



A Brief Interview With Author Jake Biondi

1. What inspired you to write the BOYSTOWN series?

I have always been a fan of continuing, serialized dramas, whether they be classics such as the novels of Charles Dickens (which were released in magazines in installments, each of which ended with a cliffhanger to keep readers coming back for more) or more contemporary such as *Dallas*, *Dynasty*, and *Revenge*. I thought it was finally time for a well-written, intriguing drama that had gay characters at its core. And after living in Chicago's Boystown neighborhood for twenty years, I thought to myself, "What better place to inspire a continuing drama?" Thus, BOYSTOWN story was born.

BOYSTOWN has a very interesting history. I began writing BOYSTOWN as an online story and intended to release one "episode" online per month, each ending in a cliffhanger. The story became so popular -- and the online reading audience grew so quickly -- that people from all over the country began to email me demanding to know what happened to their favorite characters and wanting the episodes to be released faster. They also had suggestions for future storylines!

2. How do you develop your characters?

Every good saga has a family at its core. BOYSTOWN has *two* -- the Mancinis and the Ciancios. Everyone in the book is somehow connected to them.

I have to admit that some of the characters have taken on a life all their own. Officer Michael Martinez is one example. I created him simply because I needed a police officer for a brief scene and then, all of a sudden, came up with a huge idea and now he is one of BOYSTOWN's main and most liked characters.

I have also been intrigued by the fans' responses to certain couples in the series. For example, I never anticipated that so many people would be fans of "Kemmett" (Keith and Emmett). Fans are very vocal about what I did to that couple at the end of "Season One" and provided many ideas for how I should write those characters in "Season Two." Fans of "Dole" (Derek and Cole) are also very vocal. While most readers like and connect with the character of Cole, some like him with Derek and others don't. Finally, I was really taken aback by people's reactions to Justin, who appears on the BOYSTOWN landscape toward the end of "Season One." Readers really find him appealing and interesting -- and want to know everything about him: his sexuality, his motives, his plan. And then there are the Ciancio twins, who are introduced in "Season Two"...

3. What's the best thing about being the author of BOYSTOWN?

Writing the BOYSTOWN series has been one of the most fantastic experiences of my life. I have enjoyed every moment of the writing and marketing process. But

what I have really enjoyed the most about the entire experience has been the interaction with the BOYSTOWN readers. BOYSTOWN fans are, quite simply, the best.

I have been so touched and humbled by the outpouring of kindness and support I have received from BOYSTOWN readers since the moment the first episode hit the internet in 2013. People began to email me from all over the country, and beyond, to share with me their thoughts and ideas about the BOYSTOWN characters and story lines. I make it a priority to respond to every email that I receive not only because I value the readers' feedback but also because I want my readers to understand that I want them to reach out to me. I want to hear from them -- their ideas, their suggestions, their reviews, their feedback. In fact, their comments and ideas actually can and do impact the future of the series because I have written some of their suggestions into the series. In short, by contacting me, the readers can actually impact what happens to their favorite characters.

4. Do you have a favorite character in your series?

I think every author incorporates his personal experiences into his writing. While the characters in BOYSTOWN are fictitious, my experiences with friends and family have certainly influenced them. We all know many people like the characters in BOYSTOWN.

I enjoy writing all of the BOYSTOWN characters because they are all so unique and different. And the fans' responses to certain characters often surprise and motivate me as well. For example, the character of Justin Mancini was never meant to be a main character. I only intended to use him in a few chapters; however, the fans'

response to him was so overwhelming that I had to develop Justin more and keep him around. The same is true for Michael Martinez. I created him simply because I needed a police officer for a certain plotline, but he seemed to take on a life all his own, so I kept him. Of course, I love writing Derek and Cole because they are at the center of so much of the action. And Emmett is probably the most like me, so I love writing him, too.

5. Where can people purchase the BOYSTOWN books and how do readers contact you?

BOYSTOWN is available in paperback, audio book, and all e-book formats through my website BoystownTheSeries.com as well as amazon.com, bn.com, and itunes.com. Autographed copies of the books are available through my site as well.

I encourage readers and fans to contact me. They may do so by emailing me at BoystownTheSeries@yahoo.com, through the websites JakeBiondi.com and BoystownTheSeries.com, and on Facebook and Twitter ([@boystown_series](https://twitter.com/boystown_series)).