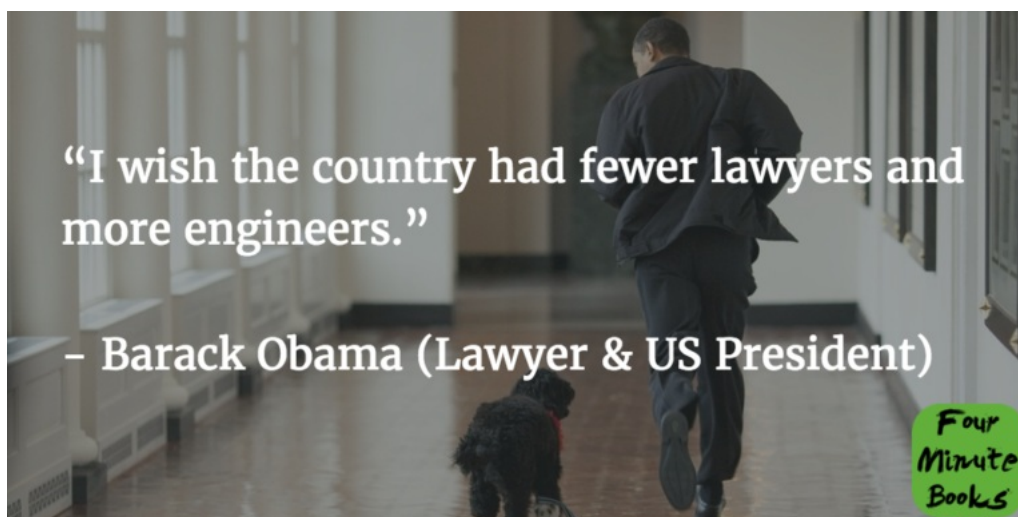
The Audacity Of Hope Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *The Audacity Of Hope explains Barack Obama's personal, political and spiritual beliefs, on which he based his 2008 presidential election campaign, which made him the first African-American president of the United States of America.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Have you ever seen the speech that made Barack Obama president? No? First off, it wasn't any of the speeches he delivered during his campaign. Not the presidential debate or the inaugural address. The speech that really made him president was given long before he ever announced to run.

In 2004, Obama spoke at the Democratic National Convention in Boston, during John Kerry's presidential campaign. His keynote address, entitled "The Audacity of Hope" was by far the best speech of the convention. The then-senator was suddenly famous. This speech put him on the map as a serious presidential candidate.

The phrase "audacity of hope" is one Obama picked up from his former pastor, who gave a sermon about a George Frederic Watts painting called "Hope" in 1990. *The Audacity Of Hope* expanded on his ideas from the speech and laid out much of the topics of what would become his presidential campaign in 2008.

Here are 3 lessons to show you what kind of American politics Barack Obama believes in:

1. All Americans are united by two central beliefs: freedom and community.
2. Politicians become a lot like their sponsors, which makes it hard for them to do their job.
3. Today's international battles are battles of ideas, which can't be won with weapons.

Ready for a glimpse into the mind of the skinny kid with a funny name, who's come a long, long way? Let's go!

Lesson 1: Freedom and community are the two central beliefs of the American people.

The groundwork for Obama's political work is based on a solid understanding of what the core beliefs of all Americans are. In the book, he describes how the founding fathers set the tone with the two documents, which describe the American ideal: the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

The two major beliefs that both of these documents center around, and that all Americans today hold are:

1. **A belief in freedom.** That every man and woman should have the same rights and opportunities.
2. **A belief in community.** That working together, be that in family, at work, in church or as a country, is the way to ensure this freedom and keep the democracy alive.

The freedom would be the aspiration. That regardless of race, gender, class, age or religion, you could become anything and anyone in an America that affords everyone the same liberty, rights and chances.

However, the founding fathers knew that ensuring this freedom by sustaining a democracy wasn't easy – no other country had done it before (and lasted). That's why the focus on communal values, where family, religion and patriotism are honored, whereas absolute power is rejected and dispersed – no single pope, king or general should ever single-handedly decide the fate of the American people.

Lesson 2: Politicians are forced to hang around rich people all the time, which makes it hard for them to do their job.

It's any politician's job to ensure this freedom. But doing that job can be really hard, Obama says, because politicians are constantly influenced by a lot of outside forces, **three in particular being money, the media and large, special interest groups and organizations.**

For example, since a presidential campaign alone costs millions of dollars (although the budget hardly affects the votes), politicians have no choice but to either be rich themselves already, or getting plenty of sponsors and donors. But hanging around with the top 1%, other rich politicians and flying around in private jets makes it very hard to stay connected to the majority of the ordinary citizens they represent.

It's the same with labor unions, lobbies, religious institutions and big political committees – a lot of special interest groups want to influence politicians to make sure their own interests are served well.

Lastly, the media control how politicians are perceived publicly, and because neither honesty nor civil behavior makes clicks and headlines, what politicians say gets distorted a lot.

Obama proposed public campaign funding and free media air time for presidential candidates as a solution to these problems. If politicians can't work in an unbiased way, there's no way they'll really represent the true values the country aspires to.

Note: Politicians aren't innocent, of course. But while I'm the last one to unreflectingly endorse any politician, I think we have to cut them some slack too.

Lesson 3: The battles we fight on a global scale today are battles of ideas and therefore can't be won with weapons.

The reason the influences politicians face are so problematic is that we now need them to be unbiased and freely speak their mind more than ever before.

Obama says the US missed a real chance when they didn't change their foreign policy from the ground up after 9/11. Instead of accepting that not states, but ideologies are what threaten countries today, the country dug out its Cold War policy, only focusing on smaller enemies instead of the Soviet Union. Going to war in Iraq cost billions of dollars and worsened America's reputation – not exactly two accomplishments worth celebrating.

Barack Obama suggests that threats now mostly arise from extreme ideologies, so **we're not battling against other states, we're battling ideas.**

A battle of ideas clearly can't be won with weapons. Only a social awakening in the places where these ideologies thrive can reform them. Therefore, America must work on its own democracy, upholding the ideal of freedom, to inspire others to voluntarily follow on their own.

This is not only the only sustainable work to resolve international conflicts, it also saves a lot of money and creates much less anti-American sentiment.

The Audacity Of Hope Review

Sure, not all of the ideas in Obama's book stand on solid ground, but name one person whose ideas are all great. I still think Obama's one of the most human presidents the US has ever had. I try to look at the person, not the political agenda, and I've never seen anyone in office more sincere than Barack Obama. If you want to learn more about one of America's greatest presidents, *The Audacity Of Hope* is the place to start.

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- What an ownership society is and why it's bad for America's empathy
- Why a lot of the drawbacks of globalization end up on ordinary peoples' backs
- Three factors for true equality among US citizens
- Two ways to address inner-city struggling teens
- Why schools need to change in order to adapt to the new American family structure with two earners
- What makes expensive education a vicious cycle that blocks innovation
- How much money America spends on foreign oil, daily, and why that must change

Who would I recommend The Audacity Of Hope summary to?

The 20 year old politics major, who aspires to run for office one day, the 35 year old entrepreneur, who wants to adapt his company to the political situation in the best way possible, and anyone who thinks Barack Obama has been a great US president.