

Quotes about the Speech

When his campaign was in peril because of his ties to Rev. Wright, Barack Obama made that remarkable speech about race and his own journey, and his relationship with Wright in Philadelphia. That held his campaign together; a very key moment.

~**George Stephanopoulos**, ABC News

[The] best speech ever given on race in this country. This is the kind of speech I think first graders should see, people in the last year of college should see before they go out in the world. This should be, to me, an American tract.

~**Chris Matthews**, MSNBC

Obama challenged Americans to confront the country's racial divide...an extraordinary speech.

~**Charles Gibson**, ABC News

Quietly, but clearly with great passion, he walked the listener through a remarkable exploration of race from both sides of the color divide, both sides of himself.

~ **Campbell Brown**, CNN

[T]he best speech and most important speech on race that we have heard as a nation since Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream' speech.

~**Michelle Bernard**, MSNBC

Barack Obama didn't simply touch the touchiest subject in America, he grabbed it and turned it over and examined it from several different angles and made it personal. Just steps from Independence Hall in Philadelphia, he rang the bell hard and well.

~**Jonathan Alter**, Newsweek

In a speech whose frankness about race many historians said could be likened only to speeches by Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson, John F. Kennedy and Abraham Lincoln,

Senator Barack Obama, speaking across the street from where the Constitution was written, traced the country's race problem back to not simply the country's 'original sin of slavery' but the protections for it embedded in the Constitution.

~Janny Scott, New York Times

I think Senator Obama showed the American people exactly who he is, what he stands for, and why he's running for president, because he had to explain in a few minutes American history – the long and perhaps difficult journey that the country has gone through to get to this moment. And the moment is, of course, whether or not America is prepared to accept or reject Obama based on who he is and what he stands for, but not because of the color of his skin.

~ Donna Brazile, Political Strategist

[Lincoln and Obama] decided to address them [the charges] openly in a prominent national venue, well before their parties' nominating conventions – Lincoln at the Cooper Union in New York, Obama at the Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

~Gary Wills, New York Review of Books