

## Amazon.com talks to Catherine Andorka

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**Amazon.com:** *Where are you from? How--if at all--has your sense of place colored your writing?*

**C.A.:** I was born in Illinois, but when I think of “sense of place,” I consider the circumstances of my life more than where I'm living. In terms of my writing, certainly my life experiences color my subject matter, my dialogues, and even the characters I create. On the other hand, I've never subscribed to that old adage “write what you know.” It's too limiting. Writers can usually research what they don't know, and in the process of learning something new, inject that enthusiasm into their work, thereby making the work all the more fascinating to the reader.

**Amazon.com:** *When and why did you begin writing? When did you first consider yourself a writer?*

**C.A.:** This question always makes me smile because I was so naive back then. It was actually about twenty years ago at around three o'clock in the morning after receiving a speeding ticket. (IMO undeserved, but that's another story.) The poem I authored lamenting the injustice of the justice system served me well, both in the courtroom and later, when it was published in a local newspaper. I actually went to the newspaper office, asked to see the Editor-in-Chief, handed him my poem and asked him to read it on the spot. Furthermore, he did. Then with a smile, he told me it would be published that very week. And it was. I thought, it's that simple. I'm a writer!

After that, getting published became a lot more difficult. But I'm nothing if not tenacious. I've written dozens of non-fiction articles, and many short fiction stories. I once had a short story that was rejected 36 times before I sold it to a literary magazine. These days my work schedule is divided between being Editor-in-Chief fo Weddingpages Bride and Home Magazine (Chicago edition) and writing romance novels.

**Amazon.com:** *Who or what has influenced your writing, and in what way? What books have most influenced your life?*

**C.A.:** I hate to be so vague, but my life experiences have greatly influenced my writing. In the early years of my career I had a need to vent, so writing was almost a form of therapy for me. Now, I have more of a need to solve the problems of my characters and tell their stories.

Without listing specific titles, I do read a lot of self-help books and, of course, romance books.

**Amazon.com:** *What is the most romantic book you've ever read? The scariest? The funniest?*

**C.A.:** I know I'm dating myself, but the scariest book would have to be “The Shining” by Stephen King. The funniest book—again, this book has been around for awhile, but it's called “Men: An Owner's Manual,” by Stephanie Brush. This is an author who really has the inside track on men and though the book came out in 1984, her advice still holds true today.

There are dozens of incredibly romantic books out there. But at the risk of sounding arrogant, the most romantic book I've ever read is always going to be the one I'm writing at that particular time. If I'm not investing all of the romantic emotions that I'm feeling into my own book, how can I expect my readers

to respond accordingly?

**Amazon.com:** *What music, if any, most inspires you to write? What do you like to listen to while writing?*

**C.A.:** I truly mean it when I say all kinds of music inspires me to write. My tastes run the gamut from Andrea Bocelli, to Poi Dog Pondering's "Liquid White Light" CD. Mostly for inspiration though, I like music that has no words. I like sound that creates a special mood, be it happy, sad, romantic or otherwise. That way I can supply my own scenario. However, once I've been inspired, the music goes off. When I'm actually writing I like total quiet, with nothing to distract me. I'm better able to get into my character's thoughts that way.

**Amazon.com:** *What are you reading now? What CD is currently in your stereo?*

**C.A.:** I am currently reading "Cowboy Justice." It's a Harlequin Intrigue by Patricia Rosemoor. And there is no CD in my stereo right now, because while I'm doing this interview I need to concentrate on what I'm saying. But just before I started, I was listening to a CD called "Red High Heel Shoes." It's by Mark Van Ark, and it put me in a happy mood.

**Amazon.com:** *What are you working on?*

**C.A.:** I am currently working on a contemporary romance with a hero who's a little rough around the edges. Sorry I can't be more specific, but I don't want to say too much else about my plot.

**Amazon.com:** *Use this space to write about whatever you wish.*

**C.A.:** I love to create stories that push peoples button's. If I've pushed any of yours with something I've written, I would love to hear from you. Feel free to send me an e-mail and tell me what you think.