

Ten Things Interesting Things About Me

1. I was born in Detroit but moved to California when I was one year old. I have no memory of Detroit. Am I a Michigander or a Californian? My father designed the hood ornament for the Lincoln Continental, still in use today. He designed toys for Mattel in the 60s. I was an unofficial toy tester-outer.

2. The ranch-style tract house I grew up in was on the border of Whittier and La Habra, also the border of Los Angeles County and Orange County. On one side of the house there were sidewalks but no street lights, on the other side there were street lights but no sidewalks. I went to public schools.

3. I skipped first grade. In second grade I wrote my first novel, entitled "What Next?" about five people who don't like each other and get stuck in an elevator. It was ten pages long. I still think this is a great idea for a novel.

4. When I was a senior in high school I was set up on a date with Jay North, a.k.a. Dennis the Menace. He was a much older man, and wore loafers of maroon patent leather. That year, I was also voted "Most *&%#&\$" in the senior class. I'm still not sure what that means.

5. On my high school aptitude test it was revealed that my perfect job was either a) test pilot or b) architect. I was least suited for anything in the helping professions. Naturally, at college (USC) I decided to become a physical therapist. I changed my mind the last semester of my senior year. I went to film school instead. My poor father.

6. I was in Paris the day Elvis died. The headline in Le Monde was "Elvis Est Mort."

7. Jobs I've held, with varying degrees of success:
 - child model
 - dog groomer
 - papergirl
 - sailboat varnisher
 - counter person (Chow House, Knott's Berry Farm)
 - housekeeper (Newport Beach Marriott)
 - art house movie theater ticket taker and popcorn seller
 - movie reviewer (The Oregonian)
 - author

8. I am a PADI-certified shark handler, trained in the Bahamas by an Australian named Derek. Sharks lose teeth whenever they feed. It is not uncommon to find them on the beach. I own a shark tooth that came from a 12' black-tip reef shark, which I caught as it fell from his mouth. We were in 60' of water. He was eating a piece of red snapper. I am more afraid of roller coasters than sharks.

9. My favorite novel is "Lolita." It gets funnier every time I reread it.

10. I have been around the world.



Karen Karbo is the author of three novels, all of which were named *New York Times* Notable Books. *The Stuff of Life*, a memoir about caring for her father during the last year of his life, was a People Magazine Critic's Choice, a selection of the Satellite Sisters Radio Book Club, and winner of the Oregon Book Award for Creative Nonfiction. A past winner of the General Electric Young Writer Award, Karen is in addition the recipient of an NEA Grant. Her (embarrassingly stupendous number of) essays, reviews and articles have appeared in *Outside*, *Elle*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, *Redbook*, *More*, *Self*, *Sports Illustrated for Women*, *The New Republic*, *The Oregonian*, and the *New York Times*. Her most recent work is the first in a trilogy of hip mysteries for young readers, *Minerva Clark Gets a Clue*. The second in the series, *Minerva Clark Goes to the Dogs*, will appear in September 2006. She lives in Portland.