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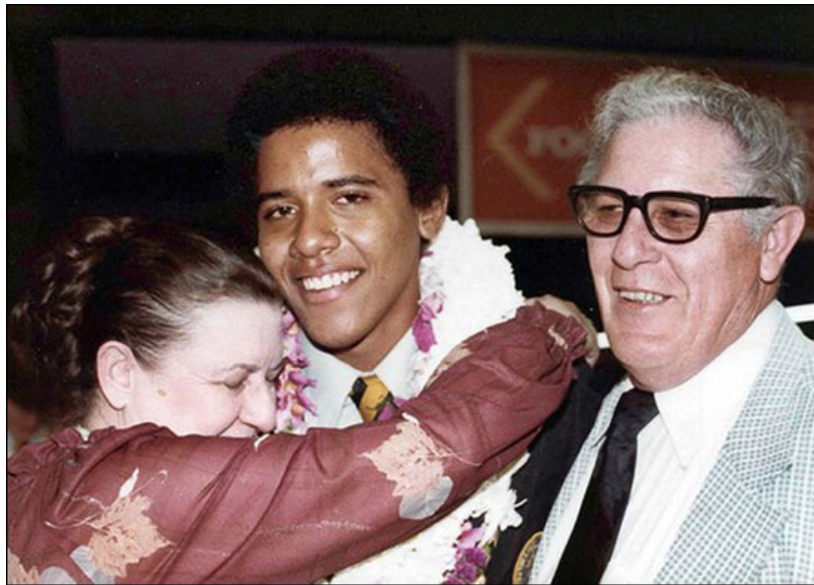
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Barack Obama's Unitarian Universalist connection

Where to learn more about President Obama's family history with Unitarian Universalism. By [Christopher L. Walton](#)
Fall 2012 8.15.12

Barack Obama's mother, Stanley Ann Dunham, grew up attending a Unitarian church in Bellevue, Washington. Obama lived with her parents, Stanley and Madelyn Lee Payne Dunham, in Hawaii in 1971-72, when he attended the Sunday school at First Unitarian Church in Honolulu, and from 1975 until his high school graduation in 1979. (The photo above shows Obama and his grandparents at his graduation.)

Obama mentions his grandparents' involvement with Unitarian Universalism in *Dreams from My Father* (see pages 16-17). He describes his mother's religious worldview and its impact on him in *The Audacity of Hope* (see Chapter 6). His mother's biographer, Janny Scott, explores the Dunhams' involvement in East Shore Unitarian Church in greater detail in *A Singular Woman* (see pages 59-61). The Rev. Mike Young describes what he learned about Obama's Sunday school experience when the president-elect visited First Unitarian Church in Honolulu in December 2008 for Madelyn's memorial service in interviews with the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* (January 6, 2009) and the *Tampa Tribune* (March 28, 2009).

This article appeared in the Fall 2012 issue of UU World (page 23). Photo of Madelyn Lee Payne Dunham, Barack Obama, and Stanley Dunham at Obama's 1979 high school graduation (AP Photo/Obama Presidential Campaign). See sidebar for links to related resources.

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