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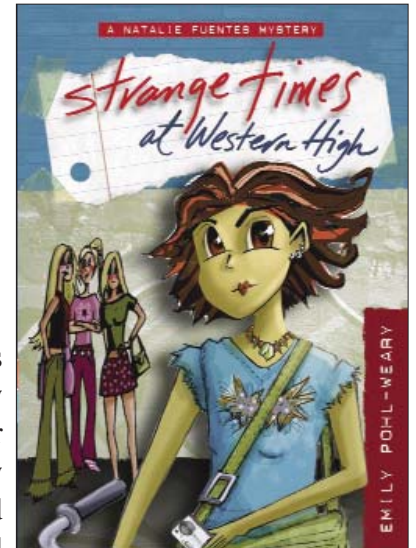
EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE
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Press Release

For immediate release

*Strange Times
at Western High*

A Natalie Fuentes Mystery
Written by Emily Pohl-Weary



She's smart, she's spunky, and she's super cool!

From Nancy Drew to Jane Marple and V.I. Warshawski, the female sleuth has always been one of the most intriguing characters in modern fiction. Author Emily Pohl-Weary grew up devouring every Nancy Drew mystery she could lay her hands on, but the heroine of the famous series always left Emily feeling slightly unsatisfied. The fact that she was good at everything, always had perfect hair, and solved crimes in her pumps never sat very well with Emily, so when she decided to write her own mystery series, she came up with a girl detective who readers could relate to more easily.

Sixteen-year-old Natalie Fuentes has a knack for attracting trouble wherever she goes. As the new kid at Western High, she'd like nothing more than to keep a low profile. In fact, all she really wants to do is focus on *My Very Secret Life*, her self-published zine. But when the school's caretaker is brutally attacked and Natalie is the only witness at the scene, her desire for anonymity quickly becomes impossible.

With only one clue to the attacker's identity, Natalie sets out to search for answers. Constant run-ins with a nasty clique of girls and a local graffiti gang make Natalie's investigation a greater challenge than she bargained for. And as she unearths secrets that others want to keep hidden, she runs the risk of becoming a victim herself.

Quirky doodles, photos, and notes from Natalie's zine lend a vitality to the fast-paced plot that will keep readers guessing. *Strange Times at Western High* marks the first in a series of Natalie Fuentes mysteries which promise to be as spirited as the savvy sleuth herself. Natalie's website can be found at www.nataliefuentes.com.

Emily Pohl-Weary has published a novel, a collection of poetry, an anthology and a biography of her grandmother, the late sci-fi writer, Judith Merrill. She edits *Kiss Machine*, a magazine of "independent art, literary culture, and political views." She was a former editor of *Broken Pencil*, and her writing has appeared in several magazines. Emily lives with her husband in Toronto, Ontario. To find out more, visit www.emilypohlweary.com.

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