

Michelle Obama

By Joan Mish

I just finished reading Michelle Obama's biography called *Becoming*. There were four main parts:

Becoming Me

Becoming Us

Becoming More

Epilogue

BECOMING ME:

Michelle grew up in a poor south-side neighborhood in Chicago. Her family was raised in a one-floor apartment above her great aunt. She was a piano teacher and gave lessons to Michele for cheap. Her dad, Fraser Robinson, worked for 20 years tending to boilers at water filtration plants. He had Multiple Sclerosis most of his adult life but worked for as long as he could and never complained about his health problems. Michelle had an older brother named Craig and they were very close. He stayed in her life all the time.

When she was in elementary school, for the first five years it was a multi-racial school. But then "white flight" and the diversity was gone. She got a degree from Princeton and a law degree from Harvard. She worked as a lawyer for various groups and finally Barach convinced her to work with him for various non-profits. Barach had a law degree but he was devoted to helping non-profits.

In the **BECOMING US** Michelle and Barach for years worked together on his various campaigns. But starting in 2007 and 2008, Barach ran for president. He was elected president in 2008 and again 2012. Michelle and Barach started to understand more and more about the political life. Michelle went all over to raise money for the presidential campaign. By this time it was her main job. Once Barach got elected to the presidency, at first they had both agreed that they would not move to Washington, as their children were pretty young. But they eventually decided to move there as a family because various associates said many marriages had fallen apart because of the separation of family between the home town and Washington DC. Michelle realized she had fallen in love "with a man with a vision who was optimistic without being naive, undaunted by conflicts, and intrigued by how complicated the world was."

She remembered well the phrase often said: *"Don't let the black folks take over. They're not like you. Their vision is not yours."*

After the presidential election, they all moved into the White House. There were so many people who helped them get oriented. President and Laura Bush greeted them. She walked them through the White House and showed them all the different rooms. "I think there were 165 rooms with different purposes!"

Her mother did not want to come and live with them in the White House, but with the help of her brother Craig, they were able to convince her she was sorely needed!

One passion she shared with reporters were her thoughts on encouraging parents to feed their children healthier foods. That was one of her passions! And this is why she started a vegetable garden behind the White House. She had many passions, this was just one of them.

EPILOGUE: *“I am now at a new beginning, in a new phase. For the first time in many years, I am unhooked from any obligations as a political spouse encumbered by other people’s expectations.”*