

Local writer and instructor launches first book



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There is no scientific evidence that things come in threes, but it certainly is the case when you look at Angie Abdou. The writer is presenting her first published book of short stories 'Anything Boys Can Do' this fall, her first baby is expected to arrive in December and her first novel 'The Bone Cage' will be coming out in July of 2007. "This is a year of everything," Abdou smiles.

Growing up, Abdou always wanted to be a writer, now that it has become reality the perspective has shifted a bit. Before, she thought a book would be the ultimate goal, now Abdou is

already looking to the next thing. "It is a beginning rather than an end." 'Anything Boys Can Do' is Abdou's first fiction project and the author admits it was written in a very cynical phase.

The twelve short stories centre around marriage and heterosexual relationships and are "cynical and dark, but also funny". Abdou stresses that the stories are fictional and compares creating a character to making a collage where the artist puts together bits to create the best effect. "The end product should have no clear connection with people in my life." It is, however, nice when people see what she is saying and find examples in the real world, Abdou explains. "It creates a great connection with strangers."

Abdou started writing 'Anything Boys Can Do' in 1999. She explains the long publishing process is the reason the book is only available now. She had to submit her manuscript to one publishing house at a time and from the time it got accepted it still took two years to get to the bookstore shelves. Abdou hopes that with some books under her belt, she will be able to get her manuscripts into the right hands more quickly.

Abdou began teaching English at the Fernie Campus of the College of the Rockies in 2001 and transferred to the University Studies Department in Cranbrook in 2003. She explains teaching keeps her sane, because it is the exact opposite to writing. Writing, she says, happens in isolation and the author has to wait a long time to get reactions. Teaching on the other hand is based on interaction and offers instant rewards. Abdou uses her connections in the writer's world to enhance her classes. West Coast Poet Philip Kevin Paul talked to the students on speakerphone and fiction writer Elisabeth Harvor answered an e-mail interview. The point is, Abdou explains, to show her students that writers are "not just dusty, weird people".

The formal launch for 'Anything Boys Can Do' will be at Polar Peek Books in Fernie this Friday, September 22 at 7:00 pm. Abdou, who has lived in Fernie since 1999, says she appreciates the support she is getting from the store and admits it feels pretty glamorous to see the books all over the window and on the shelves. "It's nice to feel I live somewhere where people pay attention to what each other are doing." Angie Abdou will read from her book of short stories at Katrina's Books in Cranbrook on Thursday, September 28, at 7:00 pm.