

**Barb Dean:** Ok Let's start - others may join us soon. I am moderating tonight and will ask the first question - once you give us your GA

**Barb Dean:** we'll ask more questions

**AlmaFullerton:** GA

**Barb Dean:** From where did the idea for Walking on Glass arise

**AlmaFullerton:** Well a friend of ours committed suicide and left their young son behind

**AlmaFullerton:** I just added some what ifs and came up with Walking on Glass GA

**Barb Dean:** Your website did say that you have personal experience with suicide and mental illness. Could you tell us more

**AlmaFullerton:** I have a lot of experience with suicide and mental illness actually. As a young adult my best friend also committed suicide

**AlmaFullerton:** His story brought on my second or rather first book published second book written In the Garage

**AlmaFullerton:** depression though has very much been a part of my life and the lives of people around me.

**AlmaFullerton:** GA

**Barb Dean:** How awful - and how wonderful that you can write about it so beautifully and touchingly

**cj:** I just finished IN THE GARAGE, very powerful

**AlmaFullerton:** thank you. I think in some ways everything I write has a lot of truths to it

**cj:** GA?

**AlmaFullerton:** whether or not they are right in your face truths

**AlmaFullerton:** or hidden truths

**AlmaFullerton:** GA

**Barb Dean:** This book certainly does -

**cj:** since I just finished Garge, I am very aware of your poetry, since it is in both books

**cj:** Is poetry a special thing for you?

**AlmaFullerton:** I'm very much into making people feel, I can't say I went out to write the books in verse though they just wouldn't come out right any other way

**AlmaFullerton:** I tried writing them in prose but I couldn't feel my characters that way. I

**AlmaFullerton:** thought it sounded stilted

**AlmaFullerton:** it's very important to make my characters real

**AlmaFullerton:** if I don't believe them how can I expect my readers to. That's what is special to me. GA

**Barb Dean:** The main character in this book is special - what were your reasons for not naming him

**Hubby** from x.x.x.138 joined the chat 54 minutes ago

**cj:** I like poetry because of the efficiency of the words

**Barb Dean:** Welcome Hubby

**Hubby:** Hi.

**AlmaFullerton:** My first editor asked me to take the name out because he said he didn't think the character would put his name on the journal. I agreed with him.

**AlmaFullerton:** The character does have a name .

**AlmaFullerton:** CJ, I find novels in verse harder to write than novels in prose. I write both.

**AlmaFullerton:** with verse you do have to pick the perfect words and use so few. GA

**cj:** And you do it really well

**Hubby** from x.x.x.138 joined the chat 51 minutes ago

**AlmaFullerton:** some days :)

**cj:** So what was his name?

**Barb Dean:** Alma - back to the name - did I miss it - is it hidden and agree with cj - amazingly few words and such powerful emotion

**AlmaFullerton:** Darwin Oliver Pence

**cj:** And where did you get that?

**AlmaFullerton:** It's not in the book Barb. BUT I knew his name

**AlmaFullerton:** I try to choose names that match characters. Baby books work well. GA

**Hubby:** That's quite a name!

**cj:** I couldn't imagine knowing a character inside and out and thinking of him as Narrator

**AlmaFullerton:** You have to know your character more than you know your own children - even more than you know yourself at times.

**cj:** Can you imagine naming a child Narrator?

**Barb Dean:** Still if the book is to be real this guy would not put his name on it

**AlmaFullerton:** right

**AlmaFullerton:** that's why it was out of the book

**Barb Dean:** I'd like to ask you about Jack - how did his character develop in your mind

**Hubby:** Have you received any comments from readers--or parents--objecting to you novel as encouraging mercy killing/euthenasia?

**Barb Dean:** Oops sorry - no GA

**AlmaFullerton:** Jack...

**AlmaFullerton:** Jack was a lot of people put into one. He started out okay but progressed into something else

**AlmaFullerton:** I couldn't have turned Jack good at the end had I wanted to.

**AlmaFullerton:** When you know your characters as much as you need to know them they really develop themselves. They'll tell you where they want to go and what they want to do. GA

**AlmaFullerton:** Hubby, comments from readers

**AlmaFullerton:** this is the one book I don't get objections on believe it or not.

**Hubby:** Hmm.

**AlmaFullerton:** I do get several on In the Garage in reference the homosexuality. GA

**AlmaFullerton:** surprised me too

**cj:** I also liked the visual imagres you created, my favorite was the broken crystals from the chandelier he put in him mom's room

**Barb Dean:** Do readers object to about the homosexuality

**Barb Dean:** What

**AlmaFullerton:** not teen readers

**Hubby:** Heh--I think there's a spy team who reads every book, searchjng for gay stuff.

**AlmaFullerton:** not teachers

**AlmaFullerton:** but other groups. Ga

**cj:** teachers down here self censor around homosexuality

**AlmaFullerton:** Images are important to poetry. I like visuals. I like to be able to see things in my head. GA

**Barb Dean:** The cover is a great connector to the crystals -

**cj:** when I reread the book, I saw repeating visuals. How do you structure that into your writing during or after?

**AlmaFullerton:** I LOVED the cover. It was the first cover I had ever gotten and when I got it I think I ran around the neighbourhood to show my neighbours but unfortunately no one was home that day. GA

**AlmaFullerton:** CJ I do that both while I'm writing it and after. When you see a finished book it's probably about the 10th or more revision of that book

**cj:** thanks

**AlmaFullerton:** I tend to revise as I go. Like I'll write a few or more pages

**Barb Dean:** How long did it take you to write GLASS?

**Barb Dean:** Oops - sorry for the interruption

**AlmaFullerton:** the next day I'll go back and read what I wrote. That allows me to get back into that characters head and then move on to write more

**AlmaFullerton:** Sometimes it's a slow process because there may be interruptions and

**AlmaFullerton:** I have to start over. Somedays, I don't need to go back.

**AlmaFullerton:** Things get added, or new ideas, threads as I go.

**AlmaFullerton:** Writing WOG took probably about 15 drafts and maybe 6 months

**AlmaFullerton:** then I put it away for a long time

**AlmaFullerton:** changed a few things. Sent it out. Editor wanted me to change a few more things. We cut about 2500 words

**AlmaFullerton:** took out an entire thread, but added a different one. (the new one was a sudden What if question on my part)

**AlmaFullerton:** I sold the book in Feb 2004 and it didn't come out until Jan 2007

**AlmaFullerton:** there were months at a time when we didn't work on anything or when we were waiting for edits and things. GA

**cj:** we?

**AlmaFullerton:** My editor and I

**Barb Dean:** Was Harper the first publisher to which you submitted WOG

**AlmaFullerton:** That version of it yes. I had submitted it elsewhere first - it was an older version.

**Hubby:** That is an agonizingly long time to wait to see your work in print.

**AlmaFullerton:** I realized after I submitted it that I wanted to change it.

**AlmaFullerton:** so after a rejection. I did. and then Harper bought it.

**cj:** Since you have published with both Canadian and US publishers--are there many differences?

**AlmaFullerton:** It was a long time, but I did have my first editor move so my new editor didn't actually get a chance to work on a revision letter

**AlmaFullerton:** until probably Jan 2005

**AlmaFullerton:** cj,

**Barb Dean:** That was my next question too cj

**AlmaFullerton:** I'm not sure if the differences are because of a Canadian US difference or a big and small difference.

**AlmaFullerton:** RedDeer is small

**AlmaFullerton:** Harper is obviously large

**AlmaFullerton:** Fitzhenry is somewhere in the middle.

**AlmaFullerton:** There is obviously a larger market in the US.

**AlmaFullerton:** But if I call up the publisher at RedDeer or Fitzhenry they would know who I was. If I called up the children's publisher at Harper they probably wouldn't.

**AlmaFullerton:** plus a smaller publisher has more invested in a book than a larger publisher. Fitzhenry has been fantastic with what they're doing with Libertad. I get to see a lot of what they do because

**AlmaFullerton:** I'm able to talk to the publisher. Harper did promotion for Walking On Glass - I'm aware of what they did but I don't know everything they did

**AlmaFullerton:** so that's where things are different. GA

**cj:** What book(s) have you published with Fitzhenry? How many books do you have out?

**Barb Dean:** and tell us about Libertad please

**AlmaFullerton:** Fitzhenry and Whiteside actually own RedDeer but they are publishing my next two books. Libertad will be out in Sept. I've already signed copies at the book expo Canada.

**AlmaFullerton:** it's about a boy who walks (with his younger brother) from the Guatemala City dump to America in search of their father.

**AlmaFullerton:** I was extremely lucky to have someone at an organization called Safe Passage read the book to make sure things were accurate.

**AlmaFullerton:** Safe passage brings children from the dump into the classroom. Libertad is set in about 2001 when the children actually worked inside the dump

**AlmaFullerton:** I'm donating part of my royalties to Safe Passage.

**Hubby:** Nice.

**AlmaFullerton:** In the spring Fitzhenry is also publishing a book of mine

**AlmaFullerton:** a chapter book for kids 7-10 - strictly fun. GA

**Barb Dean:** Did you spend time in Guatemala

**AlmaFullerton:** No, I fell into this story researching another one. It's why I had readers from the area fact check for me. It's very important to get things right.

**AlmaFullerton:** I did several years of research before I wrote the book and do plan to go down to help at sometime

**AlmaFullerton:** GA

**Barb Dean:** Alma we only have about five more minutes is there anything you particularly wish to say or to promote

**AlmaFullerton:** I think I've mentioned everything but if you have any other questions about anything feel free to ask

**Barb Dean:** Well I would love to ask you about your military background. Did your Dad serve in the airforce

**cj:** I just wanted to say how much I like the format of IN THE GARAGE. With the journal and B.J.'s prose.

**AlmaFullerton:** Yes he did. I think he was in for 30 years. My husband was also military

**AlmaFullerton:** navy though

**Barb Dean:** My Dad was navy

**AlmaFullerton:** In the Garage started out all free verse

**AlmaFullerton:** but my editor at harper rejected it saying the characters sounded too much alike

**AlmaFullerton:** they did.

**cj:** Well the change worked well

**AlmaFullerton:** I sat on it for a few days thinking on it when BJ voice just came out of no where and I had that first line.

**AlmaFullerton:** It was like this is it.

**AlmaFullerton:** I rewrote BJ's part in about a week. Sent it to my agent. She gave it to the RedDeer publisher

**AlmaFullerton:** just before he boarded a plane and by the time he landed he knew he wanted it

**AlmaFullerton:** so yes the change was perfect.

**AlmaFullerton:** I gave her humor as well.

**Barb Dean:** I loved it too Alma! In fact I look forward to more books from you. It has been great to have the chance to talk with you

**AlmaFullerton:** and she's the character most teens relate too.

**cj:** Has it won any awards? it should have

**AlmaFullerton:** I won my editor an editorial award because he stayed out of it (he didn't try to make me change certain aspects for the market)

**AlmaFullerton:** it also was short listed for an Alberta book award. and is only going up for the bigger Cnd awards this year. So maybe.

**AlmaFullerton:** But as long as teens love the book that's all that matters. if it speaks to them.

**cj:** I will keep my fingers crossed!

**Barb Dean:** Well I hate to do this but time is up - I hope you do win some awards here in Canada Alma. And thanks again for tonight.

**AlmaFullerton:** or if they get something out of it. That's why I write. Not for awards and certainly not for the money

**Hubby:** Thank you for your time this evening, Alma. I appreciate the information. G'night.

**AlmaFullerton:** Thanks for having me. it was fun

**cj:** thank you for joining us and for your books

**cj:** next month we will chat Tantalize by Cynthia Leitich Smith

**Barb Dean:** Yes, Alma, keep writing

**AlmaFullerton:** I plan to. My publisher wants another book so I best keep writing.

**cj:** Yeahhh

**Barb Dean:** Night to everyone - cj will the next book be posted online soon?

**AlmaFullerton:** good night

**cj:** and remember me if any of them contain bullying

**cj:** good night

**cj:** Barb, I think so

**Barb Dean:** Thanks all!