

Book Review: Barack Obama in Hawai'i and Indonesia The Making of a Global President, by Dinesh Sharma, Ph.D.

By Kam Williams
Special To *The Skanner News*

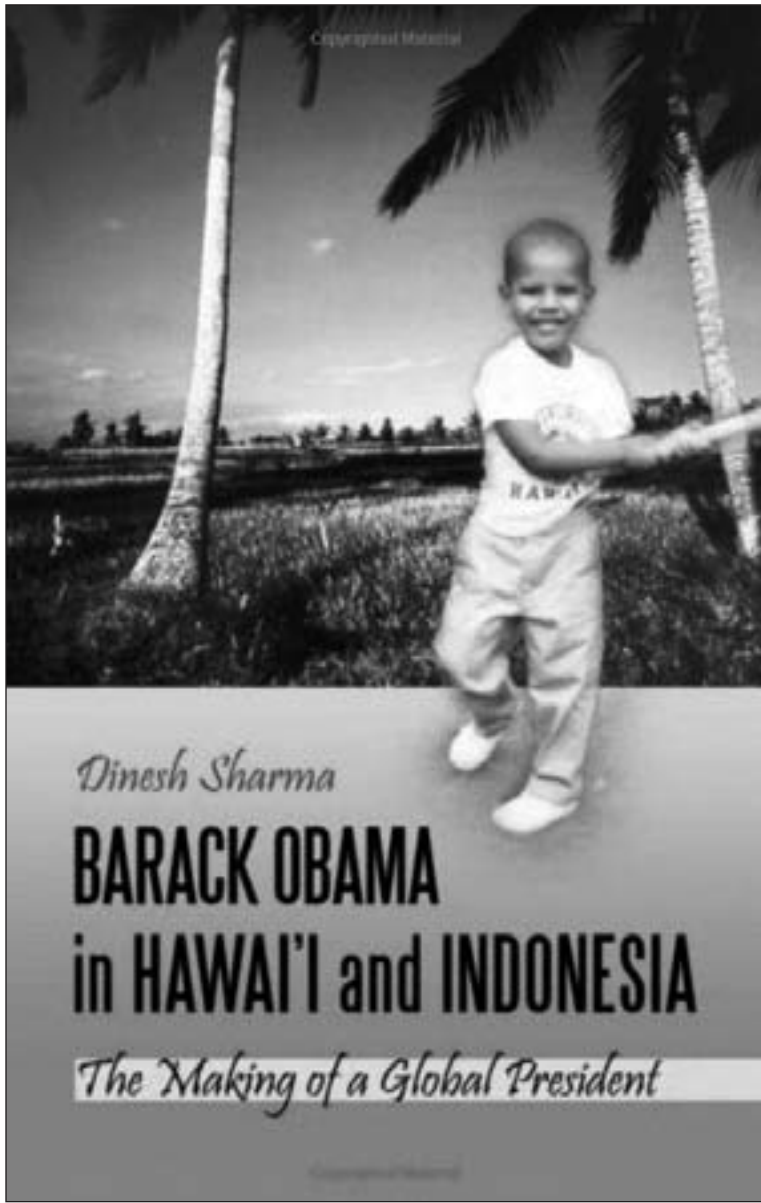
"This book is about Obama's narrative truth—his cultural upbringing, narrative psychology, and transformative leadership. We will examine Obama's cultural pathway through the life cycle and examine how he resolved the various developmental and psychosocial challenges he confronted..."

"Why is Obama's upbringing in Hawai'i and Indonesia relevant for America at this turning point in history? Is there indeed a connection between the personal and the political? I find that there is a remarkable degree of confluence between Obama's biography and the challenges America faces today."

Excerpted from the Prologue

Barack Obama's historic run for the presidency spawned a cottage industry of books about him and the First Lady, with several even being published well before the inauguration. Most of the early offerings were merely take-the-money-and-run rip-offs, which is why this critic suggested that those impatient for a keepsake consider waiting for someone to come up with a worthwhile biography likely to stand the test of time.

Proof that patience is a virtue is "Barack Obama in Hawai'i and Indonesia," as insightful an assessment of the roots and psyche of the 44th President of the United States as one could ever hope to find. This fascinating analysis of



the formative years which made the man was written by Dinesh

Sharma, a cultural psychologist who received his Ph.D. from Harvard University.

Dr. Sharma conducted a couple of years' worth of painstaking research in preparing this opus, venturing to Obama's hometowns in Indonesia and Hawai'i and to other important ports-of-call to conduct interviews firsthand and to unearth evidence to determine how his subject had truly been imprinted as a child. Among many issues, he tackles such popular questions as whether Obama had attended a Muslim or Christian school in Jakarta (both) and whether he was born in Hawaii (of course).

Sharma found it harder to prove that the President's parents ever wed. In fact, Barack Obama, Sr. was already married with children when he met Ann Dunham, Jr., Obama's mom. Womanizing, wife-beating Barack, Sr. takes it on the chin here, being exposed as both a bit of a blowhard and a deadbeat dad despite his son's desperate "dreams" and need to place him on a pedestal. Instead, it is the women in Barack, Jr.'s life had the most impact, from his mom, Ann; to his maternal grandmother, Madelyn; to his half-sister, Maya; to his wife, Michelle.

Overall, the author was obviously extremely impressed by what he learned about the President, since he has no reservations about comparing him favorably to such icons as fellow Nobel Peace Prize-winner Martin Luther King, Mahatma



Dinesh Sharma, Ph.D.

Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln and the fabled King Arthur. For, like those equally-charismatic leaders, he has managed to mesmerize not merely the citizens of this nation, but folks all over the globe, with his inspirational message of hope and change.

An enlightening account of Obama's boyhood chronicling an amazing transformation from an Indonesian slumdog ordinaire into a planetary prophet for the ages.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR SEATTLE DECEMBER 2011

BULLETIN BOARD



If you have an event you want to share with the community, email it two weeks in advance to *The Skanner* at info@theskanner.com

Friday December 2

GREAT FIGGY PUDDING STREET CORNER CAROLING COMPETITION! This is an annual fundraiser for the Pike Market Senior Center & Downtown Food Bank. This event provides free family entertainment and is the biggest single musical holiday event in Seattle. 5 – 8:30 p.m. Westlake Center & Pine Streets between 3rd and 7th Avenues. Suggested \$10 donation.

Saturday December 3

HOLLY –DAY DECORATIONS: This is for ages 5 and older. Create beautiful wreaths, garlands and sprays using invasive plants that need to be removed from the park. \$9 per person. 1 – 4 p.m. Discovery Park Environmental Learning Center, 3801 W. Government Way. For more details call 206-386-4237

KICK OFF THE HOLIDAYS AT COLUMBIA CITY'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY LIGHTING FESTIVAL! For the eleventh year in a row Columbia City will be kicking-off the festivities of the season with a family-friendly holiday celebration. Celebration begins at 4:45 p.m. at the SW corner of Rainier Ave. S. and S. Hudson St.

Tuesday December 6

HOLIDAY ICE RINK TO OPEN AT CAL ANDERSON PARK: Holiday decorations will enhance the festive atmosphere. Local sponsors will select the music played each day. Hours of operation 11 a.m. – 10 p.m. Dec 6 thru Dec 24. Cost is adults \$12, children 8 and under \$6.

Wednesday December 7

BOOKS FOR GIVING! Need gift ideas for the book lover in your life? The Seattle Public Library will offer holiday gift suggestions during its Books for Giving reader's advisory event from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. on the Library's Facebook Page.

Thursday December 8

NORTHERN LIGHT HOLIDAY BAZAAR! Come and join us in a day and evening of holiday shopping and fun with family and friends. 2 – 8 p.m. Swedish Cultural Center, 1920 Dexter Ave. N. Free for all to enjoy.

Saturday December 10

GREEN LAKE PATHWAY OF LIGHTS RETURNS! Local musicians will perform at four sites around the lake. Warm drinks and treats will be available. The lighting of the path around Green Lake will take place rain or shine. Admission is free. 5 – 8 p.m.