



January 2009 Newsletter

Information Resource Center (IRC)

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Road to the White House: Transition to the Obama administration

Although Barack Obama does not take office until January 20, 2009, the president-elect is busy preparing for his presidency by meeting with former and current government officials and appointing advisers who will play key roles in his administration. [Read more](#)

الطريق إلى البيت الأبيض: انتقال السلطة إلى حكومة أوباما

على الرغم من أن الرئيس المنتخب باراك أوباما لن يتولى الرئاسة رسمياً حتى 20 كانون الثاني/يناير 2009، فإن الرئيس المنتخب منشغل في التحضير لرئاسته بعقد سلسلة من الاجتماعات مع المسؤولين الحكوميين السابقين والحاليين وتعيين المستشارين الذين سيلعبون أدواراً أساسية في حكومته.

[لقراءة المزيد](#)

Meet the 44th U.S. President: **Barack Obama**

A profile of the next leader of the United States



President-elect Barack Obama, who will be the first African-American president of the United States, brings a life story unlike that of any previous U.S. leader. The biracial son of a Kenyan father and a white mother from the American heartland, Obama rose to national prominence with a well-received keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention in 2004, the same year he was elected to the U.S. Senate from the state of Illinois. Just four years later, he emerged from a crowded field of Democratic presidential candidates to win his party's nomination for the White House and then defeat Republican candidate John McCain in the general election.

Obama's parents came from vastly different backgrounds. His mother, Ann Dunham, was born and raised in a small town in Kansas. After her family moved to Hawaii, she met Barack Obama Sr., a Kenyan student enrolled at the University of Hawaii. The two married in 1959, and on August 4, 1961, Barack Obama Jr. was born in Honolulu. Two years later, the elder Obama left his new family, first for graduate study at Harvard and then for a job as a government economist back in Kenya. The young Obama met his father again only once, at age 10.

When Obama was 6, his mother remarried, to an Indonesian oil executive. The family moved to Indonesia, and Obama spent four years attending school in the capital city of Jakarta. He eventually returned to Hawaii and attended secondary school there while living with his maternal grandparents. He earned a bachelor's degree from Columbia University in 1983, and then attended Harvard Law School, where he was elected the first black president of the prestigious Harvard Law Review.

With a continuing strong commitment to public service, Obama decided to make his first run at elected office in 1996, winning a seat from Chicago in the Illinois state senate. In 2000 Obama ran for the U.S. House of Representatives, unsuccessfully challenging Bobby Rush, an incumbent Democrat from Chicago.

In 2004, as Obama sought a U.S. Senate, Democrats noticed his oratorical skills and gave him a speaking role at the party's convention. That speaks catapulted Obama into the national spotlight as a rising star of the Democratic Party. He later won the Senate race.

In the Senate, Obama served on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, which helps oversee the care of soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Foreign

Relations Committee which reviews matters related to foreign policy including treaties, national security initiatives and humanitarian assistance.

During his presidential campaign, whose theme was bringing change to the United States, Obama amassed a large number of supporters and raised records amounts of money. He won the U.S. presidency with at 365 Electoral College votes — well above the 270 needed to win.



Joe Biden

Vice President-elect

Joe Biden is a six-term senator from Delaware. First elected to the Senate in 1972 at age 29, Biden currently is the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, which reviews matters related to foreign policy including treaties, national security initiatives and humanitarian assistance.

He ran for president in 2008, but withdrew from the race shortly after the Iowa caucuses.

Biden was born November 20, 1942 in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He attended the University of Delaware and Syracuse Law School in New York. Prior to his senate career, Biden worked as an attorney. Biden and his wife Jill, a professor, have three children and five grandchildren.



Michelle Obama

Future First Lady

Michelle Obama, who grew up in Chicago, is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Law School. She met her future husband while working in a Chicago law firm.

She also served as an assistant commissioner of planning at Chicago's City Hall, and later worked at the University of Chicago, serving in many positions including executive director of community and external affairs.

The Obamas have two young daughters.

The Future Cabinet

Key posts and the president-elect's choices to fill them:



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Overview of the Inauguration

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."



The presidential inauguration is the official day that the President of the United States is sworn into office. The purpose of this inauguration is to honor the incoming president with formal ceremonies, including: a Presidential Swearing-in Ceremony, an Inaugural Address, and an Inaugural Parade.

The inauguration will take place on January 20, 2009 in Washington D.C. on the steps of the United States Capitol. President-elect Barack Obama will take the oath of office, which states the following:

"I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Vice President-elect Joe Biden will have already taken a similar oath.

The Presidential Inaugural Committee is in charge of planning and executing the inauguration of our 44th president, Barack Obama. [To find more information please visit their website.](#)

Looking Back: The First Inauguration

As we look forward to President-elect Obama's inauguration on January 20th, we also enjoy looking back in history to understand the origins of the American traditions that continue to guide us today.

It is the story of our country's first presidential inauguration, that of George Washington, in April 1789.

After receiving the news that he had been elected, President-elect George Washington reluctantly accepted the post and embarked on a trip to New York, which was at the time the nation's capital. Supporters lined the roads to cheer on the country's first official leader.

At the time, the founding fathers had not yet decided on the title for the president. Vice President-elect John Adams, for one, wished to name the position "His Most Benign Highness," but a congressional committee chose the title "President of the United States."

When Washington arrived in New York City, after a long journey from his home in Mount Vernon, Virginia, he was forced to wait a week until his actual inauguration, as a congressional committee ironed out the details of the ceremony. On April 30th, after Washington's weeklong wait, he was ushered to Federal Hall, where an enthusiastic crowd gathered outside.

Because the Supreme Court had not yet been assembled, New York's most senior judge, Chancellor Robert R. Livingstone, administered the Oath of Office. While taking the oath, Washington, dressed in a brown suit with white silk stockings and a hefty sword by his side, placed his right hand on the Bible, and punctuated the oath with his own addition, "So help me God." The words stuck; nearly every president since has repeated that phrase.

After taking the oath, Washington and the others returned to the Senate Chamber where he gave an inaugural address, another tradition that remains to this day. But whereas Washington left the crowd outside Federal Hall to address Congress inside the Senate chamber, modern inaugurations feature a public presidential address to the assembled public and guests.

Indeed, 219 years later, thousands of people are working to make the Inauguration of President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden the most open and accessible one in history. All who wish to attend will be welcome to watch from the National Mall in Washington, DC, which will be equipped with jumbo screens, food, and bathroom facilities.

Inaugural Addresses and Memorable Words

(Tradition of president's first speech dates back to George Washington, 1789)

Washington - Starting with George Washington at the first inauguration in 1789, the inaugural address has been an important American tradition. Most presidents use the inaugural address to present their visions for the United States and to set forth their goals to the American people. Inaugural addresses have varied in length, from George Washington's 135 words on March 4, 1793, to William Harrison's 8,445 words on March 4, 1841. The speeches set the tone for the upcoming presidency, and a select few are among the most enduring, and most frequently quoted, presidential speeches:

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." - Abraham Lincoln, 1865, in the final days of the U.S. Civil War

"Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." - Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933, in the midst of the economic Great Depression

"And so my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country." - John F. Kennedy, 1961

"To a few of us here today, this is a solemn and most momentous occasion; and yet, in the history of our nation, it is a commonplace occurrence. The orderly transfer of authority as called for in the Constitution routinely takes place as it has for almost two centuries and few of us stop to think how unique we really are. In the eyes of many in the world, this every-four-year ceremony we accept as normal is nothing less than a miracle." - Ronald Reagan, 1981

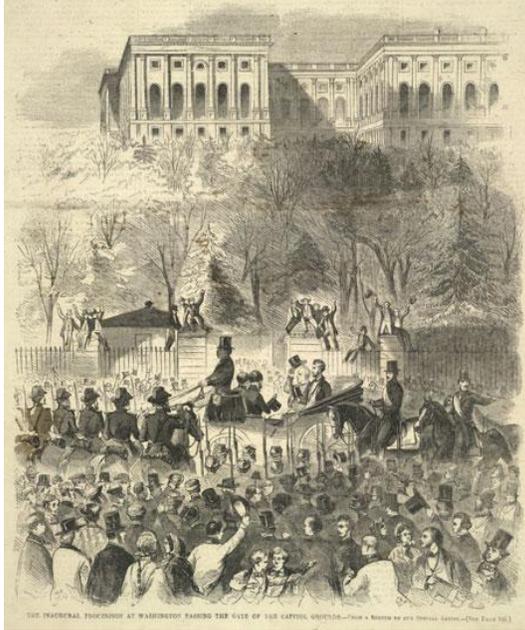
"I see history as a book with many pages, and each day we fill a page with acts of hopefulness and meaning. The new breeze blows, a page turns, the story unfolds. And so today a chapter begins, a small and stately story of unity, diversity, and generosity - shared, and written, together." - George H.W. Bush, 1989

"The greatest progress we have made, and the greatest progress we have yet to make, is in the human heart. In the end, all the world's wealth and a thousand armies are no match for the strength and decency of the human spirit." - William Jefferson Clinton, 1997

"Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our

country, it is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. - George W. Bush, 2001.

Inaugural Parade



The Inauguration Procession in Honor of President Buchanan Passing through Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington City, March 4th, 1857.

When the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies has concluded its luncheon, the guests of honor—the newly sworn President and Vice President—will make their way down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House, leading a procession of ceremonial military regiments, citizens' groups, marching bands, and floats. The President, Vice President, their wives, and special guests will then review the parade as it passes in front of a specially built reviewing stand. The Inaugural parade is a celebrated and

much anticipated event for millions of Americans across the country.

The tradition of an Inaugural parade dates back to the very first Inauguration, when George Washington took the oath of office on April 30, 1789, in New York City. As he began his journey from Mount Vernon to New York City, local militias joined his procession as it passed through towns along the way. Once he arrived in New York City, members of the Continental Army, government officials, members of Congress, and prominent citizens escorted Washington to Federal Hall for his swearing-in ceremony.

The early Inaugural parades primarily consisted of escorts for the President-elect to the Capitol. Thomas Jefferson's first Inauguration, in 1801, was the first to take place in the new capital city of Washington. Only the north wing of the Capitol was completed at that time, and as Jefferson walked from his nearby boardinghouse to the Capitol, he was accompanied by an Alexandria, Virginia company of riflemen, friends, and "fellow citizens." After his second Inauguration in 1805, a procession formed at the navy yard made up of members of Congress and citizens—including navy yard mechanics—which then escorted President Jefferson from the Capitol to the White House after the Inauguration, accompanied by military music performed by the Marine Band. The Marine Band has played at every Presidential Inauguration since.

The first organized parade occurred in 1809, at the Inauguration of James Madison. A troop of cavalry from Georgetown escorted him to the Capitol. After taking the oath of office, Madison sat in review of nine companies of militia. Future Inaugurations saw these military escorts grow more and more

elaborate. William Henry Harrison's parade in 1841 featured floats, and for the first time, military companies from outside the Washington, D.C. area accompanied the President-elect to the Capitol. Citizens clubs, political clubs, several military bands, and groups of college students also marched in the parade, setting future precedent.

In 1865, during Abraham Lincoln's second Inauguration, African Americans marched in the parade for the first time. Four companies of African American troops, a lodge of African American Odd Fellows, and African American Masons joined the procession to the Capitol, and then back to the White House after the Inaugural.

In 1873, President Grant started the tradition of reviewing the parade at the White House after the Inaugural ceremony, shifting the focus of excitement to the post-Inaugural procession, rather than the escort to the Capitol. In 1881, President James Garfield reviewed the parade from a specially built stand in front of the White House. Reviewing stands were also erected along Pennsylvania Avenue for visitors. In 1897, President McKinley reviewed the parade in a glass-enclosed stand to protect him from cold, and possibly harsh, weather.

Despite a blizzard that forced the Inauguration ceremony indoors for William H. Taft in 1909, the parade proceeded as planned, as workers busily cleared snow from the parade route. For the first time, the First Lady accompanied her husband as they led the parade from the Capitol to the White House. The only parade known to have been canceled owing to bad weather was Ronald Reagan's second in 1985, when frigid temperatures made the situation dangerous. The largest parade, with 73 bands, 59 floats, horses, elephants, and civilian and military vehicles, and lasting 4 hours and 32 minutes, occurred in 1953 at Dwight D. Eisenhower's first Inauguration. Today, the limit is set at 15,000 participants.

Women first participated in the Inaugural parade in 1917, at Wilson's second Inauguration. In 1921, President Warren G. Harding became the first President to ride in the procession in an automobile. The parade was first televised in 1949, at the Inauguration of Harry S. Truman. Jimmy Carter broke precedent in 1977 by walking in the parade, from the Capitol to the White House, with his wife Rosalynn and their daughter Amy.

Today, the parade is organized by the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee, and participants are selected by the Presidential Inaugural Committee.

Inauguration Firsts

(Event has evolved since days of George Washington)

George Washington, April 30, 1789 "First inauguration in New York City, then the capital of the nation."

Thomas Jefferson, March 4, 1801 "First inauguration in Washington; first president to walk to and from inaugural."

First newspaper "extra" edition for an inaugural address

James Polk, March 4, 1845 "First telegraph coverage; first featured in newspaper illustration."

James Buchanan, March 4, 1857 "First known photographs."

Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1865 "First participation by African Americans in an inaugural parade."

William McKinley, March 4, 1897 "First recorded by motion picture camera."

William Taft, March 4, 1909 "First use of an automobile in inaugural parade." (President Taft was not an occupant.)

Woodrow Wilson, March 5, 1917 "First participation by women in an inaugural parade."

Warren Harding, March 4, 1921 "First president to ride to and from inaugural in automobile; first use of loudspeakers."

Calvin Coolidge, March 4, 1925 "First broadcast by national radio."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 20, 1937 "First inauguration on date specified by 20th amendment."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 20, 1945 "First and only time a president was inaugurated for a fourth term." (The 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1951, restricts a president to two terms.)

Harry Truman, January 20, 1949 "First broadcast on television."

Lyndon Johnson, November 22, 1963 "First oath administered in an airplane (Air Force One, in Dallas, following Kennedy's assassination); first oath administered by a woman (U.S. District Judge Sarah Hughes)."

Gerald Ford, August 4, 1974 "First unelected vice president to assume the presidency."

Jimmy Carter, January 20, 1977 "First time handicapped-accessible viewing provided for the parade."

Ronald Reagan, January 20, 1981 "First closed-captioning of television broadcast for hearing impaired."

William Jefferson Clinton, January 20, 1997 "First live broadcast on Internet."

George W. Bush, January 20, 2001 "First time a former president (George H.W. Bush) attended his son's inauguration."

Inaugural Ball



The Inauguration Ball: Arrival of the President's Party, March 4, 1873.

On May 7, 1789, one week after the Inauguration of George Washington in New York City, sponsors held a ball to honor the new President. It was not until 1809, however, after the Inauguration of James Madison at the Capitol in Washington, D.C., that the

tradition of the Inaugural ball began. That night, First Lady Dolley Madison hosted the gala at Long's Hotel. Four hundred tickets sold for \$4 each. In 1833 two balls were staged for President Andrew Jackson, one at Carusi's Assembly Rooms, and the other at Central Masonic Hall. William Henry Harrison attended all three of the 1841 Inaugural balls held in his honor.

The Inaugural ball quickly turned into an anticipated highlight of Washington society, and its location became a prime topic of discussion and angst. Organizers wanted a building that could accommodate large numbers of guests. A temporary wooden building was erected in the city's Judiciary Square in 1849 for one of Zachary Taylor's Inaugural balls. By the time of James Buchanan's Inauguration in 1857, the idea of multiple balls was abandoned for one grand ball that could accommodate thousands of guests. Again, a temporary ballroom was built in Judiciary Square for the occasion. Food purchased for Buchanan's ball included \$3000 worth of wine, 400 gallons of oysters, 500 quarts of chicken salad, 1200 quarts of ice cream, 60 saddles of mutton, 8 rounds of beef, 75 hams, and 125 tongues.

In 1865, the ball following Lincoln's second Inauguration took place in the model room of the Patent Office—the first time a government building was used for the celebration. The Inaugural ball for Grant's 1869 Inauguration was held in the north wing of the Treasury Building. Apparently there was not enough room there for dancing, and a snafu in the checkroom forced many guests to leave without their coats and hats. So for Grant's 1873 Inauguration, a temporary building was again constructed in Judiciary Square.

Grant's second ball proved a disaster, however. The weather that night was freezing cold, and the temporary structure had no heat or insulation. Guests danced in their overcoats and hats, the food was cold, they ran out of coffee and hot chocolate, and even the caged decorative canaries froze.

Later Inaugural balls were held at the National Museum building (now the Smithsonian Arts and Industries building) and the Pension Building, which became the favorite venue from 1885 through 1909.

In 1913, the city's Inaugural organizers began planning the ball to celebrate Woodrow Wilson's Inauguration, again to be held at the Pension Building, but President-elect Wilson thought otherwise. He felt the ball was too expensive and unnecessary for the solemn occasion of the Inaugural, and asked the Inaugural committee to cancel it. The city of Washington had not missed an Inaugural ball since 1853, when a grieving President Franklin Pierce—mourning the recent loss of his son—asked that the ball be cancelled. Although some D.C. residents felt very disappointed by Wilson's request, others felt relieved. The Pension Building was often closed for over a week in preparation for the ball, causing the government's business there to shut down.

President-elect Warren G. Harding also requested that the Inaugural committee do away with the elaborate ball (and the parade as well) in 1921, hoping to set an example of thrift and simplicity. The committee complied, and instead, the chairman of the Inaugural ball committee hosted a huge private party at his home. Subsequent Inaugurations followed this trend, with charity balls becoming the fashion for the Inaugurations of Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

President Harry Truman revived the official ball in 1949. Organizers for Dwight D. Eisenhower's 1953 Inaugural ball added a second event due to the great demand for tickets. Four years later, Eisenhower's second Inauguration featured four balls. Kennedy attended five in 1961. President Carter attempted to strip the balls of their glitz and glamour in 1977, calling them parties and charging no more than \$25 each, but by the 2nd inaugural of President William Jefferson Clinton in 1997, the number of balls reached an all-time high of fourteen. George W. Bush's inaugural in 2001 saw the number of official balls decline to eight, and his 2nd inaugural in 2005 was celebrated with nine official balls.

Today, the official Inaugural balls are planned by the Presidential Inaugural Committee.

For more information:

[Inaugural Schedule](#)

[D.C. Presidential Inaugural Committee](#)

[Transition Web site](#)

[Foreign Press Center](#)



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To participate, you only need a computer with Internet access and a browser. There is no special software to be downloaded.

For more information, please see the link below:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats/faq.html>

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Welcome to the new Blogs at America.gov. This new site offers readers a place to join in conversation on variety of topics with experts from the United States and around the world. We encourage you to share your thoughts with our bloggers and fellow readers in the comments section of each post.

Freedom of Expression

By Stephen Kaufman, 16 December, 2009

Explore the evolving relationship between citizens, the media and government. The news media bear a tremendous responsibility to keep their audiences well-informed and to keep authorities on the straight and narrow. But journalism itself is being redefined as more citizens take advantage of new technologies to become bloggers and video producers. Explore the love/hate relationship between governments and the press, and the competition among the growing number of news outlets to attract your interest and influence your thinking.

Talking Faith: U.S. Religious Life Now

By Alexandra Abboud, 25 December, 2008

Talking Faith explores the complexity of life in a religiously diverse nation. Join conversation and express your views on topics like freedom of faith and choosing a religious identity. Join experts each week for an honest and exciting look at religious life in the United States.

EJournal USA

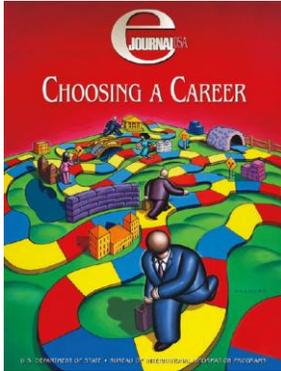


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A monthly electronic journal available in multiple languages about U.S. foreign affairs and U.S. society and culture.

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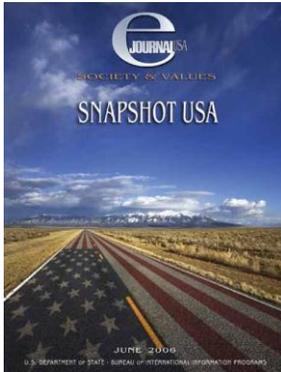
مجلة إلكترونية شهرية تصدر بعدة لغات تتناول شؤون الولايات المتحدة الخارجية والمجتمع الأمريكي وثقافته.



Choosing a Career

This edition of *eJournal USA* rambles down the many varied paths that Americans take on their way to find their life's work. Professionals in various fields explain how they got there, and some wrong turns they made along the way. Experts describe how young people can weigh and explore the options before them.

[Inside this publication](#)



Snapshot USA

This edition of *eJournal USA* is designed to provide a central resource for information about the United States. It is but an introduction, tailored to the current generation of young people around the world, containing many facts and statistics, but also essays which describe a little of how Americans think about their country and the world.

[Inside this publication](#)

[Arabic version](#)

الأسواق والديمقراطية

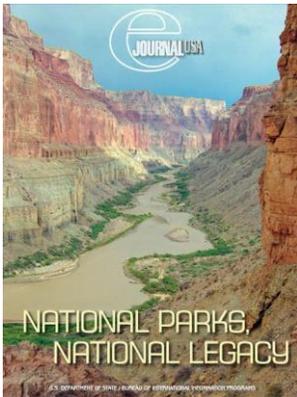


مكتب برامج الإعلام الخارجي، وزارة الخارجية الأمريكية

لم تكن العلاقة بين الأسواق والديمقراطية في يوم من الأيام خطأ مستقيماً. وقد ناقش المفكرون الاقتصاديون هذه العلاقة المعقدة منذ القرن الثامن عشر. هل من الممكن وجود أسواق حرة بدون ديمقراطية؟ أي منهما يتطور أولاً؟ وهل يمكن لدافع النمو الاقتصادي أن يؤدي إلى توسع الديمقراطية في الدول التي ليست ديمقراطية؟

يناقش اثنا عشر خبيراً دولياً استقطبناهم للكتابة في هذا العدد هذه المسألة الصعبة من عدة أوجه مختلفة ويقدمون أجوبتهم على هذه الأسئلة. إلا أن هدفنا ليس حسم المناقشة الفكرية المستمرة منذ قرون، بل تعميق فهم قرائنا للفوارق الضئيلة التي تكاد لا تلاحظ في قضية لا ريب في أنها مهمة للجميع في عالم اليوم. [في هذه المطبوعة](#)

المتنزهات القومية: الإرث القومي



يملك المواطنون الأمريكيون نظاماً من المتنزهات القومية المنتشرة في أنحاء البلاد يشمل الشواطئ والجبال والنصب التذكارية وساحات المعارك ويحافظون عليها. جميع المواطنين الأميركيين، إلى حد ما، مسؤولون عن إدارة المواقع التي تشكلت فيها صفحات التاريخ، حيث ترتفع الجبال الشامخة وتتساب الأنهر. وهم يحافظون على هذه المتنزهات للمستقبل، ويتعاملون معها اليوم ككنز ثمين. وكما قال الرئيس الأسبق فرانكلن روزفلت: "ليس هناك ما هو أمريكي أكثر من متنزهاتنا القومية. فالمنظر الطبيعية والحياة البرية بلدية أصيلة". والفكرة الأساسية خلف إنشاء هذه المتنزهات فكرة أصيلة. وهي باختصار إن البلد ملك للشعب". ويقدم هذا العدد من إي جورنال يو أس آيه مناظر رائعة من المتنزهات القومية، ولمحة تاريخية عن هذا النظام الشاسع، ورسائله المتمثلة بالمحافظة على الطبيعة وبأبوابه المفتوحة أمام جميع الناس.

[في هذه المطبوعة](#)

Photo Gallery and Videos

Offering an audio-visual tour of the stories and issues shaping our world, the photo gallery and videos are two of many invaluable services "America.gov" site offers for its audience. Both, the gallery and videos can be browsed by the following subjects: Foreign Policy, U.S. Politics, American Life, Democracy, Science and Health.

Photo Gallery: Please visit the below galleries or go to the photo gallery direct link to see more photo collections.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/photogallery.html#7a78bf28-e356-4d21-a311-0c218ec8f6f8>

<p>U.S. Politics:</p>  <p><u>Historical Inaugurations</u></p>	<p>American Life:</p>  <p><u>American College Students</u></p>	<p>Foreign Policy:</p>  <p><u>Financial Firsts</u></p>	<p>American Life:</p>  <p><u>The American Religious Landscape</u></p>
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Videos: Please point the mouse on any picture then use "Ctrl" key and click on the link to take you to the video you want to watch or go to the link below to see all the video collection.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?playerId=1475282956>

 <p><u>Immigrant Embraces U.S. Politics</u></p> <p>3 min 51 sec.</p>	 <p><u>Young Politicians Get Involved</u></p> <p>3 min. 01 sec.</p>	 <p><u>Partnering for Life: Save the Children</u></p> <p>2 min. 27 sec.</p>
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Websites *of* Interest

1. PolicyArchive

<https://www.policyarchive.org/>

A joint project of the Center for Governmental Studies (CGS), a nonprofit organization in California, the Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis Library and Communications Consortium Media Center in Washington, DC.

2. Presidential Transitions: Policy Options

<https://www.policyarchive.org/handle/10207/9671>

3. SCIENCE.GOV

<http://www.Science.gov>

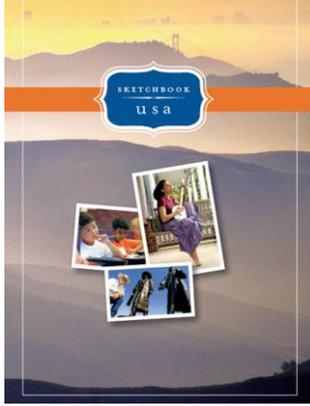
A gateway to over 50 million pages of authoritative selected science information provided by U.S. government agencies, including research and development results.

4. UCHANNEL

http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

A collection of public affairs lectures, panels and events from academic institutions all over the world, available for viewing, listening, streaming or downloading. UChannel (or University Channel) is a project of Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.

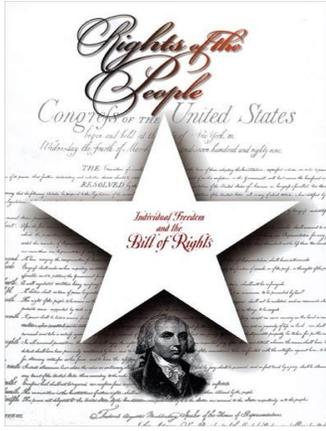
Publications



Sketchbook USA

Sketchbook USA lavishly illustrates many aspects of American life. These excerpts depict Americans at work, at play, and engaging in civic activities.

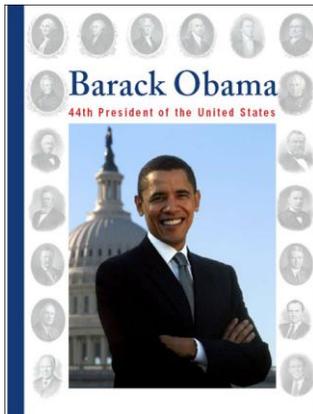
[Inside this publication](#)



Rights of the People

"Rights of the People" is a history of American law and justice, written by Constitutional historian Melvin Urofsky. By focusing on the Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution, and the legal interpretations, many of them written by America's finest jurists, that refined and expanded the Bill of Rights, Urofsky presents a history of the United States from the standpoint of individual liberty.

[Inside this publication](#)



باراك أوباما: الرئيس الرابع والأربعون للولايات المتحدة

لقد عاش باراك أوباما، الرئيس الرابع والأربعون للولايات المتحدة، حياة أميركية حقيقية، وفتح فصلاً جديداً في السياسة الأميركية. تتناول هذه المطبوعة قصة حياة باراك أوباما، وكيف وصل إلى سدة الرئاسة الأميركية، كما نتحدث بتوسع عن رؤياه للمستقبل. وهي تفرد أيضاً فصلين خاصين للحديث عن أسرة أوباما وعن نائب الرئيس الجديد، جوزيف بايدن. [في هذه المطبوعة](#)

American Holidays

Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. January 19

Americans Celebrate Achievements of Martin Luther King Jr.

Civil rights giant fought for principles with universal applicability



A young boy rides on a float during a Martin Luther King Jr. parade in Miami. (© AP Images)

By Michael Jay Friedman

Staff Writer

Washington -- Americans on each third Monday of January honor the life and achievements of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., (1929–1968), the 1964 Nobel Peace laureate and the individual most associated with the triumphs of the African-American civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. As a political organizer, supremely skilled orator and advocate of nonviolent protest, King was pivotal in persuading his fellow Americans to end the legal segregation that prevailed throughout the South and parts of other regions, and in sparking support for the civil rights legislation that established the legal framework for racial equality in the United States.

King was among those champions of justice whose influence transcended national boundaries. A student of the philosophy and principles of nonviolence enunciated by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948), King in 1959 traveled to India, where he studied further the legacy of the man his widow, Coretta Scott King, later would call his “political mentor.” Nelson Mandela, accepting the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize, similarly credited King as his predecessor in the effort to resolve justly the issues of racism and human dignity.

Son of the prominent Atlanta pastor Martin Luther King Sr., King at the age of 26 completed a doctorate in theology at Boston University. In 1954, while completing his dissertation, King accepted the pastorate at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. It was in Montgomery the following year that [Rosa Parks](#), an African-American seamstress, was jailed for refusing to give up her seat on a segregated municipal bus to a white passenger. The incident sparked the [Montgomery Bus Boycott](#), in which the city’s African-Americans refused to patronize its segregated bus system. King led the organization directing the boycott and became the movement’s public face, appealing to white Americans’ spirit of brotherhood. When the federal

courts, following the reasoning of the Supreme Court's [Brown v. Board of Education](#) decision, declared the bus segregation law unconstitutional, King emerged as a national figure.

In 1957, King was among the founders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). This was an alliance of black ministers and churches organized to pursue nonviolent direct action against segregation. SCLC leaders hoped to change public opinion and to complement the legal challenges to segregation pursued by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). King was a dynamic force within the SCLC, emerging as its leading fund-raiser and as a skillful political tactician who successfully forged alliances with sympathetic Northern whites. In 1959, King traveled to India, where he met with followers of Gandhi and further refined his thought on nonviolent social protest.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu shows off his Martin Luther King Jr. stole after the ordination ceremony of his daughter. (© AP Images)

During the early 1960s, King and the SCLC initiated a number of peaceful protests against segregated institutions. In May 1963, Birmingham, Alabama, Police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor unleashed police dogs and high-pressure fire hoses against peaceful demonstrators, many of them schoolchildren. The images horrified the nation. King was arrested during these demonstrations and from his jail cell produced [Letter From Birmingham City Jail](#), in which he argued that one who breaks an unjust law to arouse the consciousness of his community "is in reality expressing the highest respect for law," provided he acts "openly, lovingly and with a willingness to accept the penalty." That August, African-American leaders [organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom](#). Here, before an estimated quarter million civil rights supporters gathered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, King offered one of the most powerful orations in American history. Generations of schoolchildren have learned by heart lines from the *I Have a Dream* speech, in which King prayed for the day when people would "not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

The images from Birmingham and Washington helped crystallize support for the [Civil Rights Act of 1964](#), signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964. In 1965, the violent Selma, Alabama, police response to a voting rights march sparked a similar surge in support for King, the civil rights movement and for legislation guaranteeing the right of political participation. Consequently, the [Voting Rights Act](#) became law on August 6, 1965.

With the passage of these civil rights laws, King continued to employ his strategy of nonviolent social protest even as some younger leaders at times argued for more radical means. King also broadened his agenda to

encompass efforts to focus attention on African-American poverty. King was in Memphis, Tennessee, in support of striking black garbage workers when, on April 4, 1968, an assassin's bullet cut him down at the age of 39.

Americans honor the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. with a national holiday celebrated on the third Monday of each January, and soon by a [national monument](#), to be constructed in direct sight of the Lincoln Memorial, where King inspired Americans with his dreams of racial justice and equality. Countless individuals and organizations, including [The King Center](#), in Atlanta, carry on his work.

