

Interview with YA Author Bruce Edwards



How long have you been writing?

I wish I could say I was a literary prodigy who picked up a pen at the age of five and never put it down, but that's not me. I chose instead to pursue artistic expression through music and art. In a way, I've always been a teller-of-tales. I'm just now telling my stories in books.

Why did you decide to write *The Age of Amy* series?

I believe that artistic endeavors should be pursued with some purpose in mind. Writing merely to entertain is all well and good, but offering readers a fresh perspective on life is even better. Amy sees things as they are--sometimes hopeful, sometimes tragic--but her adventures always end on a positive note. The world is in disparate need of an attitude overhaul, and there's no better way to convey optimism to young adults than through fantasy fiction.

What was the inspiration for *Behind the Fun Zone*?

Two things: the intrusiveness of today's hi-tech gadgetry, and people's obsession with them. Comedian George Carlin famously said, "We are slaves to our gizmos and toys." *Behind the Fun Zone* takes that assertion a step further, as the book's characters race to get brain-implanted smartphones!

What makes your book unique?

The appeal of *The Age of Amy* series is how it examines the absurdity of human behavior. *Behind the Fun Zone* explores the trappings of modern technology, but also addresses why people think and act the way they do.

Who would you recommend your book to?

Simply, anyone looking for a departure from the same ol' same ol'. This book offers an engaging story with a fresh point of view, that you don't often find in young adult titles. File these books under "Relevant Fiction."

How much of yourself is reflected in this book?

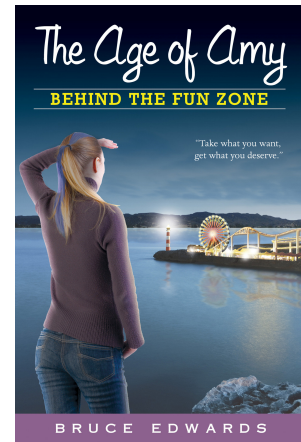
Amy and I are a lot alike. She sees things as they are, and doesn't allow politics or the media to cloud her worldview. She recognizes when the powers that be are trying to control her, and wonders why it isn't obvious to everyone else.

Can you tell us something quirky about your book?

The book's theme is about manipulation. The story of *Pinocchio* perfectly illustrates how humans behave when their "strings" are pulled. Although the little wooden puppet wants to do right, his own ignorance and greed get him into trouble. Many references to *Pinocchio* are scattered throughout this book--some obvious, some hidden.

If you could turn your book into a movie, who would be your production dream team?

A screenwriter with the sensibility of Rod Serling, a director with the zaniness of Terry Gilliam, and a lead actor of the caliber of Ellen Page. (You can still play a teenager, can't you, Ellen?)



Do you write for a particular genre, or do you like to explore different ones?

I love writing for a young adult audience. YA fiction offers a wonderfully broad canvas on which to express yourself creatively. Adult literature is too confining for me. You won't find many chocolate factories in them.

What is your writing process?

1) Observe. 2) Outline, outline, outline. 3) Write. To keep my energy up, I have a collection of notes scattered across my desk—little scraps of paper holding tiny bits of wisdom. My favorite one says, “Make an elephant fly!”

What's in store next?

With the 2016 elections fast approaching, Book #2—*The Thumper Amendment*—is getting special attention. (Amy joins a presidential campaign, as 14-year-olds earn the right to vote.) Meantime, look for Amy to embark on another bizarre adventure sometime next year!