Written by Kam Williams
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"On February 10, 2007, Barack Hussein Obama stood before thousands waiting in the cold in front of the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois and made his intentions known: he was running for president. This book traces tracks this journey through my eyes as I covered the improbable road to the presidency of Obama...

My aim in publishing this book is to offer an historical account of covering this stunning and exciting race, but to also offer in real-time the ups and downs of the campaign, and even take a look back at various moments from my perspective, as well as those of some of the entertainers and others I crossed paths with along the way."

- Excerpted from the Introduction (pgs. xxii-xxiii)

If you're interested in revisiting the 2008 Presidential campaign from the perspective of an African American journalist afforded access to candidate Barack Obama, then this coffee table keepsake was undoubtedly designed with you in mind. For, between December of 2006 and Election Day a couple years later, Roland Martin filed hundreds of reports, in his capacity as a political correspondent for the CNN and TV-One Networks, as a radio talk show host, and as a nationally-syndicated columnist.

The First: President Barack Obama's Road to the White House is essentially a chronological rehash of Martin's interviews, articles and news stories which collectively paint a complete picture of the evolution of Obama from long shot to contender to favorite to the first Black President of the United States.

What is likely to make this opus fairly absorbing for the average history buff is the fact that these real-time entries accurately reflect the pulse of the country at each moment of the campaign, as the political sands shifted back and forth beneath the feet of the pivotal players.

It's all recounted here, mostly in the author's own words, from the Iowa caucuses ("All of a sudden, there is a sense that Obama actually could win this thing.") to the Michelle Obama patriotism question ("Was it a big deal. Nope?") to the Rev. Wright controversy ("I fundamentally believe that whites and Blacks reacted differently [to] the snippets of Wright's preaching.").

Overall, the astute observations of a partisan who never hid his allegiances yet still proved pretty prescient in terms of forecasting the outcome of the landmark presidential election.

The First: President Barack Obama's Road to the White House
by Roland S. Martin
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430 pages
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