



## Author maps road to You Inc.

### Albertan's money guide for women

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[JAMES DAW](#)

BUSINESS COLUMNIST

Kelley Keehn was thinking of an episode of *Sex And The City* as she walked into the World's Biggest Bookstore this week.

The slim, five-foot-11 blond was in Toronto from Edmonton to sign copies of her motivational and inspirational new book, *The Woman's Guide To Money*.

It was the middle of the day, hardly prime time for career women like herself, or single-parent waitresses like her mother, to shop for a future bestseller.

But the unheralded 31-year-old had no delusions of instant fame, unlike Carrie, the fictional television character, upon seeing the crowds at her first book-signing.

"Everybody was there to see a dog from a children's book, Mr. Winky," Keehn chuckled as she wheeled her bulky briefcase to a small table stacked with her books.

Books about money and financial planning are far from sexy. But some, like David Chilton's *The Wealthy Barber*, boast millions of sales. And Keehn, a genuine dynamo with an amazing career trajectory, says she aims to be for the women's speaking circuit what Chilton was for general audiences during his heyday in the 1990s.

Keehn's record of early success suggests hers is not an idle boast. She's worth the price of admission just to hear how she got guys with million-dollar incomes, and million-dollar investment accounts, to trust a woman in her 20s who had little formal education.

She started selling mutual funds at the tender age of 18, armed with a post-secondary diploma in marketing from a local school. She turned to sales after her voyage to a modelling career in New York — her father's idea, not her mother's — was stopped at the border for lack of a visa.

Keehn was fortunate to be recruited by a wise perfectionist who taught her: "Act as if the entire world is watching, especially when no one is watching." His website is [ethicaladvisor.com](#).

She set out to develop contacts by volunteering to help organize a mayor's luncheon for Edmonton's Klondike Days festival. She interviewed the city's most successful business owners. She put everyone she met on her Christmas card list, and sent notes when thanks were due.

By her mid-20s, after a stint selling for a major bank, she had her own firm with "hundreds of clients." Their attitudes about saving and spending, or not spending, became grist for her homespun psychology lessons.

Before she opened up shop, she investigated what the moneyed class of Edmonton likes to do for fun.

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Then she borrowed some of the design features from the Bellagio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas for her website and stationery.

She sold/merged her business last year, signing a confidentiality agreement that prevents her from disclosing the sale price or assets under management.

Now she is reinventing herself and teaching others how to set up their own You Inc.

"I (couldn't) give everyone the same service as someone who has a million dollars. I (had) bills to pay," she says. "But the people who need the help have between \$10,000 and \$250,000."

So she developed a series of lectures on people's attitudes about money, and a course she called The Prosperity Factor. This turned into a book she self-published. After it hit the bestseller list in her home city, Mike O'Connor of Insomniac Press approached her to do a similar book for national distribution.

Keehn sprinkles details of her life through the book, including the positive influence of her mother, who saved for a home by putting aside \$2 bills from her tips.

In her book, she coaches readers on how to build the foundation of any financial plan by answering a series of questions to decide who you are, where you want to go, how far you are prepared to go to get there, and how to stay as positive as she is.

Financial planner Wayne Taylor, who hired Keehn on the recommendation of one of her teachers, says her book will make life easier for planners interviewing new clients.

"People intuitively know what they want. They want to be financially secure and independent, but what does that mean, and when?" he asked in a telephone interview.

"A book like Kelley's would help the reader discover the how. The more clear the client can be in setting out their goals, the easier it is for the adviser."

Taylor, who says his financial and lifestyle planning agency of Taylor Financial Group Ltd. will be the first in Canada to receive ISO 9001 quality certification, endorses this writer's first impressions of Keehn.

"She is well grounded, consistent, predictable and moving onwards and upwards," says Taylor.

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