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Evangelical publishers issue Palin books

G. Jeffrey MacDonald Religion News Service | Sep. 13, 2008

In this high season for political books, two evangelical publishers are leading the race to capitalize on fascination with Alaska governor and GOP vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin.

Tyndale House Publishers of Carol Stream, Ill., has begun distributing a paperback edition of *Sarah: How a Hockey Mom Turned the Alaska Political Establishment Upside Down*, by Alaska freelance writer Kaylene Johnson. Best known as publishers of the bestselling "Left Behind" series, Tyndale is printing a whopping 250,000 copies of the book, which first came out in April from Epicenter Press.

Next month (Oct. 10), Zondervan of Grand Rapids, Mich., will release Joe Hilley's *Sarah Palin: A New Kind of Leader*. According to a statement from Zondervan, the author makes a case for Palin's leadership by touting her "maverick integrity, electrifying communication style, career agility, and perpetual education."

Both biographies highlight Palin's Christian faith as a formative force. "Sarah" examines her family life and the role religion played in her childhood. The Zondervan book explores how faith influences her leadership style.

Both books also mark a contrast from other political titles published by Tyndale and Zondervan earlier this year. In an effort to reach evangelicals weary of the religious right, Zondervan in March released *How to be Evangelical Without Being Conservative* by David E. Olson. Also in March, Tyndale released "We the Purple," in which reporter Marcia Ford makes a case for politics unmediated by political parties.

"Tyndale House does not endorse political candidates or parties," said Tyndale President Mark Taylor. "But as a distinctively Christian publisher, we believe it is vital to promote clear thinking and thoughtful conversation about the intersection of faith and the public square. In choosing to distribute this Epicenter Press book about Sarah Palin ... we hope to stimulate both thought and discussion about the role of faith in politics."

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