

# CHRIS CRUTCHER

## YOUNG ADULT AUTHOR



“Chris Crutcher is a remarkably strong voice for young adult readers and for intellectual freedom. He has stood with schools and libraries as they have faced challenges to his materials. He’s an advocate as well as a writer. He gets it,” (Krug, 2006).

# LOOKING INTO THE LIFE OF CHRIS CRUTCHER

- Chris Crutcher was born on July 17, 1946 in Dayton, Ohio but soon moved to Cascade, Idaho
- He grew up in the small ranch and cattle town of Idaho and draws on this small town setting for most of his books
- School was never a favorite of Crutcher; he only ever read *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- He had an older brother who was athletic and scholarly and seems similar to Cody in *Deadline*
- Became inspired to write when he was asked to help edit his friend's manuscript (Terry Davis)
- First novel *Running Loose* in 1983

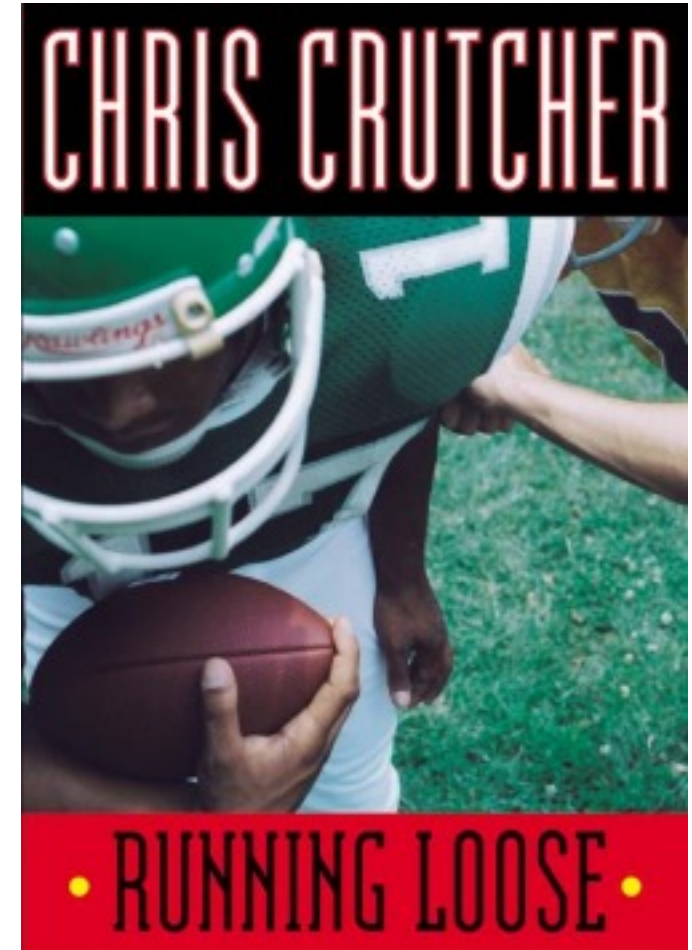


Image source: [chriscrutcher.com](http://chriscrutcher.com)



# INSPIRATION FOR BOOKS



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- Work as a family therapist
- Child protection specialist and advocate
- Ten years as teacher in alternative school



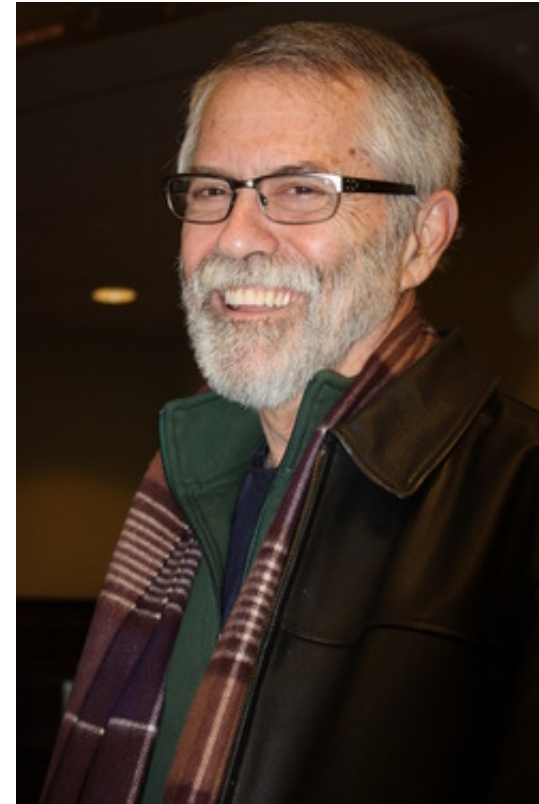
# AWARDS

- ALA has named eight of Crutcher's YA books to this list, including *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* in 2010.
- Four of his books appeared on *Booklist's* Best 100 Books of the 20th Century, put out in 2000; this was more than any other single author on the list
- ALAN Award in 1993. Award given by the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents to acknowledge those who have made an outstanding contribution to the field of YA literature.
- NCTE SLATE Intellectual Freedom Award in 1998, given to those that advance the cause of intellectual freedom.
- Margaret A. Edwards Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000, for his books *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* (1994), *Athletic Shorts* (1991), *Chinese Handcuffs* (1989), *The Crazy Horse Electric Game* (1987), *Stotan!* (1986) and *Running Loose* (1983). This award is given by Young Adult Library Services Association to an author for their lifetime achievement and contribution to young adult literature.
- California's Young Reader's Medal in 1987 for *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes*

# COMMON THEMES OF CRUTCHER'S NOVELS



- Sports
- Truths vs. Secrets
- Abusive Parents/ Adults
- Body Image





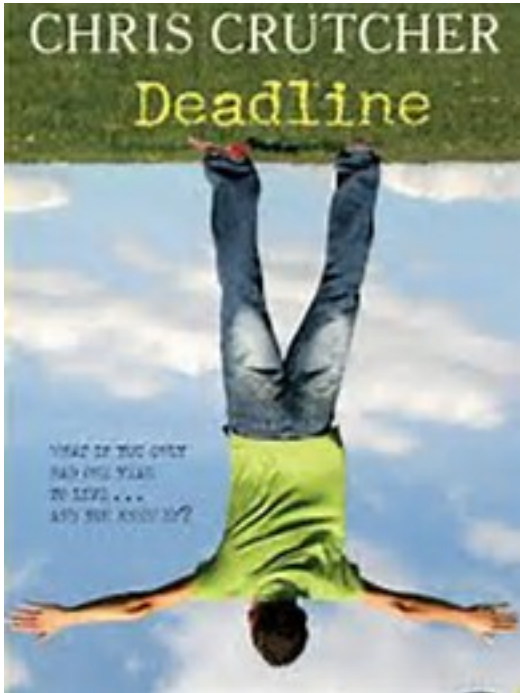
# SPORTS

- Chris Crutcher grew up playing sports and continues to swim and run
- *Deadline* has a star football player in Cody (and then Ben too)
- *Period 8* has a triathlete in Paul and a rower in Hannah
- *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* has a swimmer in Eric “Moby” Calhoun

“If you could breathe,” Crutcher says, “you could play,” (Chriscrutcher.com)



# TRUTHS VS. SECRETS

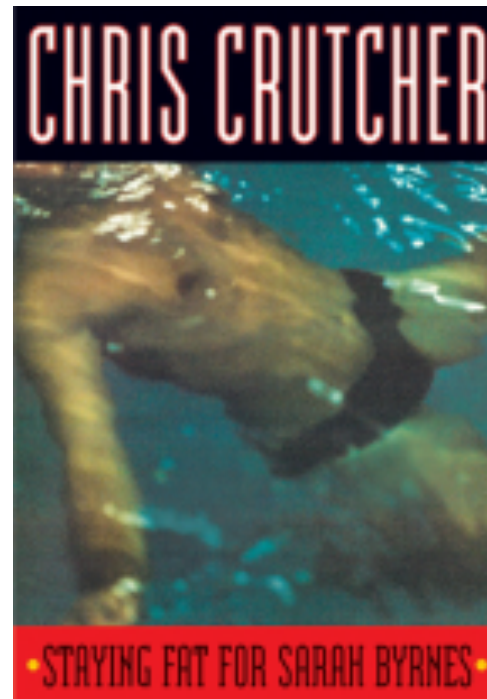


“But the truth doesn't need to be known, or believed, to be true.” –Chris Crutcher, *Deadline*

- There is always a battle in many of his characters between telling the truth and keeping a secret
- Ben Wolf in *Deadline* (keeping secret of disease from everyone)
- Sarah Byrnes in *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* (cause of her facial deformity)
- Moby in *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes* (knows about Sarah Byrnes)
- Paul in *Period 8* (who he cheated on Hannah with)
- Mary in *Period 8* (why she disappeared)

# ABUSIVE PARENTS/ ADULTS

- While Crutcher had loving parents growing up (a functioning alcoholic mom and a retired Air Force bomber pilot dad), he draws most of his ideas from past experiences with his work as a therapist and teacher
- Sarah Byrnes was based on a young child he had treated in therapy who received similar abuse at the hands of her stepfather
- Sooner's abusive father in *Deadline*
- The ex-priest Rudy in *Deadline*
- Mary's sexual encounter in *Period 8*
- Arney in *Period 8*



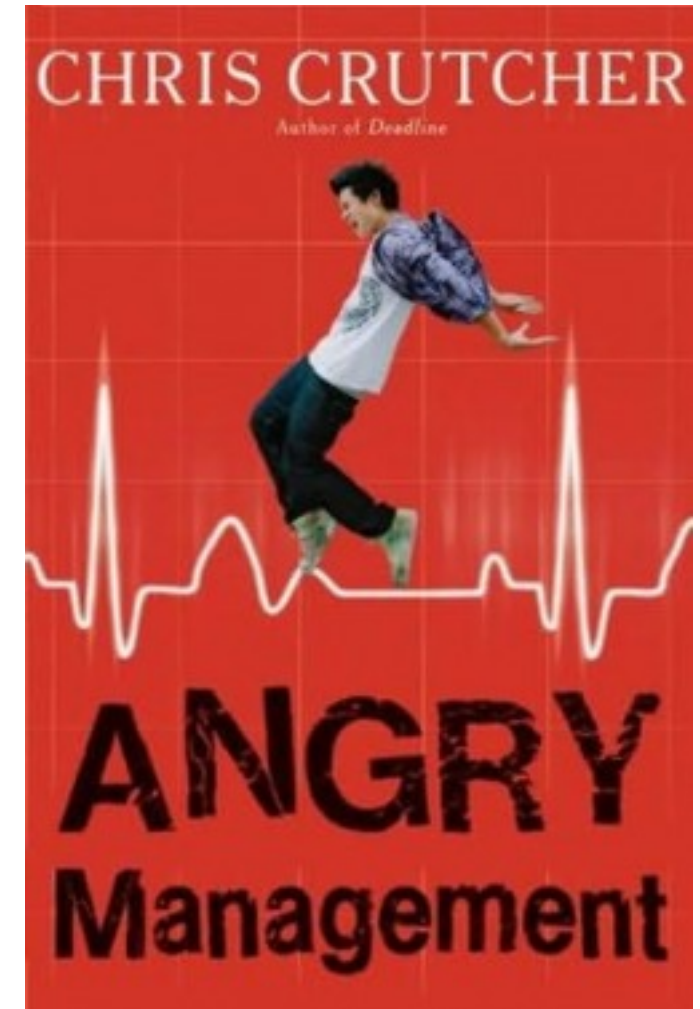
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# BODY IMAGE

- A popular problem facing young adults today is their body image and looks
- Sarah Byrnes has a disfigured face
- We meet up with Sarah Byrnes again in
- *Eric "Moby" Clahoun in Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes*

This was a banner made by students at a school in Texas



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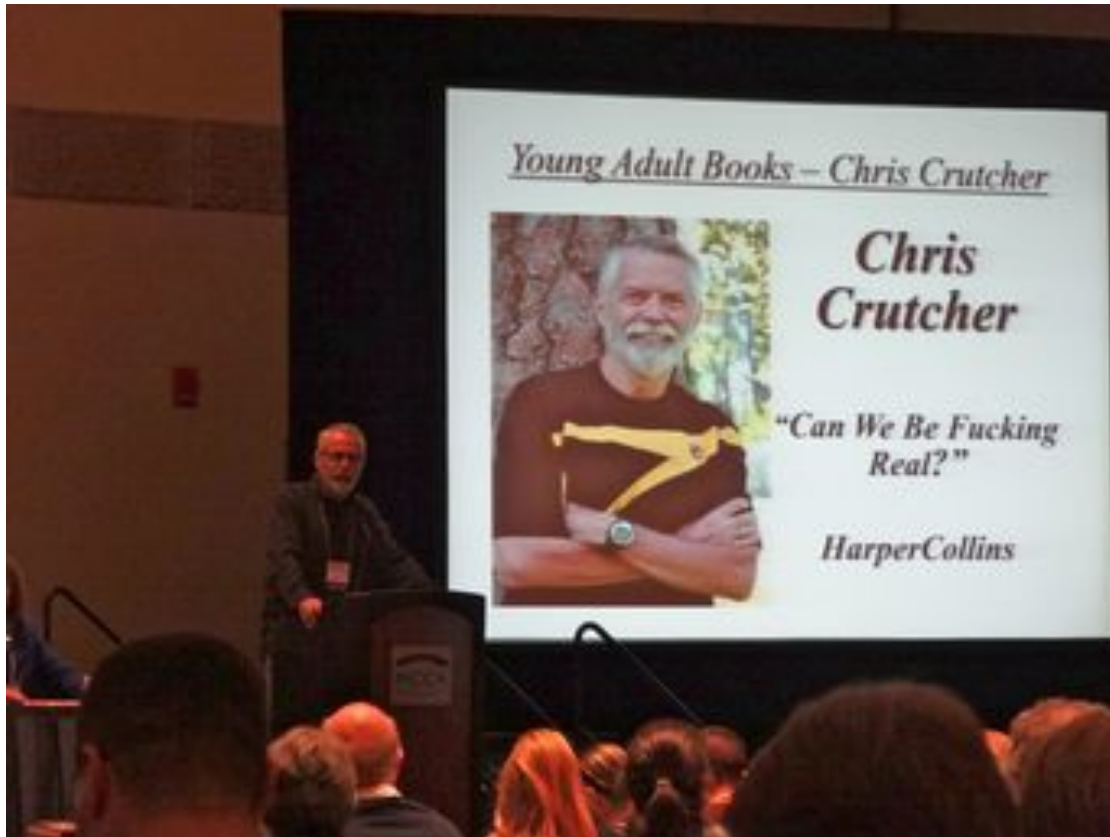


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# BANNED BOOKS

- Many of Chris Crutcher's books have been challenged, censored, or banned.
- Crutcher welcomes the opposition to his stories and speaks at Banned Books Week throughout the country
- **"The truth screams to be told in its native tongue." Chris Crutcher**

# FUTURE FOR CRUTCHER



- Whale Talk, a novel by Crutcher, is looking to be made into a movie
- On Twitter at #Whaletalkmovie
- Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes is in the works of being made into a movie
- Crutcher continues to speak at schools across the nation
- Continues to write

Image source: chriscrutcher.com



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