

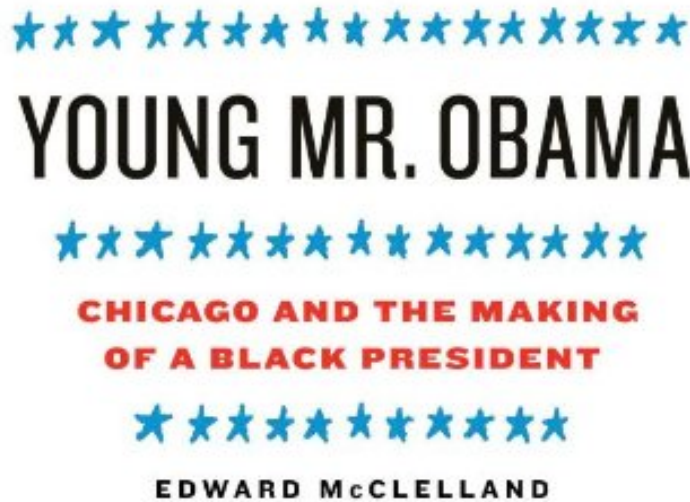
[Free and download] Young Mr. Obama: Chicago and the Making of a Black President


Young Mr. Obama: Chicago and the Making of a Black President

Edward McClelland

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Edward McClelland : Young Mr. Obama: Chicago and the Making of a Black President before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Young Mr. Obama: Chicago and the Making of a Black President:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A clinic on political reportage By Customer I was a graduate student at the University of Chicago, working on a Ph.D. and living in Hyde Park when the events in this book took place. As someone who lived through them as one of Obama's constituents, I picked up this book out of curiosity. Four hours later, I had finished it. It's a truly excellent account of Obama's time in Chicago: engagingly written, knowledgeable,

and never ponderous despite the author's obvious expertise. Anyone interested in learning more about Obama's career in Chicago, or just looking for a great example of how to cover politics, should read this book. The book covers Obama's career in Chicago as a community organizer on the far south side to his election as senator (his time at Harvard is not discussed). McClelland's basic argument is that Chicago's demographics gave the black community real political power, a power exemplified by the election of Harold Washington as mayor of the city. At the same time, this power was based on a history of identity politics which limited the ability of black politicians to reach state- and nation-wide audiences. Obama, he argues, was black enough to galvanize Chicago's local political scene, but white enough to engage a broader white audience. It was this unique mix, in Chicago's unique location, that allowed Obama to rise to national audience. McClelland's book is written in wiry prose full of tough-guy verse. Candidates do not lose races, they are unhorsed. Staff writers from the New Yorker are not prominent journalists, they are bigfoot pencils. Lavish homes in Kenwood are Edwardian piles professors blow their Nobel Prize loot on. The pacing is equally bracing: McClelland does a superb job filling you in on the history of Chicago politics (and, incidentally, provides a wonderful miniature sketch of the butternut portions of southern Illinois) but never drowns you in unnecessary detail. As a result the story -- which is good in and of itself -- is briskly told. It also seems fairly told. McClelland is a Chicago-based journalist and the book is an expanded version of his past political coverage. It is judicious and restrained in its judgment of Chicago's politicians, but never pulls its punches or pretends at objectivity. McClelland candidly describes how off-putting Obama could be at times, and also how beguiling he could be as he matured as a politician. McClelland's portrait of Obama as a young man fits closely with that story told by other authors such as Richard Wolffe: a genuine idealist who is also (somehow) a shrewd pragmatist willing to seize opportunities and cultivate (and discard) alliances as needed. The presentation is both balanced and intimate, and those are two hard things to combine. Reading this book helped me better understand the political events I lived through, and gave me a great deal more respect for the job reporters do. Young Mr. Obama is a terrific blow-by-blow account of political contestation, and the fact that it's central figure eventually became president is just icing on the cake. Strongly recommended. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A future president in the context of a city By T. Badger I bought this book after my recent move to Chicago, largely because of the jacket copy's contention that Obama could not have become president had he not come to Chicago as a young man. It was a bold claim, but Ted McClelland backs it up with a compelling narrative that melds Chicago's unique political history with Obama's unique personal history. As much as Mike Royko's "Boss" and Nelson Algren's "The Man With The Golden Arm," this book helped me gain some bearings in this sprawling and endlessly fascinating town. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring! By Maria E Freeman I have not finished reading YOUNG MR. OBAMA... but I did want to make some comments from what I have read. I have learned about politics how things work. This book shows how hard work, informed decisions and training of personnel can yield positive results. I believe we, as Mexican American activists, can learn much from reading this book. It has given me hope in my quest to empower and improve our lives.

Barack Obama's inspirational politics and personal mythology have overshadowed his fascinating history. Young Mr. Obama gives us the missing chapter: the portrait of the politician as a young leader, often too ambitious for his own good, but still equipped with a rare ability to inspire change. The route to the White House began on the streets of Chicago's South Side. Edward McClelland, a veteran Chicago journalist, tells the real story of the first black president's political education in the capital of the African American political community. Obama's touch wasn't always golden, and the unflappable and charismatic campaigner we know today nearly derailed his political career with a disastrous run for Congress in 2000. Obama learned from his mistakes, and rebuilt his public persona. Young Mr. Obama is a masterpiece of political reporting, peeling away the audacity, the T-shirts, and the inspiring speeches to craft a compelling and surpassingly readable account of how local politics shaped a national leader.

From Publishers Weekly As Barack Obama's presidency is beset by falling ratings, a weak economy, and an antideficit mood, McClelland's examination of Obama's ascendancy should encourage supporters and instill caution in opponents. This detailed history traces Obama's arrival as a community organizer self-conscious about his exoticness and his rise to the top of Chicago politics in his 2004 primary campaign for the Senate. While the insider baseball of Chicago politics can prove dauntingly detailed, the account illustrates critical moments in Obama's whirlwind ascent to high office. His 1999 loss to congressman and former Black Panther Bobby Rush left Obama dejected, demoralized and bitter about attacks on his credibility as a black politician, but McClelland (The Third Coast) is refreshingly unsparing on Obama's missteps: Obama didn't lose because he was too white.' He lost because he was a presumptuous young man challenging a popular incumbent. Political junkies will pay close attention to the story of Obama's tough political learning curve even as it recounts how the president's early ambitions bore out his initial belief that his adopted home was the perfect training ground for solving America's problems, racial and otherwise. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. With Young Mr. Obama, Edward McClelland finishes what The Bridge started, showing how Obama navigated Chicago political life, which can be as rough as a Blackhawks game. McClelland's book is long on reporting and narrative, and short on meditation and analysis for

which readers can be thankful. For the many Americans who remain fascinated with the American president, Young Mr. Obama makes for insightful, enlightening reading, a worthy supplement to Remnick's book and a valuable contribution to the record on the 44th president. Christian Science Monitor So the question was whether is this just another Obama book. The answer is no. The great strength of the book lies in its coverage of the early years, delving into all this breaks new biographical ground and will function as a solid foundation for future books on the subject. The book is a must-read for all Obama political junkies who want to know more for it does significantly advance the historical record regarding his younger years. New York Journal of Books McClelland does a great job illustrating how the gerrymandering of Chicago's First Congressional District and the emergence of early 20th century black leaders such as Oscar DePriest and William Dawson established strong foundations for black leadership to emerge in Chicago and across Illinois, well before it became accepted elsewhere. GapersBlock.com McClelland explores how Chicago's long-established African American political power bases helped nurture Obama's career. San Francisco Chronicle Where did Barack Obama come from? No answer to that question can be complete without the stories that unfold in this book. Many of them date from the time when Edward McClelland was just about the only reporter covering the young and unknown Obama. Understanding how this extraordinary leader rose from Chicago politics to the pinnacle of world power is not possible without the insights in Young Mr. Obama. Stephen Kinzer, author of Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq Edward McClelland's Young Mr. Obama argues convincingly that our first black president couldn't have come from any place other than Chicago. If you want to understand the 'Chicago-style' politics that shaped our president--the real thing, not the right-wing cartoon--you have to read Young Mr. Obama. Joan Walsh, editor in chief of Salon.com [McClelland] makes a convincing case that President Obama's experiences in his adopted city shaped him profoundly and helped make him the seasoned and formidable politician he is today. An engaging overview of the president's early political education. Kirkus sAs Barack Obama's presidency is beset by falling ratings, a weak economy, and an antideficit mood, McClelland's examination of Obama's ascendancy should encourage supporters and instill caution in opponents. Publishers Weekly Richly details Obama's background in Chicago and how it impressed those who would eventually help his presidential campaign like senior advisor David Axelrod. Paul Bedard, U.S. News World Report's Washington Whispers blog A fine survey of how local Chicago politics shaped Obama. Midwest Book A great read. AND Magazine About the Author Edward McClelland is a veteran political journalist working out of Chicago. His previous books include The Third Coast: Sailors, Strippers, Fishermen, Folksingers, Long-Haired Ojibway Painters and God-Save-the-Queen Monarchists of the Great Lakes and Horseplayers: Life at the Track. He has written for the Chicago Reader, Boston Globe, Washington Post, Slate, Salon, Chicago magazine and many other publications.