

THE AUDACITY OF HOPE

Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream, by Barack Obama

2006, Crown, 362 pages

People from the freedom movement wonder what the Barack Obama phenomenon is about, as do naturally curious regular citizens on all strands of the political spectrum.

Most of us are aware of Obama's oratorical skills. He galvanized many Americans at the 2004 Democratic Nominating Convention with phrases like:

People don't expect government to solve all their problems. But they sense, deep in their bones, that with just a slight change in priorities, we can make sure that every child in America has a decent shot at life, and that the doors of opportunity remain open to all.

Anyone watching that stirring speech can appreciate how the man has the aura to capture the imagination of voters from all walks of life. Many say American politics hasn't seen such excitement, especially on college campuses and in high schools, since Kennedy ran for president in 1960.

The Queen of Demean, Ann Coulter now in self-destruct mode—whose every other sentence these days accuses someone of being gay—claims Obama's speeches sound like Hallmark greeting cards. But political speeches are necessarily rife with platitudes. How about this one:

Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice; moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.
— Barry Goldwater, 1964

Now that's a greeting card with a kick! Back to Barack. Forget about speeches. The man can write:

"It's not simply that a gap exists between our professed ideals as a nation and the reality we witness every day. In one form or another, that gap has existed since America's birth....

"No, what's troubling is the gap between the magnitude of our challenges and the smallness of our politics—the ease with which we are distracted by the petty and the trivial, our chronic avoidance of rough decisions, our seeming inability to build a working consensus to tackle any big problem."

Barack can transport his readers into the realm of BIG THAWGHTS, ideas we all have but often lack the words for. His writing shows an independent, broadly conscious mind at work accompanied by an unpretentious depth of feeling for his country and its people... and everyone else.

He's a natural. So what about Obama's positions and the details? Here's my ranking:

Foreign policy: A
Civil liberties: B
Economics: C

Please read the final chapters for confirmation he knows what he's about in foreign affairs. He would insist on having an actual, worked out, consistent foreign policy. On civil liberties I feel he's going to be good; he taught constitutional law, and I cannot see him standing in the way of the cascading drug freedom (i.e. freedom) movements.

The only possible fly in the ointment is economics, in which he persists in the liberal worldview that government can do good things there... aside from getting out of the way. Still, I do not sense in him the Hillaryesque-liberal arrogance of what Thomas Sowell calls "The Conceit of the Anointed." So the jury is out on economics.

Finally, he doesn't explicitly take on the power-elite. But as a fundamentally honest man, he represents a huge threat to them. Until the Pathocracy[1] is overturned I think he will be the target of its assassination, either character or literal. I wish it weren't so, but I feel the malignancy goes very, very deep.

A good book worth reading. Bama-Bama Obama is not perfect but he's the real deal. And yes I believe his presidency would provide a much-needed ray of hope.

[1] Someone—please refer to this link from Carolyn Baker about Andrew M. Lobaczewski's book, *Political Ponerology*—has come up with a study of evil (ponerology) and a term for "a small pathological minority taking over a society of normal people:" pathocracy.

The editor of *Political Ponerology*, Laura Knight-Jadczyk, in her footnotes names Karl Rove, Dick Cheney, and Donald Rumsfeld, under the intellectual sway of Leo Strauss, as linchpins in America's twenty-first century pathocracy. I'm using the initial capital "Pathocracy" to mean the power-elite, from the beginning of the 20th century through now, and their operational minions.