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Young Adult Novels

The first book I wrote was called *A Two-Way Street*. And at the time I wrote that, it was kind of a revolutionary thing. That was back in 1965 and people did not write books about divorce in those days. And this was a book for children who were children of divorce, as I was. And my parents were divorced when I was just 10 and that was in 1940 and that was considered such a shameful thing that people did not talk about it even. I wrote what it was like to be a child now in two families. So that was the first one and that was used in several public schools, and because it was such a controversial subject, nobody wanted to talk about what happens to children in a family where there is divorce. It was used by counselors in the public schools to give to their students who were going through that. And then several years later, Scholastic Books picked that up as their teenage book club selection and reprinted it in paperback. Then the next book I wrote, let's say, was called *Call up the Thunder* and that grew out of our experiences in Johnson County, Indiana in a very small - we lived in a very small town where we had a large population of migratory farm laborers that came in to harvest the tomatoes in the summer and work in the canning factory. And my husband at that time started a teenage recreation center in town because there was just nothing in a little town of 500 population for teenagers to do. So some of the townspeople were a little upset that my husband even opened it up to the children of the migratory farm laborers who were mostly Chicano. So I used that basic experience to create a story, a fictional story, which has a little bit of a mystery about it. **-Mary Blair Immel**

An excerpt from the ***Danville Community Encyclopedia*** by Anna Callahan. For more information visit www.anna-callahan.com.