

People in the News

Biographies of the men and women making a mark on modern life

A series for students from Lucent Books®



FULL-COLOR Lucent Books' *People in the News* offers young readers a deeper look into the lives of today's newsmakers. Each title in the series focuses on one notable contemporary figure, covers their contributions and achievements or notorious deeds, looks at the influences that have shaped them and describes the impact they have had in their fields of endeavor and on other people's lives. Realistic narratives also look at a person's flaws and foibles and are accented by primary and secondary source quotations from diaries, letters, speeches and interviews.

Subjects for the series come from all walks of life and include authors, musicians, athletes, political leaders, entertainers, entrepreneurs and others – people like:

- **Barack Obama**, who from his upbringing in Hawaii and Indonesia and his early years on the streets of Chicago rose to the U.S. senate and is now on the world stage as the first African American to be elected president
- **Pope Benedict XVI**, the conservative, German head of the Catholic church who sees the denial of moral truths as the central problem of the 21st century

Features of each volume

- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Five or six chapters with color photographs
- Sidebars
- For More Information – an annotated bibliography of age-appropriate resources, including Web sites
- Important Dates – a timeline of key events in the newsmaker's life
- Index

Chapter 5

The Challenges Ahead

The Barack Obama story to date remains an unfinished tale. In some ways, Obama seems to be more famous for what he might yet do rather than for what he has actually done. Indeed, despite his many accomplishments thus far, many people believe that his greatest successes are still to come. Therefore, he has become the subject of a great deal of speculation as a politician with unlimited potential, a future leader who could unite numerous contentious factions and bring real change and progress to government, the country, and the world.

Of course, it will be hard to live up to such expectations. His future as a leader is by no means assured. For example, some of his strengths—his heritage, his beliefs, his voting record—could also be construed as political weaknesses that potential opponents will likely exploit. However, time and time again Obama has seemed to say and do the right thing at the right time at each stage of his life. And though people may argue about the future of his career, there is one point on which everyone can agree—Obama is someone worth watching on the American political scene.

Bridging Divides

One of the most repeated compliments made about Obama is that he is able to bring opposing groups together. In Washington,

this is known as working both sides of the political aisle, which means that he is capable of collaborating with certain Republican counterparts to win important votes for proposed legislation. This is critically important when a bill founders in committee because Democrats and Republicans cannot agree on an issue. Too often senators are divided for being partisan, voting according to the dictates of their political party rather than on their core personal beliefs or on what is best for the public.

Such partisanship and the overall bureaucracy of government have caused people to lose faith in Washington, says Obama. He explains in his book, *The Audacity of Hope*:

They [Americans] may still vote, out of habit, anger, or some atavistic sense of civic obligation. But they don't have much confidence that government can do them a lot of good. They

A proponent of bipartisanship, Senator Obama joins Republican senators Tom Coburn (left) and Sam Brownback at a press conference.



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