

McCormick Literary

Rights Guide London Book Fair March 2025

Rights Director: Susan Hobson
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FICTION

I.S. Berry

UNTITLED SPY NOVEL

From the author of *The Peacock and the Sparrow*, “one of the freshest new voices in spy fiction” (Tim Shipman, *Sunday Times*) and “a star in the making” (Jake Kerridge, *Daily Telegraph*), comes a standalone thriller about an aspiring spy novelist entangled in a dangerous web of real-life espionage.

[I.S. Berry](#) is the author of *The Peacock and the Sparrow* (Atria, 2023; No Exit, 2024), which won the 2024 Edgar, Barry, ITW, and Macavity awards for best first novel and was named the *Times* and *Sunday Times* Thriller of the Year. Berry spent six years as an operations officer for the CIA, serving throughout Europe and the Middle East. She lives in Virginia with her husband and son.

North America: Peter Borland/Atria | Delivering August 1, 2025

Rights sold: No Exit/UK

Mary H. K. Choi

MILK TEETH

The debut adult novel by the bestselling YA author is a darkly humorous exploration of the pitfalls of fame and family.

Growing up, all Stevie wanted was to be like her glamorous actress mother, Delilah Moon, and belong to the TV family of the popular (casually racist) sitcom that made her a star. Now at 20, Stevie is ready to escape the purgatory of alcoholism, dwindling career prospects, and housing insecurity that is life with a washed-up actress.

To be fair, nobody enjoys squatting in a drugstore heiress’s pool house less than Delilah Moon. Especially at 45. Especially-especially with a stormily judgmental daughter. All while trying to stay sober. But Delilah has a plan. Or at least a path toward central air and decent water pressure. But when Mac, Delilah’s sitcom husband, turns up dead in San Pedro Bay, all bets are off.

[Mary H.K. Choi](#) is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the YA novels *Emergency Contact*, *Permanent Record* and *Yolk*. She is currently adapting her books for TV and film. She has previously contributed to *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *New York*, *GQ*, *Elle* and *Vice News*.

North America: Megan Lynch/Flatiron | Delivering April 2025; Publication Spring 2026

Joshua Cohen

WITZ (revised and updated, with a new introduction by the author)

"The sort of postmodern epic that arrives like a comet about once every decade, like *Infinite Jest* or *Gravity's Rainbow*." —*New York Observer*

Originally published in 2010, *Witz* is one of the great comic epics of our time: the Last Jewish Novel about the Last Jew in the World.

On Christmas Eve 1999, all the Jews in the world die in a strange, millennial plague, with the exception of firstborn males, who are soon adopted by a cabal of powerful people in the American government. By the following Passover, however, only one is still alive: Benjamin Israelien, a kindly, innocent, ignorant man-child. As he finds himself transformed into an international superstar, Jewishness becomes all the rage: matzo-ball soup is in every bowl, sidelocks are hip; and the only truly Jewish Jew left is increasingly stigmatized for not being religious. Since his very existence exposes the illegitimacy of the newly converted, Israelien becomes the object of a worldwide manhunt.

Meanwhile, in the not-too-distant future of our own, "real" world, another last Jew—the last living Holocaust survivor—sits alone in a snowbound Manhattan, providing a final melancholy witness in the form of punch lines to half-remembered jokes.

Joshua Cohen is the author of Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Netanyahus* (2021), which has been translated into sixteen languages. His books include the novels *Moving Kings*, *Book of Numbers*, *A Heaven of Others*, and *Cadenza for the Schneidermann Violin Concerto*; the short fiction collection *Four New Messages*, and the non-fiction collection *Attention: Dispatches from a Land of Distraction*. He was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and lives in New York City.

North America: Dalkey Archive Press | Delivering April 2025; Publication August 26, 2025

Rights sold: Schöffling/Germany

Mark Hitz
THE NAME OF THE DOG

An immersive speculative debut novel set in 2009 in the aftermath of a “dog flu” pandemic.

The novel opens several years after a swift and unexplained illness, known colloquially as “the amaranth,” took the lives of nearly seven percent of the global population. Life has moved on, though the survivors have all been scarred in some way, and every summer there are echoes of the amaranth’s continuing presence. Scientific efforts to understand the illness have been unsuccessful, but because it was first observed in dogs, it was initially thought to be a “dog flu,” and nearly all domestic dogs were either killed by the amaranth or culled by humans.

The story is set in motion by the birth of a single litter of puppies who are immune to the illness, and it picks up years later when the dogs have grown and a second wave of the dormant amaranth threatens to emerge. The narrative is driven by three main characters: a woman still mourning the loss of her husband and young son, who caretakes the dogs in secret; the government amaranth investigator who is looking for her; and a lonely, busybody widower who finds himself in the middle of it all. Each is forced to overcome their own private grief as their fates, and the fates of the wild dogs, intertwine.

Set in a fictional city in a real geographic area in central Idaho—a vast, high desert covered in black lava—the novel is both deeply unsettling and deeply resonant. Despite the existential circumstances, there’s a warmth and humor to Mark’s writing that makes you root for these humans and half-wild dogs.

Mark Hitz is a graduate of the Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas, where he won the Keene Prize for Literature, and was a Stegner Fellow at Stanford University. His work has appeared in *Glimmer Train* and *The Best American Nonrequired Reading*. He lives in Idaho.

North America: Tim O’Connell/Saga Press | Delivering April 15, 2025; Publication Summer 2026

NONFICTION

sujatha baliga

ANGRY LONG ENOUGH: Toward Healing and Repair for Ourselves and the World

Manifesto on the transformative power of forgiveness that draws on the author's personal history as well as her decades of experience in restorative justice.

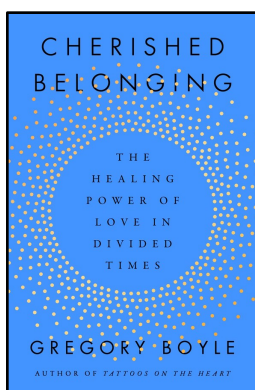
sujatha baliga begins by sharing her personal story of debilitating rage, recounting the sexual abuse she endured as a child, how she carried the weight of her anger into her twenties, and how a serendipitous audience with the Dalai Lama finally allowed her to let it go. From there, the book broadens into a nuanced and insightful exploration of anger and forgiveness, crime and punishment, and the principles and practices of restorative justice, which can help us transmute our anger into "a cleaner fuel than rage" and achieve real and lasting peace in ourselves and in the world.

sujatha baliga is an American attorney and restorative justice practitioner who won the MacArthur Fellowship in 2019. Her work has been featured widely in publications and media such as *The New York Times Magazine*, NPR, Vox, The Ezra Klein Show, Dan Harris's Ten Percent Happier, and elsewhere. A long-time Buddhist practitioner, she's a lay member of the Gyuto Foundation, a Tibetan Buddhist Monastery in Richmond, California.

**North America: Elizabeth Mendez Berry/One World | Delivering May 2025;
Publication Spring 2026**

Gregory Boyle

CHERISHED BELONGING: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times



"Boyle's vision of a brighter, more empathetic world inspires." —Publishers Weekly

Over the past thirty years, Father Greg has transformed thousands of lives through his work as the founder of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang-intervention, rehabilitation and reentry program in the world. He writes: "There are 1,100 gangs and 120,000 gang members in the County of Los Angeles. It feels like most of them have my cell phone number."

The program runs on two unwavering principles: Everyone is unshakably good (no exceptions); and we all belong to each other (no exceptions). Using his trademark sense of humor and a treasure trove of personal anecdotes and reflections, Father

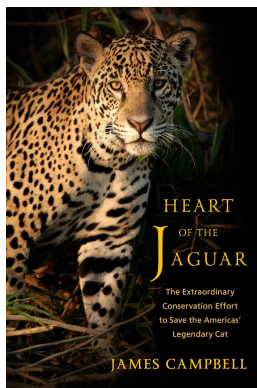
Greg shows how these two ideas can be put into practice in every community, no matter how riven by fear and mistrust. “The answer to every question is, indeed, compassion,” Boyle exhorts. He calls us to cherish and nurture the connections that are around us and to live with radical kindness.

Gregory Boyle is an American Jesuit priest, the founder of Homeboy Industries, and the acclaimed author of *Tattoos on the Heart*, *Barking to the Choir*, and *The Whole Language*. In May 2024, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States’ highest civilian honor.

North America: Jofie Ferrari-Adler/Avid Reader Press | November 5, 2024

James Campbell

HEART OF THE JAGUAR: The Extraordinary Conservation Effort to Save the Americas' Legendary Cat



The fascinating story of the movement to protect the jaguar, and the man who devoted his life to saving the species.

Once indigenous to North America, the jaguar is the largest cat in the Western Hemisphere. A resilient and efficient predator, it is one of the wildest creatures left on the planet. However, one million years after it appeared in the New World, the species is struggling to survive.

Heart of the Jaguar tells the story of the extraordinary undertaking to save this magnificent creature, which began in the jungles of Belize in the 1980s, and later became the Jaguar Corridor Initiative. James Campbell tracks the legacy of Alan Rabinowitz—“the Indiana Jones of wildlife ecology”—a formidable but damaged man who fought for the corridor that now extends 8,000 latitudinal miles from Mexico to Argentina. From the Bering Land Bridge to pre-Columbian jungle temples adorned with jaguar sculptures, *Heart of the Jaguar* takes readers on a journey across two continents in search of the jaguar’s past and present—and its future.

James Campbell is the author of *The Final Frontiersman*, *Braving It*, and *The Ghost Mountain Boys*. He has written for *Outside*, *National Geographic Adventure*, *Men’s Journal*, and many other publications. He lives in Wisconsin.

North America: John Glusman/Norton | Delivered; Publication November 4, 2025

Stefan Fatsis

UNABRIDGED: A Book About the Dictionary in the Digital Age

The bestselling author of *Word Freak* takes us on an entertaining journey into the peculiar and vibrant heart of lexicography—from the dusty but quietly humming offices of Merriam-Webster’s headquarters to nontraditional startups like Wordnik, to MIT’s qualitative linguistics labs—as he explores the future of dictionaries in our digital age.

As in his previous books, Fatsis tells this story as both observer and participant. He trained with Merriam-Webster to be a “definer” and took part in the momentous digital overhaul of its landmark book, *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged*.

[Stefan Fatsis](#) is the author of the New York Times bestselling *Word Freak: Heartbreak, Triumph, Genius, and Obsession in the World of Professional Scrabble Players* (2001) and *A Few Seconds of Panic: A Sportswriter Plays in the NFL* (2008). He is currently a panelist on Slate magazine’s sports podcast [Hang Up and Listen](#).

North America: George Gibson/Atlantic Monthly Press | Delivered; Publication October 7, 2025

Mary Lisa Gavenas

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

The feel-good true story of Mary Kay Ash, a teen mom and Texas housewife who became a door-to-door saleswoman and went on to found the direct marketing beauty empire Mary Kay Cosmetics.

[Mary Lisa Gavenas](#) is a former editor at *Glamour*, *In Style*, and *Mirabella* magazines and the author of *Color Stories: Behind the Scenes in America's Billion-Dollar Beauty Industry* and *The Fairchild Encyclopedia of Menswear*. She has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Leon Levy Center for Biography.

North America: Camille LeBlanc/Viking | Delivering April 2025; Publication Spring 2026

Miriam Gohara

THE MYTH OF THE IDEAL VICTIM

Drawing on the author's two decades of experience as a public defender, *The Myth of the Ideal Victim* exposes how not all crime victims are treated equally.

The dominant Victim's Rights Movement, which emerged in the 1970s and still holds sway today, is composed mainly of white, middle class women's advocates and political elites and focuses on person-to-person harms. The movement's political success hinges on the appeal of an "ideal victim": a totally blameless (implicitly white, usually female) person, with no previous ties to the person who harmed them, and whose perpetrator can be easily identified and punished. Miriam Gohara argues that this movement's tendency to treat violence as an interpersonal problem rather than a structural problem, its dependence on the trope of the "ideal victim," and its erasure of Black survivors, has been the central failure of American responses to crime.

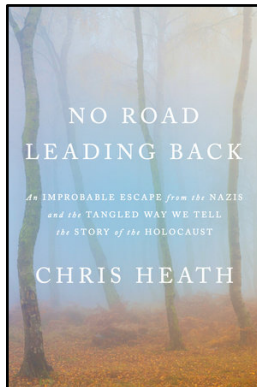
While public discourse has evolved in recent years amid a growing awareness of structural inequality, there is very little literature that centers Black survivors, even as statistics show that, nationwide, Black people are victims of crime at rates far disproportionate to other groups. There are also very few books that chronicle the extensive, century-spanning work and advocacy of Black-led survivor organizations and posit them as models of transformative justice. *The Myth of the Ideal Victim* will fill this critical gap.

[Miriam Gohara](#) is a Clinical Professor of Law at Yale Law School. Prior to joining the faculty, she spent sixteen years representing death-sentenced clients in post-conviction litigation, first as assistant counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) and then as a specially designated federal public defender with the Federal Capital Habeas Project. She is a graduate of Harvard Law School and Columbia University.

North America: Brandon Proia/Basic Books | Delivered; Publication Spring 2026

Chris Heath

NO ROAD LEADING BACK: An Improbable Escape from the Nazis and the Tangled Way We Tell the Story of the Holocaust



One of *Smithsonian's* "10 Best History Book of 2024"

A *Washington Post* "Best Book of the Year"

"A stunning book, a powerful investigation, utterly compelling."
—*The Telegraph*

The incredible story of a dozen men who escaped from the Nazi killing site in the Lithuanian forest of Ponar, where more than 70,000 Jews were shot to death and buried in mass graves. Toward the end of the war, anxious to hide the evidence of their crimes, the S.S. rounded up and imprisoned a group of Jews whose monthlong labor was to exhume every one of the corpses and incinerate them. From within that dire circumstance emerged the improbable escape made by some of the men, who dug a tunnel with bare hands and spoons while trapped and guarded day and night—an act not just of bravery and desperation but of awesome imagination.

Based on first-person accounts of the escapees and on each scrap of evidence that has been documented, repressed, or amplified since, this book resurrects their lives while also providing a complex, urgent analysis of why their story has rarely been told, and never accurately. Heath explores the cultural use and misuse of Holocaust testimony and the need for us to face it—and all uncomfortable historical truths—with honesty and accuracy.

[Chris Heath](#) is an award-winning journalist. He has written about a wide array of subjects for *The Atlantic*, *Esquire*, *GQ*, and *Vanity Fair* as well as a number of books on popular culture. He won the 2013 National Magazine Award for Reporting. Based in Brooklyn, Heath grew up south of Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

World English: Deb Garrison/Schocken Books | September 3, 2024

Rights sold: Bridge Street Press/UK, Corpus Books/Russia

Daniel Immerwahr
THIS, TOO, SHALL BURN

The author of *How to Hide an Empire* reveals the remarkable role of fires in American history.

In Abraham's Lincoln's words, the United States was "conceived in liberty." But as Daniel Immerwahr explores in his entertaining and eye-opening new book, it was built on wood. Forests—which England lacked—are what impelled our forebears to cross the Atlantic in the first place. England's growing economy required vast resources to build its cities, heat its homes, fuel its ironworks, and erect its formidable navy, and America had an apparent infinity of trees.

Timber was also the lifeblood of the burgeoning nation. Whatever boards of wood were not shipped back to England were sawed, planed, stacked, and whittled down into the shape of young America. Ours was a nation of log cabins and split-rail fences, where wooden cutlery scraped against wooden crockery, wooden doors swung on wooden hinges, and wood-burning locomotives clattered recklessly over wooden bridges. New York even had wood plank roads. Wood was easy, it was cheap, and it was everywhere. It was also, as we soon came to learn, combustible.

The story of America is the story of America on fire: from the torching of a Native American town by the first English settlers at Roanoke to the Great San Francisco Fire of 1906. The almost ridiculous flammability of the United States has played a major role in nearly every major social movement and political conflict in our history. *This, Too, Shall Burn* reveals how the fear of arson sparked the American Revolution and fueled the Civil War. It explores the importance of wood to the vaunted independence of frontiersmen. It follows the slaves who burned their way to freedom, setting fire to Mount Vernon and the Confederate White House, among other places. With the environment in view, familiar subjects, from Abraham Lincoln to *The Wizard of Oz*, take on an indelible new character.

[Daniel Immerwahr](#) is the author of *How to Hide an Empire*, which has sold nearly 200,000 copies in English and has been translated into 12 languages. Immerwahr received his Ph.D. in history from the University of California, Berkeley, and is the Bergen Evans Professor in the Humanities at Northwestern University. He is a contributing writer at *The New Yorker*.

North America: Alex Star/Farrar, Straus & Giroux | Delivering March 2027

Timothy Keller

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?

Edited posthumously but based on original writings by Tim Keller, *What Is Wrong With the World?* examines the Bible's complex, nuanced, and sophisticated presentation of the root of humanity's problems—sin.

[Timothy Keller](#) (1950-2023) was the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, co-founder of Redeemer City to City, and the author of numerous books, including *New York Times* bestseller *The Reason for God*, *The Prodigal God*, and *The Meaning of Marriage*, which he co-wrote with his wife Kathy.

North America: Webster Younce/Zondervan | Delivered; Publication Oct 21, 2025
Rights sold: Duranno/Korea

Michael Keller and Timothy Keller

NAVIGATING FAITH IN A SECULAR AGE: The Hidden Stories That Shape Our Lives

Picking up where his father left off, Michael Keller offers an original and compelling defense of how faith can guide us in a secular world.

Navigating Faith in a Secular Age is a book Michael and his father spent many months discussing, and planned to write together: about how the cultural narratives we believe, the stories that we rely on to provide meaning in our lives, do not, upon closer examination, really offer the power and insight we crave. Organized around seven prominent secular narratives—identity, happiness, morality, freedom, power, truth, and progress—Michael and Tim Keller argue that Christianity offers the strongest foundation for a life of meaning and purpose.

[Michael Keller](#) is the founding pastor of Redeemer Lincoln Square and the longest-tenured pastor in the Redeemer network of churches in New York City. He holds a PhD from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, as well as both MDiv and ThM degrees from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. His writings have been featured in *Christianity Today*, *The Gospel Coalition*, *ByFaith Magazine*, and *Gospel in Life*.

North America: Webster Younce/Zondervan | Delivering May 2025;
Publication April 2026

Pagan Kennedy

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE RAPE KIT: A True Crime Story



“An exhilarating biography of Martha “Marty” Goddard, the inventor of the rape kit....Part historical detective story and part vivid character study of a pioneering feminist, this is a page-turner.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

Riveting feminist history about little known inventor Martha “Marty” Goddard, a victims advocate and sexual assault survivor who created the forensic evidence collection system known colloquially as the “rape kit.”

In 1971, Marty Goddard was working at a rape crisis hotline and plagued by two principle questions: Why were so many predators getting away with their crimes? And, how do we stop them? In the years that followed, she led a tireless campaign to have sexual assault treated and investigated as the crime that it is. By creating the first rape kit, she revolutionized forensics. But while her invention gained widespread acceptance, Marty herself seemed to disappear.

The Secret History of the Rape Kit chronicles Pagan Kennedy’s quest to find Martha Goddard and uncover the origins of the rape kit. As she pursues this overlooked inventor, she dives into the inequities built into our patent system, the problematic and gendered history of forensics, the misogyny that runs rampant in police departments, and the failings that persist in how we prosecute rape. And as Pagan unearths Marty’s story, she reflects on her own experiences with sexual assault, and how one forgotten woman’s legacy could have saved her, as it has so many.

[Pagan Kennedy](#) is the author of eleven books including *The First Man-Made Man*, a study of transgender pioneer Michael Dillon, and *Inventology: How We Dream Up Things That Change the World*. She has been awarded a Smithsonian fellowship, a Massachusetts Book Prize honor in nonfiction, and a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship.

World English: Vintage/Vanessa Haughton | January 14, 2025

William Rankin

RADICAL CARTOGRAPHY: How Changing Our Maps Can Change Our World

“This is it: the full download from a true genius of cartography. *Radical Cartography* will make you see maps, and, indeed, your place on the planet, with fresh eyes.”—Daniel Immerwahr, author of *How to Hide an Empire*

A stunning, thought-provoking exploration of how maps shape our understanding of the world—featuring over 150 full-color maps in a gorgeous package

Maps are ubiquitous in contemporary life—not just for navigation, but for making sense of our society, our environment, and even ourselves. In an instant, huge datasets can be plotted on command and we can explore faraway places in exacting detail. Yet the new ease and speed of data mapping can often lead to the same problem that has been around for centuries: over-simplified maps are used as tools for top-down control.

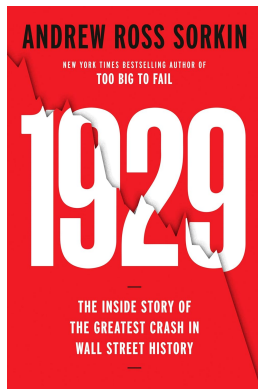
Cartographer and historian William Rankin argues that it’s time to reimagine what a map can be and how it can be used. Maps are not neutral visualizations of facts. They are innately political, defining how the world is divided, what becomes visible and what stays hidden, and whose voices are heard. What matters isn’t the topics or the data, but how maps make arguments about how the world works. And the consequences are enormous. A map’s visual argument can change how cities are designed and how rivers flow, how wars are fought and how land claims are settled, how children learn about race and how colonialism becomes a habit of mind. Maps don’t just show us information—they help construct our world.

[William Rankin](#) is a historian of science at Yale University, where he focuses on the history of mapping and the geographic sciences. Born and raised outside Chicago, he was originally trained as an architect before receiving a dual PhD in the history of science and architecture from Harvard. In addition to his work as a historian, he is also an award-winning cartographer, and his maps have appeared in numerous books, magazines, and exhibits around the world.

**North America: Terezia Cicek/Viking | Delivered; Publication November 11, 2025
Rights sold: Picador/UK, Kobunsha/Japan, Faces/Taiwan**

Andrew Ross Sorkin

1929: The Inside Story of the Greatest Crash in Wall Street History



From the bestselling author of *Too Big to Fail* comes a spellbinding narrative of the most infamous stock market crash in history.

With the depth of a classic history and the drama of a thriller, *1929* unravels the greed, blind optimism, and human folly that led to an era-defining collapse—one with ripple effects that still shape our society today. In October 1929, the world watched in shock as the unstoppable Wall Street bull market went into a freefall, wiping out fortunes and igniting a depression that would reshape a generation. But behind the flashing ticker tapes and panicked traders, another drama unfolded—one of visionaries and fraudsters, titans and dreamers, euphoria and ruin.

With unparalleled access to historical records and newly uncovered documents, *New York Times* bestselling author Andrew Ross Sorkin takes readers inside the chaos of the crash, behind the scenes of a raging battle between Wall Street and Washington and the larger-than-life characters whose ambition and naivete in an endless boom led to disaster. The dizzying highs and brutal lows of this era eerily mirror today's world—where markets soar, political tensions mount, and the fight over financial influence plays out once again.

This is not just a story about money. *1929* is a tale of power, psychology, and the seductive illusion that “this time is different.” It’s about disregarded alarm bells, financiers who fell from grace, and skeptics who saw the crash coming—only to be dismissed until it was too late.

[Andrew Ross Sorkin](#) is an award-winning journalist for *The New York Times* and a co-anchor of Squawk Box, CNBC’s signature morning program. He is also the founder and editor-at-large of DealBook, an online daily financial report published by *The New York Times*. Sorkin is the bestselling author of *Too Big to Fail* and the co-producer of the 2011 film adaptation, which was nominated for eleven Emmy Awards. Sorkin is also co-creator of the drama series *Billions* on Showtime.

North America: Viking | Delivering March 2025; Publication October 14, 2025

Rights sold: Penguin/UK, Cheers/China

Alice Waters

SCHOOL LUNCH REVOLUTION: A Cookbook

The award-winning chef and food activist champions a dynamic, empowered relationship between families, school kitchens, and regenerative farmers and offers recipes that will nourish future generations from the inside out.

Education and food are two universal rights: all children deserve to go to school, and everyone deserves to eat nourishing food. Alice Waters believes we must reimagine our food systems and the way we feed our students, from kindergarten all the way through high school and college. What *A School Lunch Revolution* proposes is a direct, meaningful relationship between schools and farms that Waters calls school-supported regenerative agriculture—a holistic approach to feeding students that includes buying ingredients from local regenerative farmers and producers, and cooking those fresh ingredients onsite in school kitchens. When schools purchase, cook, and serve food in this way—buying directly from organic, regenerative farmers—it will transform the food in cafeterias and the health and happiness of our students, and will also enrich local economies and help to transform our climate. The over eighty recipes and sample menus included, both for cooking at home and for adapting to school kitchens, are guided by the principles that Waters believes school lunches can and should be: Local and Seasonal

[Alice Waters](#) is a chef and the founder/owner of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California. She has won numerous awards, including the National Humanities Medal, the French Legion of Honor Medal, the Cavaliere of the Italian Republic, the Julia Child Award, and three James Beards Awards. She is the author of numerous books and cookbooks, including *The Art of Simple Food*, which has been translated into ten languages. As vice president of Slow Food International and founder of the Edible Schoolyard Project, she has helped bring food awareness to people of all ages all over the world.

North America: Ann Godoff/Penguin Press | Delivering April 2025; Publication
September 2, 2025

YOUNG ADULT/NONFICTION

MT Anderson

THE SANTA CLAUS HEIST

In 1087 CE, a league of Italian adventurers sailed to Asia Minor, broke into the tomb of the 4th century CE Bishop of Myra, aka St. Nicholas – better known to us as Santa Claus – and stole his corpse. Fleeing through the town with hundreds of angry villagers chasing them, they got back to their ships and sailed to Bari, Italy with the dead saint. They left several records of this extraordinary heist: the theft of a body, already 650 years old, that was supposed to emit a sacred, healing liquor. The corpse remains in Bari to this day—and every year, thousands of pilgrims still go to St. Nicholas’s church to purchase and drink the fluid that drips off his bones.

The story of Santa Claus is a far stranger one than our current Claymation mythology would have us believe. This book for teens 14 and up would go into that history—but would also use that history to talk about broader issues: in particular, the shape that religions take, the rise and fall of empires, and the detective work of archaeology.

[MT Anderson](#) is the author most recently of *Nicked* (Knopf, 2024), which put a fictionalized, for-adults spin on the story of the theft of St. Nicholas’s bones. He is the author of many books for children and young adults, including Newbery winning middle grade novel *Elf Dog and Owl Head*, YA nonfiction *Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad*, and YA novels *Feed* and *Landscape with Invisible Hand*.

North America: Andrew Karre/Dutton Children’s | Delivery March 2025; Publication Spring 2026