



# Campaign Promises

*Laurel Osterkamp*

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## **Campaign Promises** Laurel Osterkamp

Comedy writer and award-winning novelist Laurel Osterkamp has written a funny and moving novella about life, love, and politics as seen through the unique lens of Lucy Jones, a quintessential girl-next-door who is obsessed with political campaigns. Liberal, idealistic, and struggling to find her way, Lucy has an easier time believing in causes than she does in herself. But in the midst of analyzing the mistakes made by past political candidates, Lucy attempts to figure out her own choices when it comes to both her private and public life. There's her high school sweetheart Jack, Monty, Jack's magnetic older brother, and her politician boyfriend, Drew. Can any of these men offer Lucy a campaign promise to believe in?

This 19,000 word novella (roughly 60 print-book pages) spans twenty years and offers five slice-of-life vignettes in the life of Lucy Jones:

- The Prom and John Bayard Anderson
- The Wedding and Gary Hart
- The Funeral and Paul Wellstone
- The Baby Shower and Pat Schroeder
- The High School Reunion and Michele Bachmann

\*Note - This book has a liberal slant. If you're a Michele Bachmann fan, you probably won't enjoy it.

As a special bonus the first four chapters of Osterkamp's second full-length novel, *Starring in the Movie of My Life*, are included in the back.

Laurel Osterkamp was a comedy writer in Minneapolis before she began writing novels. Her first novel, *Following My Toes*, has been a Kindle best seller and won the 2008 Indie Excellence Award for Chick Lit. *Starring in the Movie of My Life* received honors in the 2011 Indie Excellence Awards for Chick Lit, and in the 2011 International Book Awards for Women's Fiction and Young Adult Lit. She currently teaches high school, and is working on a sequel to *Campaign Promises*.

## **Campaign Promises Details**

Date : Published (first published August 13th 2011)

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Author : Laurel Osterkamp

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# From Reader Review Campaign Promises for online ebook

## Ashley says

Laurel Osterkamp has another winner with the novella, Campaign Promises. Lucy Jones' life is defined by significant moments in politics, from her first crush to her high school reunion, and a few more big events in between. Everything relates back to particular politicians and how their stories shape Lucy's own perspective.

I'm a bit of a political junkie, and I couldn't get enough of this book. I had never thought about significant events from my own life against the backdrop of the hot political story of the day, but really, the relationship is there if you just take a moment to think about it.

This is such an interesting premise for a book. Osterkamp uses third party candidate John Bayard Anderson to talk about Lucy's lessons in integrity. Gary Hart's mistakes when it came to romance- and being overconfident are a part of some risk taking Lucy enjoys. And a certain (two shots of crazy) congresswoman-as-mean-girl is there to show how some people just never change.

I found myself looking forward to seeing how Laurel would relate political figures to the events in Lucy's life. I liked the reminder that Pat Schroeder blazed a trail in her run for presidency (and the reminder that because of her, we have the Family and Medical Leave Act. Thank you, Pat). I don't want to give away Lucy's life lesson from Pat, but I found myself going "Yep, uh-huh, I sometimes do that, too."

The last chapter had me laughing. This is the one with the (two shots of crazy) mean girl-congresswoman reference. It relays an encounter Lucy has at her high school reunion, and I found myself playing out the scene in my head. I really appreciated the references Laurel made here and found myself just wanting more stories from Lucy's life.

So, really, if you're looking for a light (and sometimes a little sad) chick lit piece with some intellect behind it, go out to Smashwords and download Campaign Promises. I don't think you'll be disappointed. Oh, and as a bonus, you can get the first four chapters of Starring In The Movie of My Life as part of the download. I loved that one, too, and you can read why here.

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## Kristin says

Really great writing. The way she wove political stories of the past as a means to punctuate the story she was telling...very clever! It's a short and entertaining read.

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## Liza says

Enjoyable, decently written, but added nothing new to the story.

This is a short story written as an **addendum** to the previous novel, *November Surprise*. It's not really a stand-alone novel (too confusing and not enough background history, or at least not enough to be enjoyable).

Read *November Surprise* first, or even instead of. This book added details to conversations and situations that were already discussed in the first book.

One chapter (of a five-chapter book) was an almost word-for-word reprint of a chapter in the first book. The worst part is that the author fails to mention baby daddy's name anywhere in that section, which, after coming off a paragraph mentioning an ex-boyfriend, leads you to believe you're losing your mind (I had to reread that second twice, even though I knew definitely who the father was) and that she switched fathers. Unfortunate oversight.

I enjoyed the political aspect of this book. I was invested enough in the 2008 elections to find her commentary humorous (perhaps even rather polite, in some cases, re: Bachmann), however I didn't feel it was done as smoothly as the first novel.

My suggestion for this book would be to add it into the first book and do a reprint. It didn't add enough to the storyline to warrant a stand-alone novel.

Oh, and one more gripe: At the end of the first book, it said, "To read about Lucy's opinions on the 2012 election, download..." or something to that effect. Yet this book only dealt with the 2008 election, and a brief moment in 2009. Nothing about 2012. I was disappointed, and glad it was free, because I was willing to spend money on it after I read the first one, but I'd have been rather pissed that I did after reading it.

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## **Christine says**

We all have experienced defining moments in life. These are the moments that we attribute to changing direction, gaining a deeper understanding, but mostly profoundly shaping who we are as individuals. Laurel Osterkamp's novella, *Campaign Promises*, is just this: five deeply compelling vignettes following Lucy Jones through her most significant moments over twenty years of her life.

Beginning in high school, Lucy finds it easiest to understand her current experiences through political campaign analogies and continues to make sense of events this way as the years roll on. After reading (and loving) Osterkamp's *Starring in the Movie of My Life* earlier this year I knew that she writes characters who struggle with the complexity of maturing and coming into one's own. Because of this, Lucy is easily relatable as she experiences the milestones of high school, weddings, funerals, baby showers, and swings full circle back to high school reunions. This trajectory illustrates Lucy's growth as she is finally able to compare her adult self to her naive, idealistic youth.

I enjoyed the glimpse into Lucy's life and her ability to explain where she was at emotionally and personally through a political lens. I was also impressed with Osterkamp's subtle slight of hand in one chapter, which made me scramble back a few pages to realize a character in question was not who I thought they were. Although some readers might feel tricked, I enjoyed the unexpected surprise. Readers should note that *Campaign Promises* is liberal leaning and specifically critical of Michele Bachmann...so, fair warning if you are a Bachmann fan.

*Campaign Promises* is a intelligent peek into one woman's journey into adulthood as her naivety and idealism are nurtured into mature self-awareness. At 75 eBook pages, *Campaign Promises* is the perfect companion for short trips, lunch hours, or an early afternoon with a cup of tea that leaves you feeling accomplished and satisfied.

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## **Kathleen says**

Campaign Promises is a clever novella that provides the reader with a twenty year snapshot into the life of Lucy Jones, spanning from her senior year in high school in 1988 to her twenty year high school reunion in 2008. Told in the first person narrative, Lucy shares the evolvment and growth of her views on life, love and politics over the twenty years. The novella contains five snippets that marks Lucy's progression into adulthood every four years which coincides with a political election. Lucy is a liberal thinker, who draws a philosophical political connection with a life lesson in each snippet. Filled with idealism, realism and humor, the snippets into Lucy's life and the political landscape between 1988-2008, the author weaves a story about a girl who is trying to find her way and makes the right choices in her private and public life.

As a person who graduated from college with a BA Degree in Political Science, I loved this little novella. Author Laurel Osterkamp provides the reader with an entertaining story that mixes a girl's coming of age with five trips down the political and societal memory lane between the years of 1988-2008. While the story revolves around Lucy and her two relationships with brothers Jack and Monty Brinker, it is so much more than the typical boy-girl romance story. Over the years, the reader can see the evolved connection between the political commentary and Lucy's life situation and her level of growth and maturity at each time period.

In an essence, this novella captures Lucy's life and defines it within the significant political moments of a twenty year time period. The novella is filled with snarky and humorous political and pop-culture references that kept me snickering and smiling while I took a nostalgic walk down memory lane.

Campaign Promises whets the reader's appetite with its five fast-paced vignettes, and is a perfect companion piece and lead into the novel, November Promise.

Disclaimer: I purchased a copy of this book and will provide an honest review to accompany my participation in the companion novel, November Surprise virtual book tour event hosted by Chick Lit Plus Blog Tours.

<http://jerseygirlbookreviews.blogspot...>

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## **Shana says**

I was hoping for so much more. I'm a politics fan, so I thought the political ties would pique my interest. I just didn't find the love story that compelling, even the characters were pretty boring.

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## **S.B. Lerner says**

This novella consists of five separate stories told by a young woman, starting in high school, with breaks of several years between each story. Told in the first person, the narrator, a politically minded, liberal thinker, draws semi-philosophical connections between her life and that of a politician, one per chapter. I found it thoughtful and well-written. It reflects the kind of realizations that idealists often have about the 'real' world

as they get older and more jaded. It doesn't carry an emotional punch, it's more cerebral. I didn't find it laugh out loud funny, although there is some self-deprecating humor. It's more like getting into the inner thoughts of a person who struggles with morality. It's an easy, enjoyable read, and I liked the sample of her novel that is also included with the novella.

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### **Avry15 says**

originally appeared on: Bookshelf Confessions

Campaign Promises is a novella by Laurel Osterkamp, a story of a high-school girl Lucy and her humorous principles and ideas about politics and politicians, how she compare politics in everyday situations and how she grown up in the midst of politics, though she's just in charge of the campaign.

The life of Lucy is rather insignificant compared to the life and opinions about the politicians presented in this novella. Lucy's own story though, I appreciate the suspense of who she's going to end up with, it develop rather fast or maybe just because this is a novella, that might be the reason. But as I've noticed the author writes stages of her life, making the story a fast-paced one, and jumping from one time to another, nevertheless, it's defined clearly and well-written.

The characters develop well and most of life issues are tackled here, like family, death, break-ups, high school drama, first love, views about marriage, untimely pregnancy and elections. The words used have the power to make the readers believe and read more.

I honestly like this book and the idea it presented. Ms. Osterkamp writes clearly and has her own way of words to better communicate with the readers. I guess this novella, is more like a political analyst article than a story but the fusion is really great..:)

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### **Krizia Anna says**

I love this book! First and foremost, its a novella so it such an easy and simple read. Second, for a chic-lit story it was not very chic-y! I love Lucy and how she is strongly portrayed in this story. She's not easy (actually she is! haha) and does not run around chasing boys. I hate how some chic-lit stories focuses on damsels in distress and Lucy is not one of those. She's an independent woman. I was actually surprised who she ended up with! I'll recommend this to everybody!

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### **Chrissy (The Every Free Chance Reader) says**

It is a companion book to November Surprise...read it as such. Not a stand-alone.

Did I enjoy this book: It was okay. I wish I would have read it after I read November Surprise or while I was reading November Surprise. You could read each snippet where it would go in November Surprise. It would have made much more sense and I probably would have enjoyed it even more.

With that being said, I did find it interesting and entertaining. The author was quite creative with how she

compared each life event to a politician. There isn't much else to say about this book except that it is almost as if these were the outtakes from November Surprise - outtakes that could have been left in November Surprise and that would have made it even more complete.

Would I recommend it: If you read November Surprise, then you should read Campaign Promises. It fills in some gaps.

Will I read it again: I will not.

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## **Kat Lebo says**

Campaign Promises  
by Laurel Osterkamp

This was a quick fast read (a novella), and it was a lot of fun. Very different from my usual choices: mystery and paranormal, but I enjoyed this in-the-moment style very much. The author chose to couch the storyline in political terms, with the main characters life being compared to situations involving IRL politicians such as Gary Hart and Michele Bachmann. The writing is well proofed and edited, the almost diary style of presentation lent an air of intimacy between reader and the main character, Lucy, and the story moves along well with a satisfactory end that leaves room for more stories to come, but is also a good stopping point for those who do not plan to read on in the series. I'm not sure how the series entries progress. There is a short story (Blue State), this novella, and one novel (November Surprises). I do plan to go on with the series, at least through these current choices. I guess we'll see if Osterkamp decides to continue with her character and style.

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## **Angie says**

This is a librarything membersgiveaway win...

I enjoyed the story line and the writing but the references to the political stuff that happened before left me frustrated when I didn't know who the people were. Following Lucy through her life from high school I enjoyed, she was a shy senior and when a boy found her interesting she slowly blossomed. Though she was shy throughout her life she made lasting friends through relationships which I thought was cool. She went from being a shy girl in high school to having a fulfilling career and turning into a beautiful woman by her high school reunion. While I liked Jack I was always team Monty from the moment he entered the story. This is a great, smooth, and fast read....

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## **Quentin Stewart says**

Very interesting story and a quick read. Ms. Osterkamp takes important events in her life and compares them to political events that occurred and that also affected her life in some way. Her stories tell of the political problems that arise from campaigns for high office. Whether it is a candidate that turns emotional during a press conference or candidate dying that causes a campaign promise to be broken they all affected her and



she has been able to show how those incidents in campaigns can be translated into her life. The novella is well written and is done in such a way as not to be overbearing but it does get its point across. Very good job.

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### **Elizabeth says**

Too Short. I've now read several of Laurel Osterkamp's stories and all of them have been good and this one is just as readable. Witty, fast paced and well worth a look. A wonderful way to spend an hour or so in the sun.

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### **Deirdre says**

#### **Parallels**

Nice parallels to the major political events of the day. I enjoy works that are told using this method. Bravo

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