

INTERVIEW WITH ALLY CONDIE

Question:

When did you start writing?

Answer:

I started writing before I could actually write, if that makes sense. I used to dictate stories to my parents and babysitters until I learned how to write on my own. I've always loved making up stories.

Question:

What books do you recommend for reluctant young adults?

Answer:

For girls, I recommend *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson, *The Chosen One* by Carol Lynch Williams, and *Everything is Fine* by Ann Dee Ellis. These are all contemporary stories with incredibly high stakes and authentic voices. You can't put these books down. For boys, I recommend Mike Lupica's sports fiction and science fiction like Orson Scott Card's classic *Ender's Game*.

Question:

What books have influenced you?

Answer:

The books that have influenced me the most are *Crossing to Safety* by Wallace Stegner, *Saint Maybe* by Anne Tyler, *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson, and almost anything by Agatha Christie. These are the books that have me coming back over and over, whether it's for beautiful description and characterization or just for a rollicking good tale.

Question:

What are some of your favorite dystopian tales?

Answer:

I am a huge fan of everything Ray Bradbury, so that includes *Fahrenheit 451* (of course!) and his dystopian short stories, such as "There Will Come Soft Rains". There's a

book-burning scene in *Matched* that I wrote specifically as a tribute to Bradbury. I also love *1984* by George Orwell.

Question:

How many books will ultimately be in the Matched series? When can expectant readers expect to read the future books?

Answer:

There will be three books total in the *Matched* series. We're hoping to have them out one year apart--so the first book in November 2010, the second in November 2011, and the third in November 2012. Which means I have a lot of writing to do!

Question:

Any new books in the works for after the Matched series?

Answer:

I have a lot of ideas, and I can't wait to have the time to work on some of them! I have more dystopian ideas, an idea for a fairy tale series, and there's a contemporary YA idea that's been kicking around in my mind for almost ten years now. I'm not sure what I'll do first.

Question:

Do you have any advice for aspiring writers?

Answer:

Write every day. Be disciplined about it and take it seriously. If you aren't any good yet, don't despair. Give yourself the time you need each day and over the years to get better. It's okay if it takes time, but make sure you're putting in the time.



Allyson Condie is the author of *Matched*, a New York Times bestseller for young adults. The second volume in the trilogy will be published in the fall of 2011.

