



# Joe Biden - Promises to Keep

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](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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This 2007 book published by Random House 2007 is not only a personal biography but also a chronicle of political events during Senator Joe Biden's life before he became Vice-President of the United States.

Joe Biden was born into a strong Irish Catholic household where family was extremely important. He also formed bonds with peers and mentors who influenced him throughout his life.

Despite this, Mr. Biden has faced much tragedy. His first wife and infant daughter were killed in a car accident on their way to purchasing a Christmas tree. His two young sons, who also were in the car at the time, were hospitalized for serious injuries. That left him as a single parent who was facing a career change as he had just been elected to the United States Senate. The grief led him to the conclusion that he should give up the position to be with his children but, thankfully, friends and family encouraged him to be sworn in as a Senator.

Senator Biden made a commitment to always be available to his sons and even though his sister and her husband moved into the house to help him with the childcare, he rode the train back and forth from his home to Washington every day to honour that commitment.

He was hesitant to date again but, in time found and married his second wife who has been a strong support for the boys and him. After their marriage a daughter was born to them to complete the family.

Senator Biden was not immune to physical problems. As a young man he suffered from two brain aneurysms for which he had brain surgery. This brought maturity and growth to a man who was used to being independent and pushing himself.

"Promises to Keep" not only chronicles Mr. Biden's personal life but also his career. At times, however, his writing is so detailed that, unless you are an American history buff or well-read in world affairs, you might feel bored or overwhelmed. For example, the description of the process where Justice Bork was rejected in his nomination to the Supreme Court, was extremely complex.

The only other criticism I have about the writing style is that there appears, at times, to be an assumption that the reader understands the role or history of various organizations that are mentioned. Even abbreviations used for them are used with a casualness that might not be received with understanding.

I enjoyed this book, particularly when it came to the personal aspects that describe how Joe Biden faced difficulties always with the support of his faith, family and friends. His honesty was admirable. I wish that the simple and clear style in that portion of the book had been carried through to other parts which were clouded with unfamiliar geographic locations, legislative complexity and political wrangling that might not be familiar to the reader.