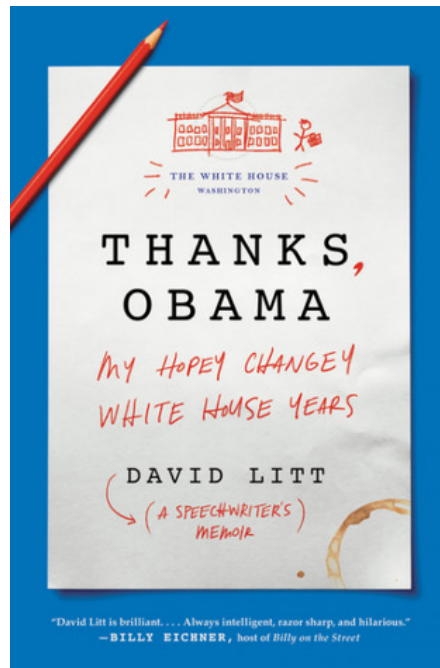




Thanks, Obama: My Hokey, Changey White House Years

David Litt

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Remember when presidents spoke in complete sentences instead of in unhinged tweets? David Litt does. In his comic, coming-of-age memoir, he takes us back to the Obama years – and charts a path forward in the age of Trump

More than any other presidency, Barack Obama's eight years in the White House were defined by young people – twenty-somethings who didn't have much experience in politics (or anything else, for that matter), yet suddenly found themselves in the most high-stakes office building on earth. David Litt was one of those twenty-somethings. After graduating from college in 2008, he went straight to the Obama campaign. In 2011, he became one of the youngest White House speechwriters in history. Until leaving the White House in 2016, he wrote on topics from healthcare to climate change to criminal justice reform. As President Obama's go-to comedy writer, he also took the lead on the White House Correspondents' Dinner, the so-called "State of the Union of jokes."

Now, in this refreshingly honest memoir, Litt brings us inside Obamaworld. With a humorists' eye for detail, he describes what it's like to accidentally trigger an international incident or nearly set a president's hair aflame. He answers questions you never knew you had: Which White House men's room is the classiest? What do you do when the commander in chief gets your name wrong? Where should you never, under any circumstances, change clothes on Air Force One? With nearly a decade of stories to tell, Litt makes clear that politics is completely, hopelessly absurd.

But it's also important. For all the moments of chaos, frustration, and yes, disillusionment, Litt remains a believer in the words that first drew him to the Obama campaign: "People who love this country can change it." In telling his own story, Litt sheds fresh light on his former boss's legacy. And he argues that, despite the current political climate, the politics championed by Barack Obama will outlive the presidency of Donald Trump.

Full of hilarious stories and told in a truly original voice, *Thanks, Obama* is an exciting debut about what it means – personally, professionally, and politically – to grow up.

Thanks, Obama: My Hopey, Changey White House Years Details

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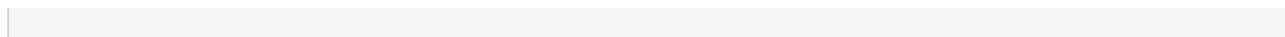
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From Reader Review Thanks, Obama: My Hopey, Changey White House Years for online ebook

Eden Church | The Required Reading List says

If you are picking up this book, I highly recommend getting it on audio. Litt narrates the book himself, and adds so much emotion and humour through his narration that the book takes on a whole other dimension.

If Hillary tells us What Happened in America during and after the 2016 presidential campaign, Thanks, Obama shows us what happened at the White House in the years leading up to the campaign, and what kind of legacy Obama leaves behind.

A very timely memoir about Litt's years in the White House as one of Obama's speech writers that also highlights the importance of hope, determination, and faith that there is still something left to save in America.

Lynn says

I enjoyed this book, but maybe not as much as I had hoped. David Litt was a low level speechwriter for the Obama administration, at first just writing jokes and relatively unimportant speeches, but he worked his way up to writing the speeches for the Correspondents Dinner and some very consequential occasions. He has a very self deprecating way of writing, although at times he comes off as a bit of a jerk (how many times can he "borrow his roommate's car without permission?"). He shares the frustrations and the highs that go along with such a high pressure job. He started off very insecure about his ability to actually do the job and ended up a very confident speechwriter.

This book is like getting a backstage pass to the White House. You get a glimpse of how things are done and what it's like to work there. It's not all glamour. President Obama is portrayed as being very human, the responsibilities of the office weighing heavy on his shoulders, but still being able to make jokes. He does not suffer fools gladly, but he is a gentleman.

In the beginning of the book, I got a little tired of Litt's constant snark, but eventually I got used to it. It made him seem just a little too full of himself, even when he was trying to seem humble. He toned the snark down quite a bit later in the book as he was describing how hard they were working to establish Obama's legacy. Probably the best passages are when he is describing when President Obama spoke at the church in Charleston and sang Amazing Grace, and when the SCOTUS affirmed the ACA again and legalized same-sex marriage. All in one week.

"In less than two days, Barack Obama had secured his place in history. No, the problems he faced were not solved forever. The Affordable Care Act was still under attack. Race was still a fault line. Discrimination against LGBT Americans remained far too real. But for now I lived in a country where health care was a right and not a privilege; where you could marry who you loved; where a black president could go to the heart of the old Confederacy and take us all, every color and creed, to church."

This paragraph alone is worth any flaws that the book may have.
A definite recommend.

Bill Kerwin says

Listen up, all you who suffer from Trump Overload Syndrome: this book is for you! Applied in small doses, it is guaranteed to bring relief, for *it allows you to imagine a universe in which Obama is still president* and all is right (almost) with the world.

Such fantasies are unhealthy, you say? We all live in Trumpworld now, you say? And “Denial” is *not* a river in Egypt? But if this is indeed Trumpworld, a place where “Nambia” has been proclaimed by our president to be a country in Africa, then how do you know *for sure* that Denial is *not* a river in Egypt? And if it be a river, I can think of no more charming vessel with which to navigate its tranquil waters than *Thanks, Obama: My Hopey, Changey White House Years* by David Litt.

Who is David Litt? An Obama speech writer. Not the premier Obama speech writer who wrote the first inaugural and the “A More Perfect Union” Speech (that would be Jon Favreau), but one who specialized in his funnier speeches. Not Obama’s most famous funny speech, the Correspondent’s Dinner speech in 2011 where he humiliated Donald Trump (that would be Jon Lovett), but most of the later funny speeches, after Lovett left for Hollywood. (My favorite Obama joke of his comes from the Romney campaign period, when the Republicans were ridiculing Obama for having eaten dog when he was a boy in Indonesia: “What’s the difference between a hockey mom and a pit bull? A pit bull is delicious.”) But it wasn’t all funny speeches and presidential debate “zingers.” He wrote a lot of serious speeches too.

In *Thanks, Obama*, Litt—in his deprecatory, amusing fashion—tells of his early days as a starry-eyed “Obamabot” on the campaign trail, of his speech writing apprenticeship in the first term, and of his emergence as an accomplished craftsman in the second term. (His “perfect speech” was one Obama delivered to the NAACP on criminal justice reform a week after the Charleston shootings. “Any system that allows us to turn a blind eye to hopelessness and despair, that’s not a justice system, it’s an injustice system.”)

Of course, one of the good things about the book is that Litt gives us more than a few glimpses of the president himself. We see him as a thorough professional, demanding the best of himself and others. He can be distant, and critical, at times, but he is also a man who is collegial, forgiving, and gifted with a fine sense of humor.

Here’s a little glimpse of POTUS and an observation by Litt that reminds us of how un-Trumplike our last president was:

The joke that most worried me involved the political landscape postcampaign. “One thing Republicans can all agree on after 2012 is that they need to do a better job reaching out to minorities,” the script read. “Call me self-centered, but I can think of one minority they could start with.”

It was the kind of line we never would have written in the first term. No one could remember POTUS referring to himself as a “minority” before. But with the reelect behind him, President Obama was eager to push the envelope.

“That’s pretty good,” he chuckled. Just as he did a year earlier, when the subject was eating pit bulls, he even promised a personal touch.

I might add a little wave there. Maybe a ‘hello,’ or something.” How strange. There I was, sick with nervousness, and POTUS was having fun.

While I doubt President Obama looked forward to spending his Saturday night with the press corp, I always got the sense he enjoyed reading jokes. Unlike most politicians, President Obama missed being treated like a normal person. I once overheard him say that this why why he loved meeting babies: they had no idea who he was.

Meg says

Remember having a good President?

Donna Hines says

For me Barack Obama meant more than mere skin color. He was our hope for change, our reason to come together as one united front, our strength to dare to dream big and bold and never settle for less. As David Litt noted," While Donald Trump may be our president , he does not define our country." Having married a malignant narcissist and left for dead I can tell you there is no truer statement than this one I just mentioned.

I enjoyed the authors sense of humor especially with the behind the scenes action throughout the book. While my former spouse and narcissist worked in OBP and as a member of the Inauguration Committee I can say he lived the life I could only dream of while I stayed home for 17 yrs raising our 3 kids one med disabled. Envious ? Sure am!

I could only imagine what it must be like to attend such elaborate functions and to simply be in the presence of our President , to learn all there is to learn about politics and democracy at work and functioning for all not the chosen few(but not anymore).

I also am saddened by the wasteful spending in DC, the continued corporate greed, the gerrymandering, terrorism, and the dirty politics and scandals with corruption being widespread and so much more to lengthy to mention.

The author does a great job in noting Obama was not perfect but he gave us insight, he gave us hope, he gave us the ability that perhaps our voices would be heard and recognized and that we need not stop giving back to others and playing our small part in government for the betterment of all involved.

I hope someday we leave our world a little better than the way we found it and that hope continues even with the current situation at hand.

Joy says

I don't often read books about politics but I really liked President Obama and I thought this would be interesting. I'm happy to say it was. David Litt was a young Ivy League graduate whose first job was a speechwriter in the Obama White House. He's a great writer, often quite funny and occasionally moving.

Of course, it makes me sad when I think of all the good things that Obama did that Trump is trying to undo. But after reading this book, I admired all this things President Obama accomplished in his eight years in office even more. I got goosebumps when I read the section about the eulogy he gave in Charleston, South

Carolina after another mass shooting. Obama sang "Amazing Grace" at the end of his eulogy.

I highly recommend this book even if you're not a political junky. I was never bored reading it and since I'm not really that interested in politics, that is the highest praise I can give this memoir!

Julie says

This review is the one that made me instantly hold this book at the library, so like, just go read that. Other people have more eloquently reviewed this book, but I'll give it a try: David Litt was one of the young speechwriters working for President Obama (in the same vein of the Pod Saves America crew, like Jon Favreau and Jon Lovett), specialising in comedy, and this book covers his career and his years in the White House.

It could have been excruciating: it could have been a white guy in his late 20s patting himself on the back and getting overly-schmaltzy about ~*history*~ and his place in it. But it's not. It's got the right level of self-deprecating self-awareness, the way Litt skewers himself, and even makes fun of the sort of self-important revisionism that occurs in many memoirs. Instead he's blunt and honest about his screw-ups, his impostor syndrome, being a terrified youth who was at first a too-idealistic Obamabot, then slowly becoming more realistic while still not giving up his kernel of hope and faith in his administration.

It's interesting getting a behind-the-scenes glimpse of how speeches are made, how the White House is run, and the background to some of the viral government videos and Correspondence Dinners that Litt had a part in. Plus Litt is genuinely funny -- I burst into hysterical giggles several times, like the description of his first time meeting the President:

The president was standing up, so we stood up. He sat down, so we sat down. He looked at the camera, but before he could begin taping, Hope stopped him. "Mr. President, this is David," she said. "This is the first video he's ever written for you."

President Obama looked at me. "Hey, David," he said. "How's it going?"

I had exactly one thought in that moment. *I did not realize we were going to have to answer questions.* And I have no idea what happened next. I literally blacked out. I went home for Thanksgiving, and my family said, "Have you met Obama yet?" and I said, "Yeah," and they said, "What did he say?" and I said, "How's it going?" and they said, "What did you say?" and I said, "I don't know, I blacked out."

Silence. That disappointed look.

And yet in addition to being tongue-in-cheek and funny, it's also poignant, in the hard-won victories and the causes that mattered to Obama's administration. This book is realistic about the fact that presidents are just human, they are never going to be perfect -- but we were truly lucky in the eight years that we had with this one. Revisiting the Obama presidency is extra-poignant now, in ye dark days of Trump, and it is oddly therapeutic to look back on a White House that was competent, well-intentioned, and cared about minorities, immigrants, the climate, and the LGBTQ community. I won't lie: I burst into tears twice during the closing chapters of this book.

But it ends with just the right note: oddly hopeful, oddly pragmatic, with an eye towards the future and the

notion that it may be tough, but we will get through this.

Conor says

My goodreads friend Julie recommended this to me, and I'm very glad that she did. I've belatedly gotten into podcasts—mostly for when I'm pottering around my room tending to my plants or doing a half-assed weekly clean—and the boys from Crooked Media have been a nice entrée into the genre. The most famous of these are Jon Favreau, Obama's wunderkind head speech writer, and Jon Lovett, the consensus funniest speech writer in the room. But while these are probably the two most famous speechwriters, the youngest member of the team was the best known to me, a really great guy whom I got to know fairly well toward the end of undergrad: Kyle O'Connor.

Kyle gets mentioned 3-4 times in this book, the first time about 100 pages in. Kyle got scooped up by the Obama team while we were still in college, when his candidacy seemed like a longshot and where a junior speechwriting gig was probably a practical stepping stone rather than a career-altering decision. But we all know how unexpected and whirlwind the Obama 2008 campaign was. Kyle was busy during those years and we didn't keep in the best of touch, but he gave us insights into this unknowable life through occasional emails and Instagrams from Air Force One.

Kyle is mentioned in the book really only as the person positioned right above the book's author in terms of the hierarchy of speechwriters. He's also probably not mentioned because—though certainly interpersonally funny—his main assets are probably earnestness, clarity of thought, ability to communicate effectively.

The closest I came to influencing political speechcraft was when I found myself on an email chain started by Kyle, soliciting our feedback on how to address the nation in the 2011 State of the Union address. Kyle asked about 5-6 of us for our thoughts on how to address gridlock. At the time, I was apoplectic over the Republicans' obstructionism and equally upset with Obama's very patient, arguably overindulgent extension of good will to them and willingness to compromise. We all know how these overtures were rewarded, but if there's one thing this book really reveals between the slapstick, it's what a good, fine man and politician President Obama was. Aside from all of the burdens he had to carry as the first Black president, he was also uncommonly deferential, optimistic, and decent toward a Republican party seemingly animated by nothing so universal as simmering racial resentment.

We all know the outcome, and history will tell whether decency and proper procedure will once again come to define our federal politics (though I'm not very optimistic). But reading this memoir in the midst of the Trump presidency, characterized by white victimhood, racist and xenophobic dog whistles, hollow braggadocio, inability to accept blame or responsibility, opaqueness of process, and eagerness to take credit for every positive while shirking or blaming others for every liability, I am thankful that we had eight years under a president who cared about good government and operated in good faith.

My response to Kyle in that email was that we should lay the blame for the economic miseries of the population on the Republicans, who had control of congress and thereby had far more control over the economy than did the president, who does not enact laws. In hindsight, I understand just how inappropriate this suggestion was; not only does the American public not really seem to understand that the president doesn't control the economy, and can only do so to the extent Congress is willing to cooperate with him, but it would have been off-message in the extreme. And none of this is to say that Republicans deserve cooperation or the benefit of the doubt. But if we are presently witnessing the conflagration of American democracy, history will bear witness to who brought a fire extinguisher and who brought the gasoline. We very recently had a man in the Oval Office whose decency and good faith were inexhaustible, and we currently have a man whose piggishness, immaturity, and ineptitude defy credulity. May our next choice

reflect the temperament of the person we feel better represents us as a people, and may President Obama's legacy counsel us to make the wiser choice.

ETA: I almost forgot to mention what an asshole Harvey Weinstein comes across as in this book, and that's without him even sexually coercing the author! Litt must feel quite vindicated and good riddance to that monster.

Heather says

I reserve the 5 star rating for books I would undoubtedly read at least one more time, so the fact that I have no intention of reading this again and I'm still giving it 5 stars means something to me.

I almost literally devoured this book. I consumed it in every possible way, with the exception of tearing out the pages and eating them. I never wanted to step away from the pages and I'm rather upset the book ended.

This book was satisfying as hell. David Litt was a speech writer for President Obama. *The man knows how to write*. Add to that his unique perspective and unflinching opinions, and you've got a great book. On top of that, the dude is straight up **HILARIOUS!**

The content is what the synopsis says it is. If you are even slightly interested in reading this, just do it, because I personally found nothing to dislike about it. The entire thing was so damn enjoyable.

Now I'm going to add an excerpt that I think really captures the book's essence, before I go overboard and keep gushing and telling you to read this book because **it's so good**.

"As a small avalanche fell from my hat onto my jacket, I thought of all the miles that had piled up over the past eight years. I had knocked on doors and driven naked. I had organized a county and scrubbed Janice Maier's table till it gleamed. I sang the Golden Girls theme song in the Oval. I watched a tiny man surf Jesse Jackson's coat. In a convention hall in Charlotte, I met a mom from Arizona who would never stop fighting for her little girl. I was disillusioned more times than I thought possible. I was re-inspired more times than I could count. I navigated Healthcare.gov for a woman, the highest test of love. I helped break the Internet. I wrote one perfect speech. I found a salmon in the toilet and was caught half naked on Air Force One and told the president he looked like Hitler to his face. I was, I felt, more perfect than when I started."

. says

3.75 stars

it's no surprise that an Obama speechwriter is going to represent his president and party, but the book is not saturated with politics. There is also some focus on certain policies, such as the Affordable Care Act, but it's important when taking a speechwriter's perspective to communicate to the public.

More so, this book is about a guy in his twenties who found inspiration, and, to a degree, infatuation, with Obama, more specifically, with what he had to say. From working on a local level campaigning for Barack to (on rare occasion) spending one-on-one time with **p / potus**, Litt lets us in on his many memorable moments, usually consisting of him making some mild blunders that most times seem innocuous, some having potential public speaking disaster. Don't get me wrong, Litt has some very good anecdotes and stories of being

on the inside (as far as he felt at times), and he has a very entertaining sense of humour that translates well onto the page, but sometimes it became a little too "aw shucks"-y, perhaps a few times slightly inflated for effect. there is not an abundance of name dropping, at least names most would be familiar with, but, for example, there is a story involving harvey weinstein that exposes him as a different, though less abhorrent than sexual assault, huge asshole nonetheless.

while litt finds many occasions to feel proud, privileged, fortunate to be a part of the white house engine, he also points out it's not all glitz and glamour that one may expect. still, when dealing with the president, a little less than ideal this or that doesn't seem as bad sometimes.

as fine as the book reads, there is a part of me finding myself annoyed, inching toward angry if i linger, that virtually everything you hear from a president has been assembled, researched, and if we're honest, manipulated to work a specific group of people, even if that group is as large as the country itself. this goes for any president from any party, but to have focus on this aspect of our leaders from a speechwriter's perspective, for me, it takes away any last element of glittery showmanship magic and shows it for what is really is: buying time. it's not like i didn't **know** this to begin with, but this is kind of like watching the sausage being made.

thank you to ecco/harper collins and all involved in this goodreads giveaway.

Mary says

A light hearted insider's guide to the Obama White House as seen by a speech writer. Although David Litt was usually working on the comedic aspects of the president's speeches, he was also part of the notable speech writing team which included Favreau and Lovett. Litt's admiration and respect for President Obama is limitless, yet his self-deprecating analysis is honest and insightful in pointing out what went wrong or what could have been better. This is a clever and entertaining memoir.

Brett says

I really enjoyed this laugh-out-loud funny memoir from former Obama speechwriter David Litt. It's an honest, and sometimes wistful, portrayal of the Obama presidency--its highs and its lows. Litt is self-deprecating and candid as he examines whether Obama lived up to his "hopey, changey" potential.

Julie Ehlers says

Kudos to this kid. There are so many ways this book could have gone wrong—overly snarky, carelessly written, or just too obviously steeped in white-Ivy-League-dude privilege. Instead, everything went exactly right, in my opinion. I've got some background in political campaigns/political office myself, and even now (yes, even now) I still have a high level of idealism; I genuinely believe (*some*) elected officials truly want to make the world a better place, and I celebrate their victories and sometimes take their defeats too personally. David Litt understands and portrays those feelings very well, and when he talks about the moments when his idealism was brought back down to earth, I understood that feeling as well.

Beyond that, *Thanks, Obama* is very well written and articulate—there's nothing lazy or phoned in here,

which I guess makes sense given how tirelessly speechwriters are used to working to get something right. It's a fantastic way to get up to speed on the big issues of the Obama administration and how they were handled (or not) by Congress, if that's something you still need clarity on. And it's *funny*. David Litt now works for Funny or Die, that's how funny he is. Really funny.

I thought it would be depressing to read about the Obama administration given the trainwreck we currently have in office, but the tone of this book is exactly right: realistic but still hopeful. If you need an antidote to the vast quantities of nonsense we're now dealing with here in the U.S., I can't recommend anything better than *Thanks, Obama*.

Cavak says

"If only we could have a Glassdoor review for the White House's inner offices during Obama's two terms." Litt has got you covered, at least from his somewhat limited perspective. If it was this *hard* for Litt to be part of a team of speechwriters, imagine how the rest of the administration felt. And this was before social media exploded to today's levels. Yikes!

There is bias for Democrats and their ideals in here, but I would say it's at a tolerable level. It's not an aggressive promotion for absolute reverence, and Litt is quick to point out that working at the White House for him wasn't always magical. It's written in a way where he hopes you can understand what the entire experience meant to him, including the embarrassing lows and quibbling annoyances. It's also telling about how inner politics could potentially damage a public figure's image and how reputation often holds paramount importance, something that is becoming all too apparent today.

Surprisingly, I would recommend this book to Obama's detractors too. Mostly to give them an idea of how human Obama is to a lot of people, since I've heard many say that they "can't understand him at all" amongst other things. Even with Litt's gushing idolization early in, this book isn't a long lost love story of how it could have been between them. Nor is it a falling out. It's about how one nervously awkward youth is doing his best to impress another busy man who has *many other* things on his mind. And through the jokes, the angst, and the disappointment, the accomplishments feel all the more rewarding. It's like that one final in school you've been stressing and whining about for weeks, but then it's over in thirty minutes and you pass with flying colors. Unmistakable triumph.

While I would have liked more background history to certain events and I didn't laugh at all of his jokes, I did enjoy reading this book. The White House jargon dictionary entries were fantastic, and the ending especially made me smile. For people who have got their electronics handy, I highly recommend looking up the speeches that are mentioned in the book after you're done reading about them. Like Litt said at the start, YouTube is your friend.

Thank you very much, Litt, for all your hard work!

I received the book for free through Goodreads Giveaways.

David Litt says

I did not mean to rate my own book - and I can't figure how to unrate it. I do think it deserves five stars, but I mean really, wouldn't it be weird if I didn't?

Grace says

I enjoyed the sneak peek into the inner-workings of the Obama presidential campaigns and the Obama White House, but I struggled to empathize with the author. Litt came off as a bit entitled and too "look at me!" at times throughout his twenty-something coming of age story. This was especially noticeable at the beginning when he mentioned on several occasions that he "borrowed" his roommate's car without asking and went rogue at an internship by disregarding the dress code and playing Minesweeper all day. It was hard to get invested in a person like this in real life, let alone in a memoir.

Gary Anderson says

Does anyone else remember when the American presidency was focused and functional? You can agree or disagree with Barack Obama's policies and philosophy, but it's hard to deny that his White House did a pretty good job with organization and communication. David Litt was a part of that, at age 24. Litt was hired as a speechwriter, first for presidential advisor Valerie Jarrett--there were no other applicants--and eventually for President Obama. Litt's memoir *Thanks, Obama: My Hopey Changey White House Years* covers his transition from a smitten, self-described "Obamabot" to a thoughtful, self-deprecating contributor to White House messaging. Litt wrote speeches on a wide array of topics because, as a junior staff member, he was assigned topics that no one else wanted. But Litt is funny, funny, funny, so he became especially valuable when Obama needed comedy material from time to time. Seeing how those bits of humor evolved is a fascinating thread in *Thanks, Obama*.

Litt's memoir is an insightful look at how a competent White House operates. But because the place is operated by humans, there are some moments when the wheels come off. This is not a tell-all on Obama or anyone else in his administration, but Litt gives readers his hilarious take on how hard work sometimes doesn't pay off, and how being in the presence of a president can make a person do things he wouldn't otherwise do. For example, on one occasion Litt had to tell Obama that a favorite photo made him look too much like Hitler. Remember when the Healthcare.gov web site was rolled out, and it didn't work? Litt's panicked writing about that debacle was, for me, the funniest section of *Thanks, Obama*.

A lot of funny stuff happened during Litt's time at the White House, but all of it was in service to a president who was serious about working for the American people. Reading this book is fun, and it makes me hope that we will soon have another president who values competence, understands organizational dynamics, and knows how to use the presidency for something other than personal aggrandizement.

Thanks to Ecco Press and HarperCollins for providing me with an advance copy of *Thanks, Obama*. I hope many people will look for and enjoy this book when it comes out in September 2017.

Katelyn says

I thoroughly enjoyed this look at Obama's presidency by then 20 something speechwriter David Litt. I laughed, I (once) cried and I looked forward to picking it up every evening. I especially appreciated Litt's honesty. He writes a lot about impostor syndrome, which I sometimes feel, and reveals his embarrassments

and missteps. I'm glad I don't work in such a high pressure position. Most of all, I liked reading about the culture in the White House and Litt's summary of Obama's presidency: he didn't accomplish everything we hoped he would, but he helped bring about major changes to our culture that aren't easily reversed, including legalizing gay marriage and improving access to healthcare. I recommend this book for anyone interested in the former President or insider stories.

Truman32 says

David Litt's fantastic memoir **Thanks, Obama: My Hopey, Changey White House Years** works in many different ways. The book is a laugh out loud series of highly comedic and spit-take inducing vignettes that you will spend hours retelling in less funny versions to supremely patient acquaintances and loved ones. It's a demonstration on how vital idealistic, enthusiastic, and inspired people working in our government are to the progress of our country. It reveals a fascinating behind the scenes glimpse of the inner workings of the Obama administration. It is a stellar table leveler if one leg is shorter by an inch and 3/8 than the other three legs. And it works in outstanding fashion as a creepy spider crusher.

Recently out of college, David Litt sees freshman senator Barack Obama stumping on the campaign trail. He is immediately beguiled. The optimism and ambition of this presidential candidate speaks to him (*we can really make a difference!*) and Litt is soon beginning a wild journey spanning from the volunteer campaign offices in Ohio to two terms at the White House as a staff speechwriter.

David Litt is self depreciating and very funny. And look, even if you take the politics out—if you don't use divisive comments like: *this book would make even career politician Mitch McConnell emit the kind of screeching laugh (think: bat caught in a bug zapper) normally only heard only when taking health insurance away from young children*. Or that: *the pages in Thanks, Obama flew by faster than Speaker of the House Paul Ryan running a two-hour marathon*. Or: *this book even held the attention of Ted Cruz so that he stopped eating his boogers for several minutes*. You are still left with a very relatable and timely story that both sides of the aisle can enjoy. Litt's goofball antics are relatable —mainly as he is overwhelmed in the presence of the 44th President of the United States. He comes off as well-meaning, smart, and dedicated... and not at all sure how his foot got stuck in that bucket nor how to get it off tactfully. It is all genuinely hilarious and bound to have reader's guffaws erupting like hot geysers from Old Faithful.

Andy says

A must read for all who have been afraid to look at the news updates on their phone for the last nine months. I laughed, I cried. I felt nostalgic for a time I was proud of my country's leaders but left this book feeling more renewed and hopeful than melancholy.

Litt does a great job of showing the reader a side of the White House that has not been covered before. Somewhere in between *The West Wing* and *Veep*, he manages to show the absurdity of his experiences without losing the idealism that motivates him.

I would put this book right up there with President Obama's speech to the NAACP and the author's 2001 speech that won him 15s Lieutenant as the best things that David Litt has ever written.
