

For Immediate Release

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CROWN PUBLISHERS



KNOPF BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

**BARACK OBAMA, ILLINOIS SENATOR-ELECT,
SIGNS BOOK CONTRACT WITH CROWN PUBLISHERS
& ALFRED A. KNOPF BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS**

NEW YORK, December 17, 2004—Crown Publishers has acquired world and audio rights for two books by the U.S. Senator-elect from Illinois, Barack Obama, and Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers (an imprint of Random House Children's Books) has acquired world rights to a children's book also by Obama, it was announced jointly today by Steve Ross, Senior Vice President, Publisher, Crown Publishers and Three Rivers Press, and Nancy Hinkel, Publishing Director, Alfred A. Knopf and Crown Books for Young Readers.

Obama's autobiography, **DREAMS FROM MY FATHER: A Story of Race and Inheritance**, was first published in hardcover by Crown in 1995. Three Rivers Press (the trade paperback division of the Crown Publishing Group) reissued the book in paperback in July 2004, where it has been a *New York Times* bestseller for fourteen weeks with 350,000 copies in print. The deal with Crown was initiated by Jane Dystel of Dystel & Goderich Literary Management and was negotiated and concluded by Robert B. Barnett of Williams & Connolly LLP in Washington, D.C. Rachel Klayman, Senior Editor, was the acquiring editor at Crown. The children's book was acquired for Knopf by Michelle Frey, Senior Editor, from Robert B. Barnett.

The first book in Crown's two-book deal is tentatively scheduled for publication in Spring 2006 and will offer a window into the political and spiritual convictions that propelled Obama's recent U.S. Senate victory in Illinois. "I got into politics after law school because it seemed to me that the law was inadequate to the task of affecting change," says Obama. "Politics provided a direct link to my background as a community organizer. Today, when I see the divisions in this country, when I see unfairness and injustice, when I see misunderstanding or the enormous empathy deficit that damages so much of our politics, I have to do something about it. It's a lifetime journey and it is the basis for this book."

The Knopf children's book, also tentatively scheduled for publication in 2006, will be an illustrated picture book; the illustrator has yet to be named. The book will detail a portion of Obama's childhood as the "the skinny young kid with big ears and the funny name" who, years later, went on to hear that name chanted at political rallies across the

country. Obama grew up the son of a white American mother and a black African father, living much of his youth in Hawaii and Indonesia. His first name means "one who is blessed by God" in Swahili. Self-reliance and fortitude served Obama well, and in this book he will share the lessons of a childhood that was both totally unique and quintessentially American, lessons from which all children may draw strength in their journeys to adulthood. The author's proceeds from the book will be donated to charitable organizations, to be announced.

A stirring orator, Obama, 42, emerged as a powerful new voice in American politics when he addressed the Democratic Party's national convention in Boston in July 2004. In January 2005, when he is sworn into office, Obama will be the fifth African-American ever to serve in the U.S. Senate, and the only one among one hundred U.S. Senators today.

Obama studied political science at Columbia University in New York, and then moved to Chicago, where he spent three years as a community organizer. In 1988, he left to attend Harvard Law School, where he was elected the first African-American President of the Harvard Law Review. After Harvard, Obama returned to Chicago to practice civil rights law and represent victims of housing and employment discrimination, and became a senior lecturer in constitutional law at the University of Chicago Law School. He also served as a three-term state senator from Chicago's South Side. He is married to a lawyer, Michelle, and they have two young daughters.

Crown Publishers is a division of the Crown Publishing Group, a diverse trade book publisher.

Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers is an imprint of Random House Children's Books, the world's largest English-language children's trade book publisher.

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