



Book Review: Theodore the Activist Boone

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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Theodore is the only child of two lawyers who practice in the small town where they live. Every day after school he heads to the law office where he also, despite his young age, has an office. Theodore is interested in the grade eight debate club, camping with his scout troop and helping people to solve their problems. Most of all, however, he loves his dog who is appropriately named Judge because it was a local Judge who convinced the family to take the stray into their homes and lives.

Because Theodore and his parents are interested in current events and are good at listening to people Theodore is aware of a number of problems in the Strattenburg area. Budget constraints have forced the school district to stop offering all the classes and programs that were in place. This is upsetting to students and staff some of whom would become unemployed because of this.

The Governor of the state arrived in the community shortly after the cutbacks to announce that an eight-mile bypass costing two hundred million dollars is going to be built. Many business leaders and truck drivers who were eager to save time by avoiding the regular drive that creates traffic jams are supportive. On the other hand, some people, such as the grandparents of Theodore's friend, Hardie, oppose the project stating that they would have to give up property that had been owned and valued by family for generations for this to occur.

As the debate heats up, Theodore begins to face an additional problem in his personal life. His goal has been to continue to move up in the Eagle Scout troop but he makes an error in judgement that blocks that goal. It is devastating for him to think about this but things become even worse when Judge is unnecessarily hurt. Theodore becomes worried that he might not be able to survive the injuries.

Despite all the difficulties, Theodore begins to take action. He commits himself to Judge and refuses to leave him alone while he is an unconscious patient at the veterinary clinic. He also decides to do some research about the planned bypass and finds some hidden information that he feels is important for the community to know regarding the bypass.

Although he couldn't have predicted it, Theodore also is presented with an opportunity to use his debating skills and experience in a very public arena.

John Grisham is the author of twenty-six novels, one non-fiction work and a collection of stories. This work incorporates the interesting life of a young boy, his family and community and the dilemma that they share. Theodore uses his intelligence, skills, growing maturity and desire to help others to bring clarity to the very difficult situation that is dividing the people of his community into passionately opposing sides. Even though there was risk to himself, the boy bravely takes a stand and does what he thinks he needs to do just because it is the "right thing".

This book was a very captivating read that I soaked up in a matter of a couple of days. Before I knew it, I was at the end of the two hundred ninety-eighth page and still found myself longing for more.