

The Authors Guild Bulletin



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THE AUTHORS GUILD BULLETIN

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The Authors Guild, the oldest and largest association of published authors in the United States, works to protect and promote the professional interests of its members. The Guild's forerunner, The Authors League of America, was founded in 1912. The *Bulletin* was first published in 1912 as *The Authors League Newsletter*.

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“OVERHEARD”

“I wish I could explain the mystery of that moment
where everything sparks and starts to come together,
but what I love to do is to wrestle with the
language—because the language
is what a writer has. It’s our tool; it’s our clay.”

Rita Dove, in an interview with PBS arts and culture correspondent Jeffrey Brown
about her new poetry collection, *Playlist for the Apocalypse*, March 2, 2022

SHORT TAKES

* TURN EVERY PAGE

Turn Every Page is the New-York Historical Society's new exhibition, displaying materials from the archive of author Robert A. Caro, a former president of the Authors Guild. Caro, age 86, is the celebrated author of *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* and a four-volume biography of Lyndon B. Johnson. With the fifth and final volume still in progress. *Turn Every Page* provides the first public access to Caro's archives, which the historical society acquired in 2019. Visitors can view Caro's research notebooks, interview notes, photographs, original manuscript pages, and one of his typewriters. Caro is known for drafting his manuscripts on typewriters, and he recently told *The New Yorker* that he currently owns eleven—down from a high of fourteen.

Exhibitions from the archives of living writers and artists are less common than displays after a donor's death, but they do occur. The ability to give the public access to archives depends on the terms of the agreement between the archival institution and the creator or the creator's estate. The New York Public Library celebrated its acquisition of Tom Wolfe's papers with an exhibition in 2015, when the author was 85. The Harry Ransom Center in Texas recently exhibited materials from its Edward Ruscha Papers and Art Collection, with the artist (age 84) participating in a program at the institution. Next fall, the Ransom Center will exhibit

the work of photographer Laura Wilson (age 82).

* RECENT MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

ProQuest, a technology company with one of the largest library research databases, has been purchased for \$5.3 billion by Clarivate, a public analytics company. Since its founding in 2016, Clarivate has acquired nine companies specializing in scholarly research, database and search technologies, and intellectual property software. Clarivate's purchase of ProQuest was initially delayed by an anti-trust review by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), but ultimately the merger was allowed to proceed.

The merger was opposed by the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC). In October, SPARC wrote to the FTC, urging that the merger be denied as "a necessary step in pulling the research enterprise back from the brink of a future in which it is controlled by platform monopolies." In its presentation, SPARC argued that the merger would cause adverse competitive effects and cause consumer harm in the library services platform market, the research analytics market, and the academic journal market; they urged the FTC to block the deal and open a broader investigation into the global research marketplace. The merger was completed in early December 2021.

Open Road Integrated Media, an e-book publisher with a catalog of more than 10,000 titles,

has been acquired by an investment group led by David Steinberger, chairman of the National Book Foundation, who formerly held CEO positions at Arcadia Publishing and Perseus Books. Open Road, founded by Jane Friedman, a former CEO of HarperCollins, is known for its unique marketing techniques, which use proprietary technology to connect readers with titles, increasing sales dramatically. The purchase price has not been disclosed, but *The Wall Street Journal* reported the amount was between \$60 and \$80 million.

In the newspaper arena, Alden Global Capital continues to dominate the market. In 2020, Alden purchased 31 publications from Warren Buffett's BH Media Group. In early 2021, it acquired the Tribune Publishing Company. The purchase was criticized by many in the industry, especially when, just two days after the sale was completed, Alden transferred \$278 million in debt to the company, replaced the CEO with the president of Alden, and offered buyouts to employees. A second round of buyouts occurred this summer.

Currently, Alden owns about 200 newspapers. In November, the hedge fund made an unsolicited proposal to purchase Lee Enterprises, which publishes dozens of newspapers in the United States. The purchase was seen as a hostile takeover by Lee Enterprises, which publicly criticized Alden for failing to follow the required procedure for investors to nominate candidates to its

board of directors. Staff at many of the newspapers owned by Lee also voiced opposition. Wyoming's *Casper Star-Tribune* staff union posted on Twitter that "Alden has a history of gouging papers and we cannot afford to lose any other positions. We urge the Lee Enterprises board of directors to decline the offer in the interest of preserving quality local news."

In December, the Lee Enterprises board of directors did just that, unanimously stating that "Lee's Board determined that Alden's proposal grossly undervalues Lee and is not in the best interests of the Company and its shareholders."

A more peaceful acquisition of note was the Hachette Book Group's purchase of Workman Publishing in September. Until the acquisition, Workman Publishing, founded in 1968, was the largest independent trade book publisher in the U.S.

The most ambitious acquisition move of the year, Penguin Random House's bid for Simon & Schuster, is currently in legal limbo. In November, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a complaint to block the deal, the first time in nearly a decade that the DOJ has intervened in the publishing industry. (See p. 8.)

* FULL DISCLOSURE

Patrick Radden Keefe is the author of four critically acclaimed and best-selling nonfiction titles, including the April 2021 release *Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Dynasty*. The book examines the Sackler family, which founded Purdue Pharma and earned enormous profits from the addictive opioid OxyContin. The family, once known for its philanthropy, is involved in several lawsuits relating to the opioid crisis.

On December 2, Keefe posted a Twitter thread about his experience the previous night at the

FT & McKinsey Business Book of the Year Award ceremony at the National Gallery in London. *Empire of Pain* had been shortlisted for the award. During pre-dinner cocktails, Keefe wrote, his editor pointed to a sign visible through the room's archway entrance. Across the hallway was a gallery named "The Sackler Room."

"As I used to write in the margins of the novels I read in high school English class: 'IRONY,'" Keefe wrote. "But then again, if you throw a brick in the London art world, you'll hit a Sackler room. That's not even the ironic part. The ironic part is that this was the FT *McKinsey* book award, and if you've read my book you will know that McKinsey is, as it happens, sort of a character in the book."

McKinsey & Company was hired by Purdue Pharma to increase sales of OxyContin. The consulting firm was investigated by attorneys general in 47 states for its role in the opioid crisis and eventually paid \$573 million in a settlement.

Keefe noted that he felt it would be "hypocritical, to put it mildly, for me to put on a suit and go to a fancy gallery adjacent to the Sackler room and drink champagne and vie for a prize sponsored by McKinsey and politely refrain from any mention of the above." He added that he was not criticizing the award jury, which demonstrated impartiality by shortlisting his book. Keefe received £10,000 for inclusion on the shortlist, which he is donating to Odyssey House, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in New York.

* ABOUT TIME

Last September, translator Jennifer Croft and author Mark Haddon wrote an open letter calling on publishers to include translators' names on the front cover of books. As of mid-February 2022, the letter had been signed by 2,599 writers

and translators. Croft told the *New York Times* that she was spurred to act after her award-winning translation of *Flights*, by the Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk, did not credit her on the cover.

Croft had not only translated the book, but was instrumental in placing it with publishers in the U.S. and U.K. The novel won the Man Booker International Prize and was a National Book Award finalist. Riverhead, which published *Flights* in 2018, is also publishing Croft's translation of Tokarczuk's novel *The Books of Jacob*. This round, Croft will be credited on the cover—as requested by both Croft and Tokarczuk. Croft is also receiving royalties, instead of a one-time fee.

* ON A LIGHTER NOTE

In 2022, Jason Reynolds will serve his third term as National Ambassador for Young People's Literature. This is the first time a writer will serve a third term in the program, which is run by the Library of Congress, Every Child a Reader, and the Children's Book Council. Reynolds, a beloved and best-selling author of middle grade and young adult books, has been praised for his encouragement of young readers, including throughout the COVID-19 pandemic via his video series, "GRAB THE MIC: Tell Your Story."

In December, Reynolds was a guest on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert." Colbert asked, "Do you have favorite questions you've gotten from kids?" Reynolds replied, "One of the ones I get most often is, 'Mr. Jason, what kind of car do you drive?'" Reynolds added that he appreciates the question, which indicates trust and can lead to a deeper connection.

Colbert followed up with a question, "Jason, what kind of car do you drive?" Reynolds laughed and leaned toward Colbert: "A cherry-red Porsche 911." **AG**

FROM THE PRESIDENT



In talking to some of you, I've discovered that not everyone is aware of the extensive benefits that come with Guild membership. Please take a moment to look through the list, because there are some truly excellent Guild benefits that you may not be aware of.

1. Free legal advice. Our staff attorneys are experts in copyright, media, and contract law. They will review members' writing-related contracts, assist with disputes with publishers or issues with payment, provide legal advice on copyright, trademark, libel, and right of publicity matters, all for free. We will review or advise on contracts, including but not limited to book publishing agreements, film and television contracts, agency agreements, freelance journalism agreements, and any other contracts involving creative content. Our attorneys will also give you free legal advice on other publishing concerns. If we determine that a company or entity has acted in legal bad faith, we will go to bat for you by writing legal letters and by publicizing unfair and illegitimate

practices. Being a member of the Authors Guild is like having a lawyer on retainer—for only \$135 per year.

2. Authors Guild regional chapters. In many parts of the country, we maintain chapters where local authors can meet in person, connect, network, get to know each other—and have fun.

3. Seminars, webinars, and events. Authors Guild members have access to a vast range of special programs, seminars, and webinars focusing on all aspects of publishing, including finding an agent, getting published, building a social media platform, marketing your book, and understanding the business of writing. We offer information on virtual marketing, legal vetting of manuscripts, libel insurance, tax advice, publicity and promotion, career building, and much more.

4. Grants and fellowships. Members have access to comprehensive information on grants, fellowships, scholarships, awards and prizes, workshops, and retreats.

5. Access to the online community bulletin board. The Guild's "All Member Discussion Board" is a place where writers can connect with fellow authors, discuss their books, provide mutual support, seek advice, report scams, and complaints.

6. Websites. Members can create websites using the Guild's website platform, designed for authors, with staff assistance. Members may also host their websites through the Guild, register domain names and personalized email accounts

at low cost. Using our web services gives you access to a dedicated support team—it is like having a tech person on retainer.

7. Press credentials and cards. Working journalists who are Guild members can receive press credentials and cards through the International Federation of Journalists.

8. Health insurance advice. The Guild offers concierge services to members through LIG Solutions to help them locate the best health insurance. Members can also purchase supplemental dental, vision, critical care, RX, and other insurances through LIG.

9. Media liability insurance. Our partnership with Dingy/NSM Insurance Group allows members access to affordable media liability insurance.

10. Self-publishing support. Guild members have free access to The Authors Guild Guide to Self-Publishing, by the renowned expert Jane Friedman and available exclusively to Authors Guild members. A definitive guide to everything you need to know before embarking on self-publishing and marketing, the Guide is updated regularly. Frequent webinars and articles on self-publishing provide additional, targeted advice for the novice and the experienced. We also provide comprehensive information on choosing an e-publishing platform, hiring editors, designers, and publicists, working with retailers, registering ISBN's, and more.

11. Problems with Amazon? The Guild has direct, high-level access to Amazon executives. If you

have a problem with piracy on Amazon platforms, with Amazon's marketing, procedures, reviews, or if there are mistakes regarding your books, we will take your problem to the top.

12. Copyright registration.

The Guild's legal staff will assist you in registering your copyrights with the U.S. Copyright Office and will guide you through the small copyright claims process with the Copyright Claims Board (CCB).

13. Guides to literary agent agreements. Members have access to comprehensive guidance on finding an agent, navigating the mysteries of agency agreements, query letters, pitching, and much more.

14. Model Contracts. The Guild has drafted an annotated Model Trade Book Publishing Agreement, a Model Translation Agreement, and a Model Film/TV Option agreement—all of which provide concrete advice on how to negotiate contracts and what to expect.

15. Writers Marketplace.

Members can advertise their writing, editing, proofing, coaching and other writing related services to the general public and other members. Prospective clients can connect with members through this portal.

16. Back in print services.

The Guild has partnered with the Independent Publishers Group to offer ebook conversion and print-on-demand formatting and publication services, with distribution to all online retailers—Amazon, Apple, B&N, and Kobo.

17. Member profiles. If you wish, we will add you to our member profile list, an important resource consulted by industry professionals. Your listing can include a biography, list of works, pictures of book covers, services you offer, social media handles, contact information, and more.

18. We do good in this crazy world. Perhaps the most impor-

tant benefit is what the Guild does to support and defend American literary culture. The Authors Guild is the nation's oldest and largest professional organization of writers. Since our founding, we have served as the collective voice of American authors and have long supported the rich and diverse literary culture of our country. We promote the rights of all authors to write without interference or threat and to receive fair compensation. We advocate for authors on issues of copyright—a right enshrined in Article 1 of the Constitution. We fight for fair contracts. We work with Congress to make sure authors are treated fairly in tax law. We fight piracy. We push back against big tech companies like Google and the Internet Archive that expropriate content from authors and deliver it to consumers under the “information wants to be free” banner. We vigorously represent authors' concerns in Washington with a full-time lobbyist. When necessary, the Guild litigates against corporations and other malefactors who have trampled on the rights of authors or taken their work without permission, and we have won millions in compensation for authors. The Guild is a remarkably effective organization, and we accomplish a great deal with tight but well-deployed finances.

As an author, I know that most of us prefer to work on our own and are not enthusiastic joiners. By being a member of the Authors Guild, we have come together to create an influential and respected coalition of the country's authors and journalists that is 12,000 strong. That is real power. When we speak through the Authors Guild, our voice is heard, and we can accomplish great things. Thank you for being part of that.

—Douglas Preston
The Authors Guild

We Express Our Solidarity with Ukraine

The Authors Guild condemns Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of the sovereign nation of Ukraine. We express our support for Ukrainian authors and journalists and all the Ukrainian people fighting bravely against their Russian aggressors to retain the right for Ukraine to be a free and democratic nation.

FROM THE HOME OFFICE



Dear Members,

In our last issue of the *Bulletin*, which arrived in your mailboxes early last September, I cited the welcome good news of lowered COVID-19 numbers, progress in the areas of social justice and racial equality, and the robust health of the book industry as causes for optimism.

As I write today, more than six million people have died from COVID-19 worldwide; Russia has invaded the sovereign nation of Ukraine, slaughtering and displacing thousands; pandemic-related supply chain shortages persist; and gasoline prices and the cost of other essentials have reached all-time highs. In other words, for many of us, 2022 is shaping up to be as harrowing as the two previous years.

When it comes to personal challenges, one of the biggest for many working writers who are juggling multiple jobs is how to keep their heads above water financially. We know that money equals time, and time is what authors need to keep writing. That's why we've

dedicated a special section in this issue to practical advice on how to leverage your writing talents and earn additional income between writing your book or your journalistic assignments. We report on three different options: ghostwriting, teaching writing, and taking a plunge into the world of serial writing platforms, including Substack, Vella, Stary, and Radish, which pay authors to publish books in snack-size bites ([page 18](#)).

We hope you find the options and information of value, and we welcome your feedback about other successful methods or opportunities you've discovered to make a living as a writer.

This issue also explores another huge challenge facing American authors: Amazon's outsize influence on publishing. It is the elephant in the room in our cover story, which traces the history of book mergers in the United States, including the proposed acquisition of Simon&Schuster by Penguin Random House, and the adverse impact such mergers have had for authors (and readers) over the years (p. 8). What's still unknown is whether the Department of Justice's decision to sue to stop the merger—drawing heavily on arguments the Authors Guild shared with DOJ attorneys—will reverse the merger trend and compel the federal government to change antitrust rules to reflect the harmful effects of monopsonies, not just as it applies to PRH/S&S but also to Amazon's anticompetitive behavior, which has sparked the more recent mergers.

In our interview with Stanford University professor and author Mark McGurl, whose latest book, *Everything and Less: The Novel in the Age of Amazon*, made headlines late last year for its in-depth look at how Amazon has commoditized book writing, he argues that the overabundance of books that Amazon's tactics have fed is a two-edged sword: more people are writing and publishing books than ever before, but the easy availability of so many low-priced books devalues their worth not just economically but in terms of the meaning and importance of novels to society as a whole ([page 14](#)).

Advocating for antitrust reform and other ways to end the unfair practices of Amazon and other publishing companies remains a top priority for us in 2022. We will continue our campaign to fight book bans as well.

Looking ahead, we have some exciting events this year, from the Authors Guild Foundation's Gala (May 9) to the Guild's launch of [WIT: Words, Ideas, and Thinkers Festival](#), a free, three-day event in Lenox, Massachusetts, on September 22–24. And for sheer pleasure, in this issue we hear from Chaney Kwak, the author of the award-winning *The Passenger: How a Travel Writer Learned to Love Cruises & Other Lies from a Sinking Ship*, writing about his early COVID wanderings.

We also look forward to launching an updated version of our website this summer, a project that you helped to shape by responding in large numbers to our

survey. We are working on improving organization, making the site easier to navigate, and significantly upgrading member websites, so your sites and your work can be more easily discovered online.

We continue to fight for your rights and to provide you with the

tools and community you need, including this issue of the *Bulletin*, to become the successful protagonist of your own life story.

—Mary Rasenberger
CEO

Ways to Give to the Authors Guild Foundation

If you love literature, please help us support the talented, dedicated authors who create it. The Authors Guild Foundation is the sole group of its kind dedicated to empowering all U.S. authors. We fight for authors' rights and equip them with knowledge of the business to ensure that a rich, diverse body of literature can flourish in the United States.

A donation of any amount is meaningful, and there are creative ways to support the Authors Guild Foundation if you are not in a position to give today.

* **Make a Donation**

Your gift will support our advocacy work on behalf of all authors, our public educational programs, and our efforts to maintain a sustainable publishing ecosystem at a time when authors' rights, copyrights, free expression, and creative content are being challenged on so many fronts, and few authors are able to support their families anymore on writing alone. To donate now, go to authorsguild.org/donate. The Authors Guild Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

For information about giving from a donor-advised fund, donating stocks, and other forms of philanthropy, please contact us.

* **Join the Authors Guild Foundation Giving Society**

The AGF Giving Society was created to give appropriate recognition to those special friends who contribute at the highest levels

to the Foundation. The importance of annual giving is critical to the mission and ongoing operations of the Authors Guild. Such support advances our ability to advocate for writers, protect creative freedom, and promote a robust and diverse literary culture in America. To join today or to learn more about the benefits of AGF Giving Society membership, visit authorsguild.org/the-foundation/agf-giving-society.

* **Make a Monthly Gift**

To sustain our ongoing efforts, select a "Recurring" gift to automatically renew your gift on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis with an end date of your choosing. Pledge a monthly gift today.

* **Join the Authors Legacy Society**

Be remembered as a champion of literature by joining the Authors Legacy Society. Whether it is naming the Authors Guild Foundation as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or gifting other liquid or non-liquid assets, we encourage you to consult with your financial advisor to discuss the options.

* **Bequeath a Copyright**

Authors can leave the copyrights to their works to the Authors Guild Foundation, allowing us to manage all or part of your literary estate. We actively seek to re-publish and license film rights to the works we manage, so your literary legacy can live on while benefiting our charitable work. Learn more about the Authors Legacy Society Estate Management program.

* **Join Our Newsletter**

Stay updated on industry news and advocacy efforts by receiving the Authors Guild Newsletter via email, and share our news and events with writers and readers who may be interested!

The Great Merging: A Short History of Consolidation in the American Publishing Industry

In late 2020, Bertelsmann, the parent company of Penguin Random House (“PRH”), the world’s largest trade publisher, announced that it intended to acquire its competitor Simon & Schuster (“S&S”). As we’ll see, this move isn’t an isolated case, but rather the apogee of a pattern of consolidation that’s been gaining momentum since the 1960s.

The merger would create a company with more U.S. revenue than the next three largest publishers in the U.S.—HarperCollins, Hachette, and Macmillan—combined, leaving authors with fewer potential buyers competing for their books, thus lowering advances across the board and likely adding fuel to a highly consolidated Big Four’s need for bestsellers, at the expense of those smaller, riskier titles that foment debate and move the culture forward.

When the PRH acquisition was proposed, it was met with resistance from many industry observers. The Guild was quick to respond, pointing out in a call for Department of Justice antitrust intervention, that “the history of publishing consolidation has also taught us that authors are further hurt by such mergers due to editorial layoffs, canceling of contracts, a reduction in diversity among authors and ideas, a more conservative approach to risk-taking, and fewer imprints under which an author may publish.” This was not a new position for us. For many years, we’ve argued to the DOJ and FTC that consumers are harmed when authors’ incomes decline, driving authors to other work and consequently writing less or not at all.

But in a remarkable turn of events, the DOJ heeded our call this time and, on November 2, 2021, filed a complaint in the district court of the District of Columbia to block PRH’s acquisition of S&S, arguing that such a merger, if allowed to proceed, would effectively create a monopsony harmful to working authors. The intervention was remarkable because the government’s antitrust forces have for decades enforced a “consumer-welfare” standard made prominent by the conservative jurist Robert Bork in his 1978 book *The Antitrust Paradox*, which holds that antitrust scrutiny should focus on whether the consumer is being harmed by corporate action. It was under this standard that the DOJ last intervened in the publishing industry in the early 2010s, pursuing a collusion case (*U.S. v. Apple, Inc. et al.*) against Apple and the major publishers—S&S and Penguin among them—for conspiring to raise e-book prices to protect themselves against Amazon’s loss-leader pricing model.

**THE DOJ ACTION SHOWED
A REALIZATION THAT
“AUTHORS ARE FACING THE
SAME IMBALANCE OF POWER
THAT HAS HELD DOWN
WAGES FOR COMPUTER
ENGINEERS IN SILICON
VALLEY AND FOR WORKERS
WHO CUT CHICKENS INTO
PIECES.”**

— BINYAMIN APPELBAUM

So to see the DOJ intervening, this time in aid of authors, is something to be celebrated. The complaint demonstrated an understanding of the value authors provide to consumers, as well as to the publishing industry and democracy at large. Further, it proved the importance of advances in providing authors with the necessary time and resources to develop quality books, so many of which transform how we see the world and interact with others.

As *New York Times* opinion editor Binyamin Appelbaum wrote, the DOJ action showed a realization that “authors are facing the same imbalance of power that has held down wages for computer engineers in Silicon Valley and for workers who cut chickens into pieces.”

As for the monolithic company that would be formed by the proposed merger, we really shouldn’t be surprised. Consolidation in the publishing industry is nothing new; the industry has been on a ceaseless march toward fewer, bigger companies for over half a century. Publishing is a business, after all, and we live in a land of free

**RANDOM HOUSE ITSELF . . .
WAS THE FRUIT OF AN
ACQUISITION, WHEN IN 1925
BENNETT CERF AND DONALD
KLOPFER BOUGHT RIGHTS
TO BONI & LIVERIGHT'S
MODERN LIBRARY LIST, AN
INEXPENSIVE COLLECTION
OF BACKLIST TITLES, AND
FOUNDED RANDOM HOUSE
TWO YEARS LATER.**

trade. So we thought we'd take a look back at the history of publishing industry consolidation and see how we arrived at this moment.

The culture of consolidation has been with us for the better part of a century. The force gathered steam in the 1960s, but it began well before that. Random House itself, for example, was the fruit of an acquisition, when in 1925 Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer bought rights to Boni & Liveright's Modern Library list, an inexpensive collection of backlist titles, and founded Random House two years later. Interestingly, almost a century later, the acquisition of a valuable backlist is seen by some industry observers as a prime motivating force for consolidation. Publishing industry observer Mike Shatzkin, for example, points to the S&S backlist as one of the major attractions for PRH's intended acquisition, observing that "the new online book marketing environment could rediscover and reinvigorate old books just as well as new obscure ones. . . the more titles you have the more likely it is that tomorrow's news or cultural event will raise the profile of something on your backlist."

A look at the *Bulletin* archives shows that consolidation among publishers is an issue that has motivated our advocacy for decades. The headline above the lead item in the April–June 1978 issue of the *Bulletin* reads: "Senator Kennedy Hears Anti-Merger Testimony from Guild Officials." The concern there? A threatened takeover of Houghton Mifflin by Western Pacific Industries. As Irwin Karp, then counsel for the Guild, put it in testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly, "[t]he irony is we have now come to the point where a company like Houghton Mifflin, which was a major independent kind of publisher, is threatened by a takeover by a conglomerate that owns a railroad it is preparing to dump, and earning through this transaction a huge tax loss which it wants to have income to shelter against." This sentiment highlights a major theme running throughout the commentary surrounding decades of publishing industry mergers: the inherent tension between culture and commerce.

This tension manifests itself in a question asked throughout the decades of consolidation: Is the publishing industry somehow different from other industries, and deserving of special treatment? Should the same rules be applied to an industry that serves as a custodian of public discourse as to other industries, such as producers of steam and steel—or, for that matter, cable television? In the 1978 Senate session, novelist and Guild member Herman Wouk left no doubt about his position on the matter, stating for the record that "publishing is not like other industries, in which you basically put in dollars to take out dollars. I know of no other industry, Senator, that has the special protection of the Constitution of the United States. Our founding fathers cared enough about the freedom of the press to put it into the Bill of Rights." After nearly two decades of increasing consolidation in the industry, anxieties were high.

The pattern had begun in earnest in the 1960s, when, as *The New York Times* reported in an article in 1987,

publishing houses attracted a number of electronics giants, including RCA, which

bought Random House; CBS, which bought Henry Holt, and I.T.T., which bought Howard Sams, the parent company of Bobbs-Merrill. They hoped to produce “teaching machines” from the marriage of their technical expertise and the publishers’ editorial know-how, but their attempts ended in disappointment. In the case of Bobbs-Merrill, one of the few non-New York publishing houses, its lists were pared down, its corporate owners prohibited it from publishing fiction, and finally shut it down altogether.

During this period of consolidation, the corporate structure of the major book publishing houses shifted from closely held independent firms to privately and publicly held independent companies, and from there to publishers owned by other large companies, with a variety of holdings. A 1972 study by EB Christianson found that 18 percent of the mergers in the 1958–1970 period were with companies engaged in other fields: magazine or newspaper publishing, broadcasting, and electronics.

By 1970, the pattern had drawn the attention of *Businessweek*, which wrote of an “epidemic” of publishing mergers: “With the big fish swallowing the little fish, the book business is becoming increasingly competitive and brutal. It is evolving into an industry of giants and dwarfs with middle-size companies a vanishing species. Financially oriented executives are taking over where traditionalist genteel editors used to hold sway.”

The shift from literary culture to business culture is a point echoed by former Guild president John Brooks in his 1978 Senate testimony:

Previously, the man you dealt with, the publisher himself or his editor, was what I would call a book man. He had mixed motives. The discipline of profit was important to him. He needed to make money. But he was balancing that motive with literary, artistic, and social values. In other words, in the terms of [Thorstein] Veblen, of whom Herman Wouk spoke, he had the

A 1972 STUDY BY EB CHRISTIANSON FOUND THAT 18 PERCENT OF THE MERGERS IN THE 1958–1970 PERIOD WERE WITH COMPANIES ENGAGED IN OTHER FIELDS: MAGAZINE OR NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING, BROADCASTING, AND ELECTRONICS.

pecuniary function separated from the workmanship function, and was keeping them in balance. He actually worked on your book. He edited it, sometimes, perhaps, more than you wanted him to, but he had a sincere interest in the literary value as well as the potential for profit.

What has happened now is that one finds oneself faced with what is called an acquisition editor. What is an acquisition editor? He is a book broker, as nearly as I can make out. His job is to find a book project that he believes will make money, to get the book done, and then to send it to the press, often without his having read it. I know first-hand that that is sometimes the case. In other words, he, or his department, are a profit center competing with other profit centers within a large firm of which they are a part.

In the very same issue of the *Bulletin* that reproduced that transcript, we find an excerpt from an award speech by the poet and Guild member Archibald MacLeish, inveighing against

IN 1978, THE FIVE LARGEST PUBLISHERS ACCOUNTED FOR LESS THAN ONE-THIRD OF ALL TRADE BOOK SALES.

the contemporary practise [sic] by which certain corporations having no connection with literature, no knowledge of literature, no interest in it, have begun to acquire publishing houses, not to enter publishing but to “diversify their investments.” These are the conglomerates, corporate carnivores conceived by a new breed of corporate manipulators who believe that if the greatest possible number of ways of making money can be crammed into a single corporate fist the old dream which eluded the manipulators of the nineteen twenties, the dream of permanent prosperity, can be achieved.

Such a jeremiad, keep in mind, was delivered in 1978. In that year, the five largest publishers accounted for less than one-third of all trade book sales, and the four largest book publishing chains accounted for less than 12 percent of combined trade book sales. Today, by contrast, book publishing is dominated by five corporations, with Bertelsmann already in a preeminent position, with U.S. sales twice those of the next largest publisher, HarperCollins.

While 1978 represented the forceful beginning of the Guild’s advocacy against consolidation in the book trade, we sounded the alarm again in the late 1980s, when, faced with the possibility of a Harper & Row takeover, Guild president Robert Massey told the *Times* that, “almost every time a takeover happens, the company that’s acquired disappears or its list is cut way back, further di-

minishing the opportunities available to authors to have their work published.”

The trend continued, according to industry observer David Lamb, with waves of consolidation led by “diversified media companies (1980s), financial buyers (1990s–2000s), and, in the current market, primarily other book publishers.”

The late 1990s gave us even more consolidation, when Bertelsmann bought Random House and merged it with Bantam Doubleday Dell, and HarperCollins acquired Morrow/Avon. This led Jim Milliot of *Publishers Weekly* to write in 2001 that “after years of mergers, the landscape of the book publishing industry has never been so top heavy. In each of the three major publishing segments—trade, educational and professional—three companies dominate their respective categories and each has revenues that are well above their fourth-place competitors.”

Mergers and acquisitions remained steady throughout the 2000s, and by the 2009–2013 period, according to Lamb’s 2020 study, *Trends in U.S. Trade Book Publisher Mergers and Acquisitions*,¹ there was an average of “one dozen transactions per year, even as the bankruptcy of chain retailer Borders Group and the introduction of ebooks complicated the landscape.”

The year 2013 brought a blockbuster merger and perhaps the closest analogue to PRH’s proposed acquisition of S&S, when Random House acquired Penguin, creating the behemoth that is PRH today. With that move, the fear of layoffs and imprint shuttering came to fruition, though perhaps under the radar. “There were more merger-related layoffs than media coverage suggested,” according to a *New Republic* report, “and PRH . . . shuttered imprints, particularly adventurous literary ones like Spiegel & Grau and Blue Rider—but they all happened so slowly that few connected them to the merger itself.”

Of the period from 2014 to 2019, Lamb observes that while acquisitions continued among the Big Five, they also flourished among midsize

¹ David Lamb, “Trends in U.S. Trade Book Publisher Mergers and Acquisitions,” *Publishing Research Quarterly* 36 (2020): 323–334.

publishers. “Among major publishers that have been active acquirers—notably Penguin Random House and Hachette,” he wrote, “are mid-sized publishers that have grown concertedly through acquisition. Leading this cohort is the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, which completed ten acquisitions, including that of Globe Pequot Press. Other active mid-size acquirers have been Start Media, Chicago Review Press, Turner Publishing Company, and Sourcebooks.” Perhaps the most telling acquisition from this period was HarperCollins’s 2014 purchase of Harlequin. And the temperature hasn’t cooled since 2019. Last year saw two blockbuster deals: in May 2021, HarperCollins bought the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt trade division for \$349 million, and Hachette completed a \$240 million purchase of Workman in September 2021.

Lamb’s study concludes by predicting that “the recent high level of M&A activity in U.S. trade publishing will persist.” It’s likely that the DOJ’s antitrust scrutiny won’t affect this kind of activity throughout the market, but could potentially chill consolidation among the current Big Five—which would in itself be a major win for authors, given the top-heavy nature of the business.

As we’ve said before, the book publishing industry plays a uniquely important role in protecting democratic freedoms of speech and expression, and thus must be uniquely protected. We welcome the DOJ’s recognition that fair competition in this crucial industry must be maintained, but we also recognize that much recent industry consolidation is attributable to the outsize dominance of Amazon as a retailer, distributor, and publisher—and if similar antitrust scrutiny isn’t brought to Amazon’s machinations in the book world, scrutiny of the PRH-S&S merger may be of little long-term effect. **AG**

WIT: Words, Ideas, and Thinkers Festival

September 22–24
Shakespeare & Company
Lenox, MA

The Authors Guild Foundation is excited to host our inaugural WIT: Words, Ideas, and Thinkers Festival this September at Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts. WIT means to expand our understanding of critical issues, celebrate America’s literary culture, and amplify new voices and perspectives. It is free and open to the public so everyone can participate in the dialogue without barriers.

For our inaugural event, we will explore the theme “Reimagining America” through a series of thought-provoking conversations, presentations, panels, and speeches. Novelists, playwrights, journalists, scientists, and performing artists will discuss topics such as creating identity, reexamining history, how the arts accelerate social movements, the impacts of tech and artificial intelligence, and visions for our future. Festival attendees will have the opportunity to interact with speakers in Q&A sessions, book signings, and receptions. Dinners with speakers and additional special guests will be available for ticketed purchase.

For details, visit authorsguild.org/the-foundation/wit-festival.

Authors Guild Foundation Giving Society members can register early for the festival and individual sessions, receive preferential seating, and can purchase tickets in advance for our hosted dinners. To learn more and become a member, visit authorsguild.org/the-foundation/agf-giving-society.

WHAT AMAZON HAS DONE TO BOOKS

Q&A with Mark McGurl, PhD

Interview by
Sandi Sonnenfeld

Mark McGurl is the Albert Guérard Professor of Literature at Stanford University, the author of *The Novel Art: Elevations of American Fiction after Henry James* and *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing*, for which he received the 2011 Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism. He received his BA from Harvard University and a PhD in comparative literature from Johns Hopkins University. His most recent book, *Everything and Less: The Novel in the Age of Amazon*, (Verso, October 2021), has triggered widespread interest and debate, including reviews and articles in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. We thank Professor McGurl for taking the time to talk with us about his book and its significance for Guild members and all authors.

AG: What was your impetus for writing *Everything and Less*, and how do you think literature's role and influence have changed because of Amazon?

MM: I come from a school of literary criticism that takes the material conditions of culture as seriously as possible. What kinds of institutional supports need to be in place before literary history can even begin? One day, as I was opening yet another Amazon box, it occurred to me that while we weren't looking, Amazon had become one of those institutional supports, surely among the most important of them all. It wants to be *the* platform of contemporary literary life.

If we use Amazon as an interpretive key, we see literature being subsumed into the larger world of everyday commodities. From that perspective, literature looks perhaps a little less glamorous or noble than we would like, but also like something millions of us need to get by. It is an unsettling trade-off.

AG: Can you talk about what you mean by the "contemporary genre system," which you say categorizes individual works of fiction as iterations of a generic kind?

MM: For Amazon, all fiction is genre fiction in the simple sense that different kinds of fiction appeal to different kinds of readers, including so-called literary fiction. Genre is a version, within literature, of the broader phenomenon of market segmentation. The number of distinct genre categories recognized by Amazon is truly amazing. There are literally thousands of them. And yet, if you step back, you start to see broader patterns emerging. One of the most important concepts I noted is how gender plays a role in the types of genres readers are drawn to—with, for instance, romance skewing starkly toward a female readership and things like the military thriller skewing toward the male. Literary fiction is less visibly marked in this way.

AG: In your earlier book, *The Program Era*, you focused on the role that MFA creative writing programs have had in shaping contemporary fiction, with an emphasis on craft and mentoring. In *Everything and Less*, Amazon has turned all that on its head. Where does that leave craft in the evolution of American fiction?

MM: Creative writing programs continue to thrive! And books themselves, always the most important teachers, continue to show new generations of writers how to ply their craft. For Amazon, however, what matters most are questions of marketing and sales. It wants to collapse the distinction between artistic success and market success. As a college teacher, this disturbs me, of course, since market value is not what I am asking my students to assess in the classroom. But out in the wilds of popular literary consumption, matters of craft as I might measure them often take a back seat to other values, above all to the familiar pleasures we seek in genre fiction, with its emphasis on plot.

AG: Literary critics often classify Western literature written after WWII as postmodern. Your subtitle, “The Novel in the Age of Amazon,” suggests that you believe postmodernism is dead. If so, can you define events or specific books that have shifted us away from postmodernism?

MM: Postmodernism means so many different things. If by “postmodern” we refer to a set of rela-



WHAT MATTERS MOST TO AMAZON ARE QUESTIONS OF MARKETING AND SALES. IT WANTS TO COLLAPSE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ARTISTIC SUCCESS AND MARKET SUCCESS.
—MARK MCGURL

tively experimental and difficult writers who came to prominence in the 1960s—Thomas Pynchon, for instance—then I think we have moved well past that moment into something else. There is so little patience for experimentalism and difficulty in the mainstream literary market today. The idea that the reader should have to work for her pleasure seems an increasingly strange one. If, instead, as some theorists would say, postmodernism means exactly this assimilation of literature to the law of easy consumption and entertainment value, then we have never been more postmodern. It’s a terminological thicket that I mostly stay out of.

AG: Amazon promotes a populist message about how it is eliminating “elite literary gatekeepers” who prevent riskier works or those from diverse

A SERIES OF TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE BOOK BUSINESS BEGINNING EVEN BEFORE THE RISE OF AMAZON HAVE PUT TREMENDOUS PRESSURE ON AUTHORS AND MADE IT MORE DIFFICULT THAN EVER TO MAKE A LIVING FROM WRITING. THE ADVENT OF AMAZON IS JUST THE LATEST STAGE IN THAT PROCESS, INAUGURATING A NEW ERA OF HYPERABUNDANCE, OR EVEN SURPLUS. IT HAS CREATED A WHOLE NEW CHANNEL FOR THE SALE OF BOOKS, BUT IF IT STARTS TO SEEM NORMAL THAT THOSE BOOKS SHOULD BE PRICED AT \$2.99, THEN WE HAVE A PROBLEM.

backgrounds from being published. But you also write about the “unspeakable conventionality” of novels self-published through Kindle Direct Publishing. What do you think is needed for truly unique voices or experimental works to get noticed, through Amazon or a traditional publisher?

MM: In theory, you could go ahead and publish something truly wildly experimental via Kindle

Direct Publishing right now. And there are no barriers, visible ones at least, to any person of any kind publishing their work by those means. The trickier question is how you would get people to read those works and take them seriously. What Amazon has taught us is that the technical fact of publication is only half the battle, maybe not even half. Mainstream publishing has substantial resources for marketing. So-called indie writers market their works, too, but the most important way they do so is by way of generic identifiability: “If you liked that best-selling romance novel, you might like the one I wrote too. The pleasures they offer are almost identical.”

AG: What, if anything, surprised you about your research into the genre novels published through KDP?

MM: Just the sheer energy of the human imagination at work. The staggering scale of the popular desire to live a literary life, either as a writer or reader. It’s all so huge and terrifying and wonderful.

AG: Writers like Margaret Atwood, Ursula Le Guin, Neil Gaiman, and Walter Mosley have elevated “genre” fiction to great literature. If a reader went to a librarian and asked her to recommend a well-crafted sci-fi novel with a strong female protagonist, there’s a good chance that the librarian would indeed recommend a book by Le Guin. Amazon’s algorithms do not recommend books to readers in that way. Can you explain how their system works and why you think Amazon views all books equally regardless of the quality of the writing and production value?

MM: Amazon’s recommendation algorithms have an interesting history. My understanding is that, once upon a time, customers were grouped into presumed social types and that recommendations were made on that basis. You are the kind of person who would read X. Now the recommendations are made by way of associations between products: you bought novel Y, and that is associated with the purchase of novel Z. What’s lost in either case is the human touch. There is no longer a knowledgeable person leading you to what you want, but even more importantly, to what you

didn't know you wanted. I hate algorithms that steep me in my own taste profile! I want to evolve! But I guess they work to move the product.

AG: In the chapter "Surplus Fiction," you write that "to say that the specter of commoditization hangs over contemporary literature is, of course, to admit that, as a specter, it is not quite yet manifest." For most Authors Guild members, the commoditization of books has been manifest for a long time, and [author incomes continue to fall](#). What do you think this says about the survival of professional authors and the future of American literature?

MM: This is the crucial question for the profession of authorship going forward. Books will probably never be fully commoditized in the sense that the author's identity, or brand, will continue to distinguish one work from another. With truly commoditized commodities, you don't care who made something as long as it does the job as inexpensively as possible. And yet, as most of your members don't need to be told, a series of transformations in the book business—beginning even before the rise of Amazon—have put tremendous pressure on authors and made it more difficult than ever to make a living from writing. The advent of Amazon is just the latest stage in that process, inaugurating a new era of hyperabundance, or even surplus. It has created a whole new channel for the sale of books, but if it starts to seem normal that those books should be priced at \$2.99, then we have a problem. Behind the romance of the starving artist is the reality that a thriving literary culture requires that writers be paid enough to put food on the table. **AG**

Sandi Sonnenfeld is a published fiction and creative nonfiction writer. With an MFA in fiction writing from the University of Washington, Sonnenfeld has taught fiction and memoir writing as an adjunct college instructor and through public libraries.

The Authors Guild Foundation Gala

Join us Monday, May 9, at 8 pm EST for the 30th Annual Authors Guild Foundation Gala! We are excited to honor David and Michelle Baldacci for their support of literacy initiatives and Amanda Gorman for inspiring change through literature. Thanks to our generous sponsors, this virtual celebration is free and open to the public!

The Authors Guild Foundation's mission is to sustain the literary life of our country through education and advocacy. We believe that an abundance of free expression is essential to our democracy, and can only be achieved by protecting authors' constitutional and moral rights to benefit from their work. The Authors Guild Foundation is the sole group of its kind dedicated to empowering all U.S. authors.

To attend, register at authorsguild.org/the-foundation/authors-guild-gala.

Making a Living Between Book Contracts

It's a rare published author whose book contract ensures the kind of payout that can cover the rent through the next book's advance, should such a golden prospect even be in the offing. And if you are not among those with the good luck to have a fully employed partner, a generous aunt, uncle, parent or sibling backing you up, you need

a plan: a fulltime job, a part time job, a gig within your sphere of competence that will leave you the time and spirit to keep writing.

We examined three options that require authors' specific talents, noting their upsides and downsides, their potential income, and the possibility that they might feed your writing and your imagination.

GHOSTWRITING BY THE LIGHT OF DAY

A writer's side gig, once defined by contracts of anonymity, has gone public, and is more competitive than ever.

by Barbara DeMarco-Barrett

I was halfway through *Shoe Dog: A Memoir by the Creator of Nike* by Phil Knight when I thought, “How did a man who’s been a businessman his entire life write such a gripping memoir?” The book had a solid structure, great writing, and it had me—someone not the least bit interested in Phil Knight or Nike’s origins—turning the page, and the next page, and the next. (I facilitate a leadership book group and this was that month’s read.) And then it occurred to me: there had to be a ghostwriter involved.

Of course there was. J. R. Moehringer, author of one of my favorite memoirs, *The Tender Bar*, (released as a film in 2021), was the guy. I had Moehringer on my radio show when *The Tender Bar* came out, and I loved his writing. This had to be why I loved *Shoe Dog*: because Moehringer wrote it.

I’d been wondering where he’d been, and when his next book would be coming out. It turns out he’d been busy ghostwriting and, rumor has it, commanding seven figures for his work. He also wrote Andre Agassi’s memoir, *Open*, and is working with Prince Harry on his memoir, to be released this year.

Back in 2008, in *US News and World Report*, career coach Marty Nemko said ghostwriting would be a lucrative career for writers in the twenty-first century. Was he psychic?

Some years back I thought ghostwriting might be the sort of work I’d like. It paid fairly well, and it was writing, so what’s not to like?

I ghostwrote a couple of fitness books and a book proposal for a motivational speaker’s memoir, but the gig wasn’t for me. It paid well, but the back and forth with the client became annoying. Not an attribute of a successful collaborator, as ghosts are often called these days. I turned down subsequent projects—wisely, I’m sure.

The Upside

Those who find happiness, if not success, as collaborators enjoy getting close to the author, tak-

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—ERICA MOROZ**

ing on their persona, and don’t mind putting their own stories and voice aside.

“I find it genuinely fun and interesting to be a chameleon and take on someone else’s voice,” says Erica Moroz, a *New York Times* best-selling ghostwriter. “Also, I think it’s probably just less personal to not have my name attached to writing. There’s something freeing about being anonymous.”

“People’s lives are fascinating,” says author Skip Press, who has collaborated on and off since the mid-1990s, “and it’s great to learn how they think and *what* they think. One story Patti Page wouldn’t let me put in her book was about a date she had with Frank Sinatra when they were both playing Vegas and single. It was a very funny story, but she was afraid Frank’s widow would be offended. It was totally innocent, but that’s what Patti wanted.”

You should also be adept at getting in close. “It’s a level of intimacy to get inside people’s words, meanings, emotions,” says Pamela Johnson, a multimedia journalist and former senior editor at *Elle* magazine.

Empathy is another aspect of ghostwriting. Jill Amadio, who has collaborated on 18 books so far, says she was surprised in an unexpected way. “I found I empathized so deeply with clients I often found myself weeping with them as they recalled sad moments, especially with the victim of a crime for whom I wrote a book. When we finished it, the client declared he had no wish to publish; our interviews had become a catharsis. He’d gotten the crime against him, a childhood event, off his chest, told someone about it—me—and could now go forward with more confidence.”

Michael Coffino, novelist, writing coach, freelance editor, and a ghost collaborator since 2015, says the best thing about the work, for both client and author, is the storytelling, “the opportunity to give voice to the experiences of the client and how each project refines and improves my writing and my coaching skills, and in addition, requires introspection for personal growth.”

When asked what the best thing about collaborating is, Claudia Suzanne, who’s been in the game for more than three decades and has been dubbed the godmother of ghostwriting, says, “Only everything! The constant learning, the creative flexing, the author interaction, the satisfaction of bringing a first draft up to an industry-standard second draft, the fun of musical line editing, the money.”

Robert W. Stock, who spent 29 years as an editor, writer, and columnist with *The New York Times*, agrees but adds: “The best thing about ghostwriting? It pays the bills.”

Surprises

The surprises that come through collaborating run the gamut from the wondrous to the depressing. Suzanne, who teaches in the Ghostwriting Professional Designation Program at California State University Long Beach, says, “After thirty-plus years and two hundred-plus titles, I can honestly say I still learn something new from every book and every author.”

Vanessa McGrady, journalist and author of the memoir *Rock Needs River*, says, “I was surprised by how easily I let go of the work once I fin-

ish it. I never really look back at it.” She goes on to say new ghostwriters might be surprised by “how little your opinion actually matters. You have to try to live in someone else’s mind for a while.”

Johnson says, “You’ve got to be the other person’s twin and sublimate how you would say it or do it. You take the back seat.”

Another thing collaborators must deal with often are clients who seek “bestsellerdom.” “Your subject might fully believe that you will somehow magically write a bestseller for them while they put in little work personally,” says Press. “In contrast, the best-selling biography of Steve Jobs was written only after Jobs did forty interviews with Walter Isaacson.”

The Downside

While the amount of money you can potentially earn ghostwriting is a major draw, dealing with clients who won’t pay or never get past the starting gate is something collaborators often have to contend with.

Coffino says he’s been surprised by “how difficult it is for prospective clients to pull the trigger on moving forward, whether for financial or personal reasons. It’s a major undertaking, and I have lost several clients to inertia.” He also hates “watching clients reject advice you know will improve the project. . . . It’s hard sometimes to see them insist on a path you know won’t yield results.”

Suzanne says the worst thing is “not being able to help someone because they cannot get out of their own way on the path to success.”

For Stock, “The whole ghosting enterprise is built on presenting what you have written as the work of someone else, misleading the work’s readers. Sometimes that fact is made clear, as when the ghost is given a coauthor or ‘with’ listing on the cover of a book. Sometimes the understanding is implicit, as when the putative author is an actor, sports star, or politician who is unlikely to have written the book alone. Otherwise, the reader is misled.”

Press, too, finds that immersing himself in other people’s stories can be a problem. “I’m so

Tips from a Pro

Keep the following in mind, according to Claudia Suzanne (ghostwritingcentral.com):

Set your fee in accordance with your book-ghostwriting expertise, because what you charge and how you charge it essentially fixes your standing in the author’s eyes. Once set, it cannot be altered. Keep these Ghostwriting Psych 101 points in mind:

- * To effectively manage any book project, you must be in either the **one-up or at least level position** in the client-writer relationship.
- * Your writing credentials, academic background, personal achievements, and other writing services **do not count** toward book-ghostwriting expertise; rather, they position you as a freelancer seeking work. The following practices subliminally position you as a freelancer:
- * Using a rate sheet.
- * Charging by the hour or page subliminally positions you as a freelancer.
- * Quoting a fee without taking the time to consider the project subliminally positions you as a freelancer.
- * Charging below industry standards subliminally positions you as a freelancer.
- * Freelancers are considered work-for-hire/at-will employees in most states and are thus **automatically in the one-down position** in any client-writer relationship.

**“YOU’VE GOT TO BE THE
OTHER PERSON’S TWIN
AND SUBLIMATE HOW YOU
WOULD SAY IT OR DO IT.
YOU TAKE THE BACK SEAT.”
— PAMELA JOHNSON**

interested in people and their stories I can get too invested in writing their stories and lose track of my own work.”

“Often enough the nominal author will either have little to do with the project or be totally lovely to work with,” says Moroz. “A couple of times, the nominal author has been somewhat challenging to work with. For example, insisting on adding things that I strongly believed would compromise the text—or being overly mediated by their managers/publicity teams/self-image.”

What to Charge

As longform journalism dries up and publishers consolidate, putting editors out of work and reducing the chances for midlist authors to get a contract, the ghosting field has grown increasingly competitive. Ghostwriters are in high demand and can command huge fees. The writers I spoke with said the best collaborators can command anywhere from \$75,000 to \$100,000—or more—for a memoir or novel, and successful published authors who are also experienced ghostwriters often charge between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Midtier collaborators may not garner quite that much money, but it’s up there, and \$30,000 for most other books sounds about average. Ghostwriters who write fast say they can handle two book proj-

ects a year, and that’s not a bad income for a writer, especially those who have other income streams.

Madeleine Morel, a literary agent who represents only ghostwriters, says pay depends on the genre. “Business books pay more than diet books. The fee for writing a diet book can start as low as \$30,000, rising to maybe \$65,000. Of course, there are high-profile health/diet books that pay more. On the other hand, the fee for writing a business book for one of the Big Five starts at around \$75,000 and can often top out with a healthy six figures.”

“Ghostwriting has become so competitive,” Morel adds. “There’s a ton of work out there, but there are more writers looking to fulfill that work.” Her advice: “Spend a few thousand dollars on a professional website rather than a homemade one. Include quotes from people with whom you’ve worked: agents, authors, et cetera. Also, take out a paying subscription to Publishers Marketplace. Every day you’ll see what kinds of agents are selling what kinds of books to editors. You can find a contact, get the personal emails to agents and editors out there. You never know when they’re looking for a writer. Matching ghostwriters with authors is a bit like blind dating.”

“Ghostwriters notoriously get paid little for their work,” says McGrady. “Honestly, if someone can afford a ghostwriter, it’s worth it to fight them for what you think you deserve—especially if it’s a project you *know* will do well. Get in on those royalties if you can . . . even if it means taking a little less up front.”

Payment levels depend on the experience and reputation of the ghostwriter. Someone like Moehringer, with a best-selling book of his own and a track record of successful books for his clients, can demand top dollar. The new kid on the block, not so much.

“It’s tempting to lowball to get jobs, and while that might make some sense in the early goings, eventually it becomes bad business,” says Coffino, who wishes he’d known how to structure a fair fee before he got into ghostwriting. “My base financial model is a two-tier structure: one, a flat fee for a set number of words, paid in monthly installments

over the projected life of the project; two, an additional amount for any additional words. . . . And while I have done so in the past, I'm disinclined to take upside in lieu of certain payment. Too speculative in most cases."

Contracts

As in all business transactions, a good contract helps you avoid nonpayment mishaps, but negotiating a price can be a sticky enterprise. Clients often want you to give them a dollar amount up front. Even with a contract, be prepared for flaky clients. The best of contracts won't help you if you cannot afford to or don't want to sue, so be sure to do some due diligence on the potential client and send the contract to the Authors Guild legal team for review before signing.

"I signed a contract with a billionaire's wife to help her do a how-to book," says Stock. "I researched her subject and spent time talking it over with her. I submitted my first invoice, for \$600, and payment never arrived. It took weeks of hectoring and third-party intervention before she came across, claiming that she had never received my emails and phone messages. She also mentioned that she was very busy on other matters and was rethinking the whole project. We haven't had any further conversation."

Morel, who gets 80 percent of her business from other literary agents and 20 percent from publishers, does collaboration agreements between her writers' and authors' agents. She says ghostwriters should insist on having the right to put the project on their résumé. And, she says, if you don't have an agent involved, be careful with the payout.

"Frontload the payment," she says. "Have incremental payments. For every three chapters, the writer gets another payment. If worse comes to worse and the client decides not to proceed with the book, and as a result you don't receive your final payment, you've at least been paid to date."

She goes on to caution ghostwriters to never sign a deal where someone wants to share the

"BUSINESS BOOKS PAY MORE THAN DIET BOOKS. THE FEE FOR WRITING A DIET BOOK CAN START AS LOW AS \$30,000, RISING TO MAYBE \$65,000. . . . ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FEE FOR WRITING A BUSINESS BOOK FOR ONE OF THE BIG FIVE STARTS AT AROUND \$75,000 AND CAN OFTEN TOP OUT WITH A HEALTHY SIX FIGURES."
— MADELEINE MOREL

back end instead of paying an up-front fee because "there's never a back end, or almost never."

The other reason not to take payment on the backend? People die.

Suzanne was writing a book for a CEO of a huge corporation that had agents and editors salivating when her client died.

"Logic dictates that after an appropriate span of time, I'd write up that critical last chapter so the book could be published posthumously," says Suzanne.

Because of her confidentiality agreement with the client, she can't say what happened next, except that there was "no last chapter. No posthumous publication. No legacy book for a remarkable man who affected, and continues to affect, millions of people with his decent business practices, diversity hiring mandates, and exemplary company culture." **AG**

TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING TO ENHANCE YOUR INCOME

The side gig
that comes with
bonuses.

By Sandi Sonnenfeld

According to the Authors Guild's [most recent authors' income](#) survey, teaching creative writing either in person or online is the second most popular way for published authors to supplement their income. Only speaking engagements, such as lectures and readings, ranked higher, with freelance journalism third.

With more than 130 accredited MFA programs in creative writing in the United States, teaching fiction, creative nonfiction, or poetry writing at the undergraduate or graduate level offers authors some unique opportunities. However, tenure-track positions are hard to come by, require an MFA or a PhD, a significant publication history, and previous teaching experience. They also leave less time for writing.

As such, many professional writers teach as adjunct faculty (part-time contract positions) at a nearby college or university. Salaries vary by state, whether the job is at a community college or university, at a public or private institution. According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, the median salary for adjunct writing faculty at a college or university is \$3,400 per course per semester and \$2,700 at a community college. Semesters run 10 to 12 weeks on average. Bear in mind that far more adjunct faculty openings exist for those who can teach college composition and business writing than for creative writing, so non-fiction authors might want to consider teaching those types of courses as well.

Compensation for visiting writers in residence averages \$55,000 a year, depending on the college, state, public/private status, and whether you are teaching at the undergraduate or graduate level. These positions generally involve teaching two creative writing classes a semester, mentoring creative writing students, and other duties such as supervising a student-run literary magazine or organizing readings. Highly competitive, writers-in-residence positions last from one semester to three years and require relocation for the appointment duration. You must have pub-

lished at least one book, and an MFA is generally a preferred prerequisite.

Literary novelist and AG council member Michelle Richmond has taught at numerous MFA programs, both as an adjunct and as a visiting writer-in-residence after her first novel was published. “I love visiting writer gigs because you get one intense semester with a small group of MFA candidates, and you don’t have to serve on committees,” she says. “It’s the best of both worlds.”

Many opportunities exist outside academia, however, including continuing education programs, private writing organizations, teaching at writing retreats, and workshops at public libraries and senior and community centers.

Some authors set up their own teaching businesses. Richmond started teaching online through her website in 2012. It began as an experiment and grew as more of her students asked for more classes. She now offers two nine-month workshops: one for writers new to novel writing and a master class for those further along in their manuscripts and with more advanced skills.

“I give writers an intense and rigorous education in the narrative craft without forcing them to put their novels through rounds of workshops. I don’t think the traditional workshop model necessarily works for novel writing. What novelists need is a months-long space to write and discover with community support and education but without too many voices in their heads. I shepherd writers through the process of writing a novel in a way that keeps them engaged and motivated for the long haul,” says Richmond.

Of course, as with any paying gig, finding the right balance between teaching classes and writing books presents a challenge.

Author Sheila Bender, who teaches personal essay, memoir, and poetry writing full-time through her company, Writing It Real, in Port Townsend, Washington, says that while she has less time for her own creative work, “somehow the poems and essays command me to set time aside for them to manifest. I can’t explain how I do this. It just happens. And I must say that reading stu-

“I DON’T THINK THE TRADITIONAL WORKSHOP MODEL NECESSARILY WORKS FOR NOVEL WRITING . . . I SHEPHERD WRITERS THROUGH THE PROCESS OF WRITING A NOVEL IN A WAY THAT KEEPS THEM ENGAGED AND MOTIVATED FOR THE LONG HAUL.”

—MICHELLE RICHMOND

dent work inspires me to help them bring their best versions forward. I have learned a lot from this work, so when I sit down to write, I suffer less resistance to my real subjects and get into the flow more easily.”

Richmond adds, “I urge every writer with a side gig (which means most writers) to find a job that allows you to write during the ‘clean slate’ part of the day—whatever that time is for you.”

How to Find Freelance Writing Gigs

*** Connect with the head of programming at your public library.** Public libraries have become more than just places to conduct research or check out books. Most offer a host of workshops and courses for children, teens, adults, and senior citizens. Speak to the head of adult or children’s programming and propose teaching a creative writing workshop for 4 to 10 weeks.

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— SHEILA BENDER

*** Reach out to your local senior or community center.** Many seniors are interested in writing memoirs to leave something behind for their children and grandchildren, but they don't always know how to get started. Writing workshops that introduce narrative elements and provide in-class and take-home writing exercises can yield notable short memoirs, mostly from people who have never taken a creative writing course before.

*** Contact the local BOCES or cooperative public education program in your state.** New York, for example, funds alternative educational programming through BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), which supplements the traditional K to 12 curriculum and offers adult education programs. Most of this funding goes to vocational training, learning for the disabled, and adult literacy. Still, they also provide opportunities to teach writing tradecraft, including essay, business, and creative writing, to students and adults. The number of writing in-

structors needed varies depending on where you reside and the size of your state's public education budget.

*** Consider teaching through a community college or university continuing education program.** Most community colleges or state universities offer noncredit courses for adults through their continuing education department. You can propose teaching one or more writing courses in various genres, assuming you have the experience and publications to prove it. Generally, these courses are taught at night or on weekends to accommodate working adults. You do not need an advanced degree to teach through continuing education programs, though previous teaching experience is helpful.

*** Become an instructor with a private creative writing company such as [Gotham Writers Workshop](#) or [Catapult](#).** Teaching through such outlets rarely pays well, but it is a wise option for working writers with minimal teaching experience. They walk new instructors through the entire process and even provide you with sample course curriculums. Both companies offer one-day, weekend, and 10-week-long workshops and hire published authors to teach fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, magazine writing, and screenwriting.

*** Pitch writers' conferences and retreats.** Introduce yourself to directors or organizers of writing conferences, regardless of their size. Stress what you can add as an instructor, perhaps as an author with a unique background, writing style, or perspective. Try to identify a significant issue that writers struggle with and draft a workshop or course proposal around a solution.

What to Charge

Private companies and colleges and universities that hire adjunct writing faculty or instructors to teach writing through continuing education

generally set the cost of workshops and what you will earn. You have much more flexibility in setting rates when teaching at public libraries, community or senior centers, or in your own teaching business.

The size of the class, the duration, the end goal (teaching craft versus developing a manuscript for publication), and your reputation as an established author play a role in determining what you should charge. Don't undersell yourself or charge so much that you price yourself out of the market. Think carefully about how much time it will take you to develop a successful writing course, review, and comment on students' manuscripts, and give the class itself, and then calculate how much you need to make based on those hours. Remember, too, that you may have to either rent a space or pay a cut to the workshop organizer. If you will be teaching online, factor in the cost of paying for a Zoom subscription or other online tools when determining how much to charge per student per workshop.

Recruiting Students

There is no shortage of people looking to take creative writing classes. If your local library or community center accepts your course proposal, it will promote your class through its regular newsletter, course catalog, and website. It may take a few sessions before people get to know you and your classes, but word of mouth spreads quickly, particularly in smaller cities and towns, and you often will get repeat students.

Bender suggests that you also draw heavily on your personal and professional network. "Who can help you gather students? Friends, writing pals, relatives—everyone knows someone who longs to write or is writing and would like to learn something new or be around other writers," she says.

Richmond concurs, saying that she gets about half of her students through referrals. "Writers who take one of my classes tell others or mention it to people they know in the writing community."

Richmond and Bender also regularly write blogs, articles, or newsletters that offer advice on

craft, notes on process, and the writing life to attract potential students and market their services. Bender has published ten books about the writing process that include proven exercises she uses in her classroom. Both on her website and in her books, she includes essays and poems from some of her best students as examples of what even first-time writers can produce based on writing prompts and the feedback she provides.

Finally, Bender says you must be realistic and manage your expectations, particularly when you first start teaching.

"You have to start small and recognize that it might take a few years until you generate significant income from private teaching. For a time, I taught in my living room to avoid renting space and quickly learned that private groups enjoyed the home atmosphere. Before that, I taught writing classes for senior citizens in the mornings at one community center and evening classes for adults at another center. Most importantly, keep writing and publishing, since that is the basis for teaching the craft and staying connected to a network that can help you find students and places to teach."

As with all freelance endeavors, teaching creative writing to supplement your book income involves a certain amount of risk. But with patience, persistence, and as you become more adept at teaching and in learning how best to structure workshops and manage your time, teaching writing can provide valuable dividends, not just financially but in learning more about yourself both as a writer and a person. **AG**

CAN WRITING PLATFORMS LIKE VELLA, RADISH, OR SUBSTACK ENHANCE YOUR INCOME?

It all depends on what you write and the size of your fan base.

In a return to the age of Dickens, writing apps like Radish and Stary's Dreame, which share new stories in serialized form, have grown significantly in a few short years. Well-funded internet companies like Amazon and Substack are introducing new apps that could quickly push out some of the smaller players.

Most of these serialized publishing apps are new to the marketplace, and so we have little data, or even anecdotal information, on whether they are a reasonable source of income for authors. We urge members to review the platform terms closely before committing to publishing through them, especially if they require exclusivity. Authors should also watch out for definitions of payment terms such as "net profits," "net receipt," and "amounts received," as these can have different meanings in this context than in traditional publishing contracts. The terms can also vary, with some apps offering better terms than others, and as often is the case with so many publishing endeavors, best-selling authors are far more likely to realize significant income through these opportunities than midlist or emerging writers. Nonetheless, if the terms are fair, the platforms provide a new potential source of income that is worth exploring for writers interested in serialization. It's important that Authors Guild members know what new opportunities exist, how they work, and the potential benefits and drawbacks of each as they seek out ways to grow their readership or sell more of their work.

The Authors Guild will keep a watchful eye on these platforms and let members know which are treating authors unfairly. We also ask members to let us know of any particularly good or bad experiences with any of these platforms. Thanks to a member, we learned that Crazy Maple Studio, developer of the Kiss app, advertises a 50/50 split of profits to authors, even though it deducts 32 percent off the top for vendor fees (e.g., Google and Apple's platform fees), as well as a whopping 30 percent across the board for undisclosed and marketing fees, leaving authors with roughly

19 percent of the gross revenue from their work. We are working with them to be more transparent about their terms.

Amazon Kindle Vella

Launched in July 2021, [Kindle Vella](#) is a serialized reading platform where readers can access stories or novels released in short episodic installments via a mobile or desktop app. Episodes range from 500 to 6,000 words, and while the first three episodes of any Kindle Vella story are free to access, readers need to buy tokens to unlock future ones. Readers can also interact with stories by “faving” them, though there is no place for reader comments.

How it works: Kindle Vella is relatively easy for authors to use, particularly if one has previously published Kindle e-books. Authors can create episodes directly from the KDP dashboard by typing in the story’s title, author, description, category, keywords, and image. Writers can then upload their first episode from a .doc or .docx file.

How authors make money: Kindle states that Vella authors earn 50 percent of what readers spend on tokens to read their episodes on the app. The cost of the tokens varies depending on how many tokens readers buy at a time. Two hundred tokens cost \$1.99 and allow the reader to access four episodes of any Vella work; \$14.99 buys 1,700 tokens, giving a reader access to 34 episodes. An author’s earnings depend both on how many tokens readers use to access one or multiple episodes of a story and the actual “purchase price” of those tokens.

But authors don’t actually earn 50 percent of what readers pay because the token vendors (generally Apple, Android, and Amazon) get a cut of the revenues earned—as much as 30 percent. So if a reader paid \$14.99 to purchase 1,700 tokens for access to all 34 episodes of one’s Vella story, the platform first deducts the 30 percent vendor’s fee (\$4.50) from the \$14.99 “price.” The author then gets paid 50 percent of the remaining 70 percent,

which translates into a payout of \$5.25, or 35 percent of the profits.

Pros

- * Offers a high-profile alternative to Radish or Stary authors
- * Might serve as a kick start for new or upcoming authors, particularly those who write stories of nontraditional lengths that might be hard to publish elsewhere
- * Authors can earn money per episode rather than having to wait until the whole novel/novella/narrative is completed
- * After publishing on Vella, you can compile all episodes together and seek to get it published as a full-length book, but you must wait 30 days from when your last episode is published

Cons

- * Doesn’t cross-promote or work with Kindle Unlimited
- * Different prices for tokens and token vendors make for a complicated payment structure
- * Content must be wholly original and cannot have been published anywhere else, in print or digitally
- * You cannot publish images, charts, or illustrations, which may prove problematic for children’s authors or nonfiction writers who rely on such graphics to round out the text
- * You earn money only if readers keep reading, as they have to pay tokens to access each episode

Radish

Founded in 2015, [Radish](#) is a serialized fiction app bringing “bingeable” stories to readers everywhere. It offers curated, premium, and original stories in multiple genres, including romance, mystery, thriller, and fantasy fiction, which are published and read in bite-size installments. Radish claims that more than 2,000 authors have pub-

lished more than 10,000 stories, with more than 500 million episodes read.

How it works: Writers must apply to be accepted and identify themselves as an emerging, established, or influencer author (e.g., big-name authors, top executives, and celebrities) to get the best pricing and publishing packages. The application must include the first 30 pages of the work to be published. The first three episodes of each story are available for free on Radish to attract readers. After that, interested readers must buy coins (similar to Vella’s tokens) and pay three coins to open an episode. Readers can pay even more coins to read ahead for “locked” episodes. Each coin costs approximately 12 cents, so access to one episode costs readers 36 cents. Radish recommends each episode be 1,500 to 2,000 words and that each story consists of at least 10 episodes.

How authors make money: Authors get 50 percent of the revenue earned per episode. So if an episode costs 36 cents, and the author wrote a 10-episode story, he or she would earn \$1.80 per reader who read the full story. However, Radish determines each author’s revenue based on a flat share, which is arrived at by counting all the coins the app has received for all works on the site each month, divided by the total number of outstanding coins issued to all readers. That number is then divided by 50 percent based on the number of coins each author’s piece earns each month. The money writers earn may also be impacted by which pricing model authors qualify for and whether the content is exclusive to Radish.

Radish pays its writers quarterly but only pays out if the amount earned exceeds \$50.

Pros

- * The most established of the serialized apps and the easiest to use/navigate
- * Authors retain their copyright, though the exclusivity and length of the license is governed by the pricing model and publication-type designations

- * Offers three pricing models to choose from
- * Editorial review of work before accepting a writer’s application helps ensure high-quality narratives
- * Allows for true interaction, as readers are encouraged to leave comments or ask authors questions
- * Authors may post previously published work

Cons

- * Primarily interested in genre fiction. They do not accept short story collections, poetry, or nonfiction
- * The content skews heavily toward YA and fantasy
- * JustUseApp rated it 18 out of 100 for readers, citing poor customer service and unreliability
- * The payment calculus is confusing and authors with limited readership may have to wait a long time to receive their first payment of \$50

Stary Writing (Dreame, Ringdom, and Slash)¹

Based in Singapore, Stary Writing offers multiple platforms:

- * Dreame emphasizes female-centric narratives with an emphasis on romance
- * Ringdom offers adventurous, high-concept fiction with strong characters
- * Slash caters to LGBTQ+ stories and readers

Stary focuses on episodic or serialized stories but posts “exclusive” content behind a paywall for

¹ Since publication of the Winter–Spring 2022 *Bulletin*, we have become aware of terms in the Dreame/Stary app contracts that put authors using those apps at a serious disadvantage. As these contracts are not public and are only sent to authors solicited by Dreame/Stary, they were not accessible to our team at the time this piece was written. The objectionable terms include a grant of rights provision that allows developers to adapt and commercialize the stories into any form, including film, television, graphic novels, and games. We have also become aware of concerns about the lack of transparency in Dreame’s payment processes. We are adding this note as a caution to authors who are considering using the Dreame/Stary apps. As always, you can send in your contracts to our legal services team for a full evaluation.

which authors earn 30 percent of the sales price. It claims to host more than 300,000 original stories reaching more than 100 million users.

How it works: Interested authors log on to www.starywriting.com, post at least 3,000 words, and then must apply for a contract. Only content and writers exclusive to Stary are eligible for tiny advances (\$40–60) and bonuses.

How authors make money: Licensing and contract terms were not available on the website, though there is a section touting the many bonus dollars that Stary writers can make. These bonuses apply only to writers who have signed an exclusive contract with Stary for new and original stories as follows:

- * New Story Bonus: Writers receive a \$50 bonus for every signed story once more than 30,000 words have been posted
- * Daily Update Bonus: Writers can earn \$150 if they publish a new chapter daily in a calendar month, posting a total of at least 50,000 words.
- * Completion Bonus: The amount of bonus varies depending on the total word count of each completed story: 60,000–99,999 words, \$50 bonus; 100,000–199,999 words, \$150 bonus; 200,000 or above, \$350 bonus

Pros

- * Huge reach internationally
- * Publishes stories in many languages, including English
- * Anecdotal evidence that some authors have been recruited off Radish with small advances

Cons

- * Operates out of Singapore and, depending on what nation's laws the contract is governed by, it may be difficult and expensive to sue for breach of contract
- * Payment is by PayPal only

SUBSTACK ASPIRES TO GROW BEYOND THE STANDARD NEWSLETTER INTO A SERIALIZER OF NARRATIVE STORIES.

- * Many writers on Reddit and elsewhere report questionable practices and suggest this app is not trustworthy
- * Authors must sign away their digital copyright for three years. Contract terms are not publicly available

Substack

Founded in 2017 in San Francisco, [Substack](#) provides publishing, payment, analytics, and design infrastructure to support online subscription newsletters. Substack aspires to grow beyond the standard newsletter into a serializer of narrative stories, given the recent deals it has made with well-known authors including Salman Rushdie and Chuck Palahniuk. This vehicle also attracts many established freelance journalists and political pundits.

How it works: Substack provides writers with a content management system (CMS) for creating email newsletters, integrated payments through Stripe, and a website that can host free and subscriber-only content. Most Substack writers begin by posting newsletters for free until they attract enough regular followers to charge for a monthly or annual subscription. While almost anything goes when it comes to subject matter, all writers must conform to its [content guidelines](#).

ROMANCE, MYSTERY, FANTASY, AND OTHER GENRE FICTION WRITERS MAY BENEFIT FROM SERIALIZATION . . . BUT READ THE PLATFORM TERMS, CONTRACTS, AND LICENSING RULES CAREFULLY. . . .

How authors make money: The payment structure is straightforward. Authors set the subscription price they wish to charge readers on a monthly or yearly basis. Subscribers pay authors through Substack with a 10 percent commission going to the platform for each subscription sold. A writer with 1,000 subscribers each paying \$5 each month would earn \$54,000 per year after Substack takes its cut.

Substack also recently launched a monthly Writer in Residence program designed to give established writers a place to experiment, share knowledge, and inspire other writers and readers on the app. Substack compensates Writers in Residence for their work and time spent supporting other writers. No information was posted about how to be considered for this program.

Pros

- * Easy to navigate with a simple payment and commission fee structure
- * A better-paying alternative to Medium
- * Provides authors freedom to experiment with different writing forms and craft “edgy” stories without the editorial oversight that a traditional publisher demands

- * Actively seeks journalists, media, and political writers and so is a good forum for nonfiction authors
- * Can post images, illustrations, and charts
- * Authors can set the subscription price for their content
- * Also offers subscriber-based podcasting

Cons

- * On top of the 10 percent commission, Substack charges a processing fee for credit card payments
- * [Only big-name writers/celebrities score advances](#), so most authors work for free until they attract a reasonable number of subscribers
- * Lack of editorial oversight raises the potential for abuse such as sharing false or inaccurate information

The bottom line: Romance, mystery, fantasy, and other genre fiction writers may benefit from serialization, particularly for novellas or other stories of odd lengths, but read the platform terms, contracts, and licensing rules carefully before you leap. Of the platforms described here, Substack seems to provide the most equitable author terms and offers significant opportunities for nonfiction writers and journalists, but without a large dedicated fanbase, your earning potential may be limited.

We will continue to look out for new income-generating opportunities for writers of all types. **AG**

Travel Writing in the Shadow of Covid

By Chaney Kwak

In January 2020, I left my partner of over 17 years. After a few weeks of staying with friends, I felt aimless in the best and worst ways. I was no stranger to living out of a carry-on, having been a paid professional tourist for over a decade. But having no home in the city I called home quickly turned stifling. When a last-minute Mexico assignment came from an inflight magazine, I didn't hesitate.



The assignment took me to an all-inclusive resort, one of the hundreds that litter the white-sand coast between Cancún and Tulum. The hotel was a nesting doll of sorts, flanked on all sides by a bigger, cheaper resort—which in turn was enveloped by a gated residential development. In this strangest of bubbles, I roasted in the sun, encrusted in sand and did very little. The owner was said to be a Burning Man type—New Agey with money earned through luck—and the resort made a point of imbuing itself with vague, nationless spirituality. The concierges called themselves “journey guides” when they texted guests about dinner reservations.

At the outdoor yoga pavilion, I lay on the ground and listened to a sound bath of Balinese metal bowls that were said to be healing. The on-site temazcal gave express versions of the traditional sweat-lodge experience, which was said to be healing. A masseuse slid her meaty hand across my back, which was covered in essential oils that were also said to be healing. I was just another middle-aged American tourist descending on Mexico while nursing a fresh heartache. I saw no shame in being a cliché.

I waited for my tear ducts to burst. But whatever feelings that stirred inside canceled one another out. It was both exhilarating and exhausting to have nowhere to return to; being single for the first time was both thrilling and distressing. After a few days, I had to admit: When all the feelings were added and subtracted, I felt nothing.

I heard something about a strange pneumonia turning up in a nursing home outside Seattle.

I took a bus to Mérida, a colonial town in the Yucatán Peninsula beloved by Anglos. I rented an Airbnb, and my friend Sarah joined me. During our two weeks there, she bought an expensive bottle of tequila and managed to finish revising her novel. I ate tacos and went to decor shops stocked with goods for the home I didn’t have.

I went out on dates with strangers from the internet. One man, a regional manager of a logistics company, took me to a town square where old people were dancing cheek to cheek and gallantly offered me 50 percent discounts on shipments to

the U.S. Another, the editor-in-chief of a defunct Hungarian fashion magazine, asked me to come with him to Budapest. I told neither of them I’d just left the only man I’d loved.

In the news, I saw shoppers clearing out grocery shelves and hoarding toilet paper in the U.S. I felt nothing.

I took another bus, this time to Valladolid, an intimate town of sun-bleached pastel walls. Tiny *papel picado* flags applauded in the wind, casting dancing shadows on the cobblestone lanes underneath. I walked in loops until I knew every lane in the historic center. To visit pyramid ruins, I waited for a bus that never came, and instead shared a cab with three women about half my height and nearly twice my age. I don’t understand a word of Yucatec, but their chatter comforted me. I didn’t know this would be the last time I’d get in a car with strangers for a very long time.

Near the ruins, there was a cenote. I paid a few pesos to use the rickety ladders going down to the swimming hole. The bored teenagers who took my money soon disappeared. I paddled into the aquamarine water. When I flipped over, the world shrank into the round skylight of the limestone sinkhole. It was an ordinary morning of an ordinary day. I was but one ordinary tourist. I felt alone as never before. Floating, I started sobbing.

When I teach, I tell my students that travel writing shouldn’t be a list of “I did this, then I ate that.” An itinerary is not travel writing, I tell them, and it’s never fun to sit through someone else’s slideshow of a trip.

But I just told you a series of things I did. Should travel writing be fun? Should any piece of writing be?

During the pandemic lockdown—after the inflight magazine that got me to Mexico went out of business—I tried to indulge in armchair travel. I got no further than a page or two in every travel book I picked up. Instead, I got sucked into reading about plagues from before—like *Pale Horse*, *Pale Rider* by Katherine Anne Porter—and dystopias yet to come—like *Oryx and Crake* by Margaret Atwood. Neither was fun, yet I felt more in motion

I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT A STRANGE PNEUMONIA TURNING UP IN A NURSING HOME OUTSIDE SEATTLE.

while reading them than from travel books that promised to take me away from my solitary studio apartment.

My own book, *The Passenger*, is also billed as a travelogue. When I encounter it out in the wild, it's usually in the travel-writing section of a bookstore. Yes, the bulk of the book takes place on a cruise ship that loses power off the coast of Norway in a storm. But in the end, *The Passenger* is travel writing not because it happens to take place in Scandinavia but because it deals with a journey, albeit of the kind that burrows inside. It's the type of travel that crosses time and zig-zags around the world, all the while the narrator is stuck in one place, which happens to be on a cruise ship in Norway.

"Neither the destination nor the point of departure are important," writes William Maxwell in his bildungsroman *The Folded Leaf*. "People often find themselves midway on a journey they had no intention of taking and that began they are not exactly sure where."

When I was asked to write a piece about what travel writing will be like after COVID-19, I spent weeks drafting how the pandemic has both endangered and necessitated human connection between strangers. I used a lot of four-, five-, six-syllable words. I'm ashamed that I even picked out smart-sounding sound bites from the very books that I couldn't bear to finish. In the end, I had nothing to say. The drafts left me feeling nothing.

Truth is, I don't know if there's going to be an "after COVID," let alone travel writing that's fun-

damentally altered. Humans have always moved; ours is a history of migrations and the myths we tell ourselves along the way. Even when we're stuck in one place—say, on a disabled cruise ship during an 80-mile-per-hour storm or in an overpriced San Francisco studio in the middle of a pandemic—our minds will continue to wander.

So I agree with what Maxwell says in *The Folded Leaf*. Impressive sights aren't what real journeys are made of. That's not because a traveler should be so wrapped up in their head as not to notice what's around them but because travel stories worth telling aren't about some #YOLO bucket-list items to be checked off. Instagram does arm-chair travel so much better, after all.

Maxwell writes that, more than any sights you may come across, the most important experience on a journey is gained from putting yourself in someone else's shoes, or in their literal homes, in fact, and learning "the elementary things—which doors sometimes bang when a sudden wind springs up; where the telephone book is kept; and how their lungs feel when they waken in the night and reach blindly toward the foot of the bed for the extra cover." After the last two years we've had, this act of understanding, and the inevitable empathy that follows, makes for the kind of travel writing I want to read. **AG**

Chaney Kwak is the author of *The Passenger: How a Travel Writer Learned to Love Cruises & Other Lies from a Sinking Ship*.

ADVOCACY NEWS

In our advocacy and lobbying efforts during the second half of 2021, we emphasized the importance of antitrust enforcement against large internet platforms and collective bargaining rights for authors, while continuing our work on section 512 reform and piracy. We strengthened our relationships with lawmakers, cultivated new allies, and have been instrumental in organizing creator groups around issues of bargaining power. Here is a summary of our major advocacy and lobbying activities in the latter part of the year.

* ANTITRUST BILLS

In June 2021, House Democrats released a spate of bills targeting the anticompetitive practices used by large tech and internet platforms to dominate and control markets. Together, these bills marked the most significant attempt yet by lawmakers to break up the power of tech monopolies and monopsonies. Among the bills that have been introduced, the American Choice and Innovation Online Act (ACIOA) is especially relevant for authors, as its provisions directly target Amazon's dominance of the publishing ecosystem. The bill makes it unlawful for online platforms to prioritize their own products or services, discriminate between similarly situated businesses, impede them from promoting products and services that compete with the platform's services, or unfairly use or withhold data in order to materially harm competition.

Prior to the bill's introduction, the Authors Guild and a group of several high-profile authors met with Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI), the drafter of the bill, its lead sponsor, and chair of the House Antitrust Subcommittee, to discuss Amazon's anticompetitive practices, including giving preference to its own imprints on bestseller lists, charging high marketing fees for visibility, and extracting excessive discounts from publishers to undersell independent and small booksellers. Earlier in the year, in response to the subcommittee's investigation into anticompetitive practices, we raised these and similar concerns, and are pleased to see that the bill thoroughly addresses them. ACIOA and related antitrust bills will undoubtedly face formidable challenges from the tech lobby, but we are optimistic that Congress will take some action this year.

* PRH-S&S MERGER

For over 50 years, the Authors Guild has voiced its opposition to publishing industry consolidations, which diminish competition. We believe that these consolidations not only harm authors' financial interests but also make the industry less diverse. In January 2021, following the news of PRH's proposed acquisition of S&S, we wrote a letter to the Department of Justice (DOJ), along with four other writers' groups and the Open Markets Institute, to express our concerns about the merger as well as Amazon's downstream pres-

ures on the publishing industry. In November, when the DOJ filed a civil antitrust lawsuit to block the merger—primarily on the basis of its potential harm to authors, “the lifeblood of book publishing in America”—we came out in support, and we will be submitting an amicus (friend of the court) brief against the merger. While the DOJ's action is an important step toward ensuring parity between authors and publishers, we view this also as an opportunity to remind enforcers and lawmakers that Amazon is the primary driver of inefficiencies and inequities in the publishing market, and that unless steps are taken to loosen its hold on every aspect of book publishing, authors will continue to suffer.

* COLLECTIVE BARGAINING EFFORTS

As reported in the last *Bulletin*,¹ the Authors Guild is leading a coalition of organizations that represent creative workers in lobbying for collective bargaining rights. The coalition is promoting two legislative proposals—an amendment to the National Labor Relations Act and an exemption for professional creators from antitrust laws—to allow “professional creators” to engage in collective bargaining with those who buy their services (publishers, streaming platforms, production companies, etc.). We continue to meet with congress-

1 Summer 2021, p. 26.

sional offices and are looking for sponsors to introduce our legislative amendments.

The coalition has also submitted comments in response to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the DOJ Antitrust Division's joint inquiry into antitrust law. We continue to underscore the need for collective bargaining rights for professional creators and we persistently set forth legislative proposals as solutions. Monopsonic control of the market for creative labor and services by large internet platforms is driving down wages and forcing creators to give up more of their rights for less. In January 2022, the Authors Guild submitted written testimony before the House Small Business Committee in response to its hearing *The Power, Peril, and Promise of the Creative Economy*, which again reiterated the need for a labor or antitrust solution to the problem of unequal bargaining power between creators and buyers of their services, such as producers and publishers.

* **FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT AND CREATIVE ECONOMY REVITALIZATION ACT**

We accelerated our lobbying for the 21st Century Federal Writers' Project Act (H.R. 3054) and the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (H.R. 5019) in the second half of 2021. To drum up support for the two bills, we met with members of the House Labor and Education Committee—where the bills are currently pending—as well as with staff members of more than twenty additional lawmakers.

The 21st Century Federal Writers' Project (FWP) was introduced by Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA) and lead cosponsor Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez (D-NM) on May 6, 2021, with the goal of supporting

unemployed and underemployed writers. The program provides for \$60 million in funding to be disbursed through the DOL to eligible nonprofit organizations, arts and cultural institutions, and states and municipalities. Following the introduction of the FWP bill, Rep. Leger Fernandez introduced the Creative Economy Revitalization Act (CERA) on August 13, 2021, with Republican cosponsor Jay Obernolte (R-CA). Like the FWP, CERA is modeled as a Work Projects Administration–style grant program, to be administered by the Department of Labor in consultation with the secretary for the National Endowment for the Arts. State and local governments, as well as public and private not-for-profit organizations, will be eligible to apply for a share of the projected \$100 million fund, in the form of grants to hire creative workers and produce public arts projects. Whereas the target recipients of the new FWP are writers, CERA is open to creative professionals in every discipline and has no thematic restrictions.

* **CAMPAIGN AGAINST STATE BOOK BANS AND CENSORSHIP**

In response to state bills banning or proscribing teaching of books on race, racism, gender, sexual identity, and reproductive rights, we launched a national write-in campaign in November. Ten states—Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas—have already outlawed discussions of critical race theory, not only at K–12 public schools but also in some cases at colleges and universities. These laws often include confusing and wide-sweeping restrictions on discussions of, and texts related to, race, gender, and sexuality in general. We are working with the

American Library Association, PEN America, and the National Coalition Against Censorship on programs, initiatives, and advocacy to oppose the growing swell of censorship, and to support the teachers, librarians, and authors who are being targeted through such laws.

* **PROTECTING JOURNALISTS, FREELANCE WRITERS, AND PRESS PUBLISHERS**

In November, we submitted comments to the U.S. Copyright Office recommending changes to copyright law and policy to prevent internet platforms like Facebook and Google from monetizing news content freely, and to give newspaper and magazine publishers greater power to negotiate with platforms that aggregate content. The comments were in response to the Copyright Office's newly launched Publisher Protection Study, which seeks to investigate the effect of “news aggregators” like Google and Facebook on newspapers and magazines, with the goal of issuing policy guidelines to protect the industry. Our comments addressed how Facebook and Google's “duopoly” over the digital advertising market has siphoned revenue out of news publishing without compensation, causing hundreds of newspapers and local periodicals to close, and in consequence depressing rates for journalism and freelance writing. In addition to our engagement with the Copyright Office on these issues, we continued our lobbying for the passage of the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act (S. 673 and H.R. 1735). This bill creates an antitrust exemption for news publishers, allowing them to engage with large internet platforms collectively and to negotiate fair terms for use of news content. Although the bill, if passed, would yield important ben-

efits for news publishers, we have been very clear in our demands to ensure that it also includes a provision whereby the companies that produce news content are required to reinvest the additional revenue generated from the anti-trust exemption into journalism, as opposed to using it as corporate profits.

* CASE ACT/ COPYRIGHT CLAIMS BOARD

We continue our participation in the Copyright Office's public comment process to establish rules that will govern the Copyright Claims Board, the small claims tribunal created by the CASE Act, which is expected to begin operations in spring 2022. Last fall, the Copyright Office announced that it has hired three experts in copyright and litigation as copyright claims officers, as well as attorneys to support their work. In addition to its engagement with the Copyright Office, the Authors Guild is also building resources to help authors bring claims before the Copyright Claims Board when it launches.

* DMCA: SECTION 512 REFORM

The process of reforming section 512 of the Copyright Act stalled in the last months of 2021 due to the failure of copyright and tech-industry stakeholders to reach a compromise on the draft Digital Copyright Act released by Senator Thom Tillis's (R-NC) office in late 2020. Nevertheless, the issue remains alive, and the Authors Guild continues to lobby for a solution, with elements of the Digital Copyright Act as a starting point. We are also working with creator organizations in music, photography, and other industries to craft our own creator-focused legislative

solution to the whack-a-mole problem of digital piracy.

* PIRACY

The Authors Guild won an important victory in a lawsuit we helped bring against a notorious Ukraine-based pirate network known as Kiss Library, which operated Kissly.net, Libly.net, Cheap-Library.com, and dozens of other domains that illegally sold pirated e-books to unsuspecting book buyers. On December 20, 2021, the U.S. Court for the Western District of Washington permanently shut down the sites and awarded \$7.8 million in statutory damages for 52 acts of copyright infringement. The plaintiffs included twelve Authors Guild members, Amazon Publishing, and Penguin Random House. The victory also sends a message to pirates everywhere that they can and will be sued in the U.S.


The Guild is continuing its support of the publishers' lawsuit against Internet Archive's mass copyright infringement of books protected by copyright. We are also continuing our partnership with law enforcement agencies, the FBI, DOJ, and the National IPR Center to bring criminal copyright referrals against notorious pirate sites; however, we are unable to share any specific details due to the sensitive nature of these investigations.

* STATE MANDATORY E-BOOK LICENSING BILLS

The Authors Guild continues its opposition to state bills that impose onerous—and unconstitutional—compulsory licensing requirements on publishers, self-published authors, and in some cases, virtually anyone who produces digital text or audio. With some variation, these bills generally require anyone who pub-

lishes e-books (and in some cases audiobooks) to offer licenses to that content to state libraries on vaguely defined "reasonable terms." While the Guild remains a proponent of libraries' access to all books in every format, we strongly oppose any effort to undermine copyright, which these bills do by dictating the terms on which copyright owners should license their works. In addition to submitting opposition testimony whenever such bills go up for hearing, we successfully lobbied the governor of New York to veto the passed bill on the grounds that states don't have jurisdiction to create laws governing copyright, an area under exclusive federal authority. We also supported the Association of American Publishers in winning an injunction to block the state of Maryland's legislation from being enforced.

* STATEMENTS, LETTERS, AND BRIEFS

A crucial part of the Authors Guild's advocacy work is simply speaking out on issues that affect authors. We do that by making public statements and getting the word out on our website, on social media, in our email, and through the press. We also submit amicus briefs in cases that will likely impact authors, to let the court know how authors and journalists might be affected by the decision. In 2021, the Authors Guild drafted or signed on to a wide variety of written statements, letters, and amicus briefs, all of which can be found at authorsguild.org/where-we-stand 

LEGAL WATCH

* SLASHER SCREENWRITER'S COPYRIGHT RISES AGAIN

On September 30, 2021, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the lower courts' finding that screenwriter Victor Miller had written the screenplay of the slasher classic *Friday the 13th* as an independent contractor and not as an employee and, as such, could invoke the "termination" right granted to authors under the Copyright Act. If Miller had written the screenplay as an employee, it would have been considered a work made for hire, and he would not be deemed the "author" for purposes of copyright law (the production company that hired him would be considered the putative author). The Copyright Act gives authors who are not work-for-hire employees the right to terminate any assignment or copyright license several decades after

the grant was made. The court held that, since Miller was an independent contractor and the author of the screenplay, his termination notice to cancel the original grant was valid, and all rights in the screenplay had to be returned to him.

Section 203 of the Copyright Act allows authors and other creators to terminate their post-1978 copyright grants between 35 to 40 years after the grants were made or the works were first published. When Miller served his notice of termination for the 1980 film, both the company that Miller wrote the screenplay for and the company that subsequently acquired the screenplay objected to the termination, claiming that the screenplay was a work made for hire and that there was no license that could be terminated under section 203. Works made for hire are *not* terminable under section 203 because the employer (or another party that commissioned the work in accordance with work-for-hire

requirements) is considered to be the author instead of the work's actual creator. The two companies argued that Miller was an employee at the time he wrote the screenplay, based on the fact that he was a member of the film and TV writers' union Writers Guild of America (WGA) and that the parties had entered into several WGA agreements. WGA agreements are premised on the screenwriter being an employee of the production company. However, the WGA agreement that Miller signed did not include an express clause stating that the work was a work made for hire, or that he was an employee. WGA agreements have since been updated to include language that expressly declares that the screenwriter's services are being provided on a "work made for hire" basis.

The Second Circuit analyzed Miller's situation within the 13-factor framework the Supreme Court laid out in *Community for Creative Non-Violence v. Reid* and found

LEGAL SERVICES SCORECARD

From 8/1/2021 to 12/31/2021, the Authors Guild Legal Services Department handled 608 legal inquiries. Included were:

170

**Book contract
reviews**

34

**Agency contract
reviews**

21

**Reversion of
rights inquiries**

that Miller had been hired as an independent contractor. In its analysis, the court also drew a distinction between labor and copyright law, noting that neither the industry's presumption of screenwriters being employees of production companies nor the WGA agreements affected employment status for purposes of copyright law. The ruling stated that the fact "that labor law was determined to offer labor protections to independent writers does not have to reduce the protections provided to authors under the Copyright Act."

As a result, Miller retains all rights in the screenplay and can resell it to the owner of the film or to others for a new production.

* STARZ V. MGM

On November 3, 2021, the Authors Guild [filed an amicus brief](#) before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in support of the plaintiff-appellee Starz in *Starz Entertainment, LLC v. MGM*. The case addresses the ability of a copyright holder to collect damages when a suit is brought more than three years after the copyright infringements have taken place.

In 2013, MGM licensed the rights to certain films and television shows in its library exclusively to Starz. Six years later, a Starz

employee discovered that MGM had licensed those same films and shows to Amazon, despite the exclusivity language in its original agreement with Starz. After conducting its own investigation, Starz later realized that MGM had improperly licensed those films and shows to other platforms since at least 2015; they filed suit in 2020. MGM claimed that since more than three years had elapsed between the actual infringements and Starz's lawsuit, the statute of limitations had run out, and Starz could not collect damages.

Case law in the Ninth Circuit allows copyright infringement claims to be brought within three years of *discovery* of the infringement, as it is reasonable that plaintiffs might not be aware of the infringement at the time it occurred. Rather than start the clock running at the commencement of the infringement, the Ninth Circuit set it to start at discovery.

MGM argued that while the "discovery rule" applies, copyright holders should nevertheless be allowed to collect damages incurred only during the three-year period before the suit was brought.

Such a rule would deprive copyright holders of the ability to collect damages from infringers when the rightsholder, through no fault of their own, did not learn

Request Legal Help

The Authors Guild legal department can help you navigate the legal and business aspects of writing.

To initiate a query, go to go.authorsguild.org/account/legal_help

Be sure to include all relevant information related to your query (for example, copies of your contract, correspondence, website screenshots, etc.). This will help expedite your request. Our staff attorneys will communicate with you directly, and may request further information as needed.

62

Inquiries on copyright law, including infringement, registration, duration, and fair use

11

Inquiries regarding securing permissions and privacy releases

16

First Amendment queries

294

Other inquiries, including electronic rights, literary estates, contract disputes, contract questions, periodical and multimedia contracts, movie and television options, internet piracy, liability insurance, finding an agent, and attorney referrals

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of the infringement within three years. If a creator cannot recover anything, what is the purpose of suing? Moreover, the proposed rule would harm artists at a time when infringement is widespread and hard to enforce. Few writers possess the resources or the ability to patrol the internet and other spaces for infringement on an ongoing basis; even a major corporation like Starz had difficulty doing so. Writers are often unaware that one or more piracy sites have been selling pirated copies of their books for years until someone calls their attention to it. Imposing a strict three-year limit on damages essentially shuts down the ability of many creators to file a lawsuit at all, given that few writers can afford the legal costs associated with such suits and, in consequence, cannot seek restitution for income lost to piracy or other infringement.

* COVID-19 AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

On November 7, 2021, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who wrote the foreword to *The Truth About COVID-19: Exposing the Great Reset, Lockdowns, Vaccine Passports, and the New Normal*, in conjunction with the book's publisher, Chelsea Green Publishing, filed suit against Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), alleging that she had violated their First Amendment rights.¹

In September 2021, Senator Warren wrote a letter to Amazon CEO Andy Jassy expressing her concerns that Amazon was “peddling misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines and treatments” through its search and “Best Seller” algorithms and mentioned the plaintiffs’ book by name.

Warren asked Amazon to, within 14 days, “provide both a public report on the extent to which Amazon’s algorithms are directing consumers to books and other products containing COVID-19 misinformation and a plan to modify these algorithms so that they no longer do so.”

Although Senator Warren’s letter did not specifically instruct Amazon to stop selling the plaintiffs’ book, the complaint alleges that by saying that Amazon’s “peddling” of these books was “potentially unlawful,” the senator violated the First Amendment “by seeking through intimidation and threat to stop Amazon and other booksellers from selling/promoting plaintiffs’ book.” The complaint further alleges that Barnes & Noble notified Chelsea Green Publishing that it would no longer sell the plaintiffs’ e-book as a result of Senator Warren’s letter. Barnes & Noble later reversed that decision, but the plaintiffs claim that they were harmed by Barnes & Noble’s refusal to carry the book in their brick-and-mortar stores, by other stores that followed suit, and by Amazon’s refusal to run the publisher’s ads for the book, among other things.

This lawsuit sets plaintiffs’ First Amendment rights squarely in opposition to the efforts of Senator Warren (and others) to address public health concerns surrounding misinformation about COVID-19. The lawsuit is still in its early days, but we will continue to monitor it and keep our members advised accordingly. **AG**

¹ www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/publisher-news/article/87845-covid-19-skeptics-publisher-sue-senator-elizabeth-warren.html.

REGIONAL CHAPTERS UPDATE

Throughout 2021, the Authors Guild's Regional Chapters continued to hold meetings and panels over Zoom, ensuring that the connections that members have worked so hard to build would hold despite the challenges of COVID-19.

The New York City chapter's spring and summer events included an April conversation with publicist Andrea Pass, who focused on successful media campaigns for authors. In May, the NYC chapter cosponsored an event with Pen Parentis for authors who are also parents, and in July, ambassador Marina Aris explored the many different paths writers take to a successful publication.

In March, Los Angeles ambassadors Tisha Morris and Paul Peress led a Zoom discussion on the editing and publishing process with Veronica Alvarado, an editor at the Simon & Schuster imprint Simon Element. In summer, Morris, a lawyer as well as an author, gave a talk on vetting a manuscript for legal red flags. Also, best-selling novelist Caroline Leavitt discussed her work and the craft of synopsis, making the case for knowing where you are heading and how to get there.

In April, the Las Vegas and Phoenix chapters organized a Zoom meetup, bringing the two groups together for a live exchange. Phoenix ambassador Shay Vasudeva welcomed the opportunity as a way to "travel" to a different city and engage with new faces.

In October, Tampa ambassador Kate Sullivan led a conversation with publishing marketer John D. Pitts. The hour was filled with tales and tips for successful book marketing campaigns.

Autumn ushered in a cluster of new ambassadors from coast to coast. In September, the Portland chapter held a meet and greet Zoom for incoming ambassadors Maryka Biaggio and Bert Krages. The Washington, D.C., chapter held a similar event, introducing new ambassadors Michon Boston, Lesley Harris, and Donna Hemans. The Guild welcomes them as well as our two new ambassadors in Chicago—Bruce Gans and Charles Grippo—and our three in Boston—Charlene Smith, Stephanie Schorow, and Nancy Rubin Stuart.

Fall was also when several chapters—Philadelphia, New York City, the Bay Area, and Los Angeles—held general meetings to give members the opportunity to discuss what was going on in their writing lives; to share advice, tips, and support; and to keep the bonds of community strong even as we continue to meet only virtually. In Seattle, ambassador Larry Zuckerman broke the record for meetings, scheduling an open chat for Washington State members every Wednesday from October 13 through the end of the year.

Looking to the New Year, the Washington, D.C., chapter held an end of the year discussion on writing goals for 2022, and Detroit organized a New Year's writing resolution get-together. The

Detroit event was notable for the fact that it was the first in-person event the Authors Guild has had since pre-COVID days. The event was organized by co-ambassadors Weam Namou and Violet St. Karl and cosponsored by the Chaldean Cultural Center. Proof of vaccination was required for all participants.

Back at the office in New York, the Guild is pleased to announce the appointment of Nicole Vazquez as director of Regional Chapters. Many of you will know Nicole from her long tenure at the Guild, as membership manager and most recently as the director of membership, a post she retains.

—Melissa Ragsley
Manager of Regional Chapters

MEMBER NEWS

* BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Reinfred Dziedzic Addo: *The Dedicadas*; **W. C. Aldridge**: *My Soul's Journey*; **Liz Alterman**: *Sad Sacked*; **Amal**: *My Key*; **Ryka Aoki**: *Light From Uncommon Stars*; **Kathi Appelt** (and Eric Rohmann, illus.): *Once Upon a Camel*; **Kelley Armstrong** (and Xavière Daumarie, illus.): *The Serpent's Fury*; **Barbara Lazear Ascher**: *Ghosting: A Widow's Voyage Out*; **Linda Ashman** (and Alea Marley, illus.): *Phoebe Dupree is Coming to Tea!*; **Tracy Swinton Bailey**: *Forever Free: A True Story of Hope in the Fight for Child Literacy*; **Daniel Barbarisi**: *Chasing the Thrill: Obsession, Death, and Glory in America's Most Extraordinary Treasure Hunt*; **Patrick Eugene Barber II**: *The Book of Labors: The Silver Prophecy*; **Thomas Bardenwerper**: *Mona Passage*; **Marion Dane Bauer**: *Sunshine*; **Kalynn Bayron**: *This Poison Heart*; **Monette Bebow-Reinhard**: *Saving Boone: Legend of a Kiowa Son*; **Andy Becker**: *The Kissing Rabbi: Lust, Betrayal, and a Community Turned Inside Out*; **Beverly A. Behan**: *Becoming a Boardroom Star: Board and Director Evaluations: Innovations for 21st Century Governance Committees; New CEOs and Boards: How to Build a Great Board Relationship—and a Great Board*; **Ron Belak**: *The Fishing Guide to 800 High Lakes in Colorado*; **James R. Benn**: *Road of Bones*; **Miranda Beverly-Whittemore**: *Fierce Little Thing*; **Kathy Biehl**: *Eat, Drink &*

Be Wary: Cautionary Tales; **Susan Blackaby** (and Scott Brundage, illus.): *Where's My Cow?*; **Livia Blackburne**: *Feather and Flame*; **Mary Bly**: *Lizzie & Dante*; **Scott Borchert**: *Republic of Detours: How the New Deal Paid Broke Writers to Rediscover America*; **Brendan Borrell**: *The First Shots: The Epic Rivalries and Heroic Science Behind the Race to the Coronavirus Vaccine*; **David Bowles** (and **Erika Meza**, illus.): *My Two Border Towns*; **Charles F. Bowman**: *How Things Work: The Computer Science Edition*; **Elisa Boxer** (and Laura Freeman, illus.): *A Seat at the Table: The Nancy Pelosi Story*; **Sandra Boynton**: *Good Night, Good Night: The Original Longer Version of The Going to Bed Book*; **Barbara Bradford**: *A Man of Honor*; **Dustin Brady**: *Mystery on the Starship Crusader*; **Kathleen Brady**: *Francis and Clare: The Struggles of the Saints of Assisi*; **Audrey Brice**: *A Purloined Solstice*; **Emily Brightwell**: *Mrs. Jeffries and the Midwinter Murders*; **Kalyn Brooke**: *Practical Dreamer*; **Fern Field Brooks**: *Destiny's Children*; **Eliot Brown** (and Maureen Farrell): *The Cult of We: WeWork, Adam Neumann, and the Great Startup Delusion*; **Laura Brown** (and Elly Kramer; Sarah Mesinga, illus.): *The Triplets Get Charmed*; **Nancy Marie Brown**: *The Real Valkyrie: The Hidden History of Viking Warrior Women*; **Wynne Brown**: *The Forgotten Botanist: Sara Plummer Lemmon's Life of Science and Art*; **Joseph Bruchac**: *Rez Dogs*; **Anneliese M. Bruner**: *The Nation Must Awake: My*

Witness to the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921; **Perdita Buchan**: *Florilla: A Pinelands Romance*; **Paul Buchanan**: *Valley of Shadows*; **Anca Sandu Budisan**: *Fly, Little Bird, Fly*; **Lana Lynn** and the *New Watchdog*; **Lucy Burdette**: *A Scone of Contention*; *Unsafe Haven*; **Weldon Burge**: *Harvester of Sorrow*; **Dan Burns**: *A Necessary Explosion: Collected Poems*; **Reid Byers**: *The Private Library: The History of the Architecture and Furnishing of the Domestic Bookroom*;

Geoffrey Cain: *The Perfect Police State: An Undercover Odyssey into China's Terrifying Surveillance Dystopia of the Future*; **Stephanie Calmenson** (and Aaron Blecha, illus.): *Our Principal's Silly Story Collection* (boxed set); **Stephanie Calmenson** (and Zoe Persico, illus.): *Dozens of Dachshunds: A Counting, Woofing, Wagging Book*; **Marc Cameron**: *Tom Clancy Chain of Command*; **Kathy Caple**: *Frog and Ball*; **Matt Caprioli**: *One Headlight*; **Margaret Cardillo** (and Zachariah O'Hora, illus.): *Dogs at Work: Good Dogs. Real Jobs.*; **Anthony Carelli**: *The New World: Infinitesimal Epics*; **Earl A. Carr Jr.**: *From Trump to Biden and Beyond: Reimagining US-China Relations*; **André Lewis Carter**: *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*; **Donald Catalano**: *Restitution*; **Melanie Chartoff**: *Odd Woman Out: Exposure in Essays and Stories*; **Lee Child** (and Andrew Child): *Better Off Dead*; **Eileen Christelow**: *Five Little Monkeys Looking for Santa*; **Tory Christie**: *A Little Round Panda on the Big Blue*

Earth; **Jessica Ciosek**: *Sometimes a Soldier Comes Home*; **Martina Clark**: *My Unexpected Life: An International Memoir of Two Pandemics, HIV and COVID-19*; **Michael J. Coffino**: *Truth Is in the House*; **Jennieke Cohen**: *My Fine Fellow*; **Elizabeth Cole**: *Daisy and the Duke*; **Susan Cole**: *Holding Fast: A Memoir of Sailing, Love, and Loss*; **Sneed B. Collard III** (and Meg Sodano, Illus.): *Beaver and Otter Get Along . . . Sort Of: A Story of Grit and Patience Between Neighbors*; **David P. Colley**: *The Folly of Generals: How Eisenhower's Broad Front Strategy Lengthened World War II*; **Michael Connelly**: *The Dark Hours*; **Kia Corthron**: *Moon and the Mass*; **James Crews**: *How to Love the World: Poems of Gratitude and Hope*; **Elizabeth Crowens** (Ed. and Photog.): *New York: Give Me Your Best or Your Worst*; **Cathy Curtis**: *A Splendid Intelligence: The Life of Elizabeth Hardwick*;

Francesco Da Vinci: *I Refuse to Kill: My Path to Nonviolent Action in the 1960s*; **Angela Dalton**: *Ruby's Reunion Day Dinner*; **Catherine Dang**: *Nice Girls*; **Naomi Danis** (and Daniel Rieley, Illus.): *Bye, Car*; **Jacqueline Davies** (and Deborah Hocking, Illus.): *Sydney & Taylor Take a Flying Leap*; **Jacqueline Davies** (and Sonia Sánchez, Illus.): *Bubbles . . . Up!*; **Stephanie Davies**: *Other Girls Like Me*; **Amanda Davis**: *30,000 Stitches: The Inspiring Story of the National 9/11 Flag*; **Lydia Davis**: *Essays Two: On Proust, Translation, Foreign Languages, and the City of Arles*; **Nancy Raines Day**: *Baby's Opposites*; **Jeffery Deaver**: *The Midnight Lock*; **William deBuys** (and Rebecca Gaal, Illus.): *The Trail to Kanjiroba: Rediscovering Earth in an Age of Loss*; **Mike DeCapite**: *Jacket Weather*; **Barbara DeMarco-Barrett** (Ed.): *Palm Springs Noir*; **Heather Demetrios**: *Code Name Badass: The True Story of Virginia Hall*; **Hannah Dennison**: *Danger at the Cove*; **Phillip DePoy**: *Sammy*

Two Shoes; **John C. Derr**: *Another Christmas Carol*; **Greg Dinallo**: *Bridge of Lies*; **Lourdes Dirden**: *Going Solar: The Homeowner's Handbook*; **Alda P. Dobbs**: *Bare-foot Dreams of Petra Luna*; **David Dominé**: *A Dark Room in Glitter Ball City: Murder, Secrets, and Scandal in Old Louisville*; **Carrie Doyle**: *It Takes Two to Mango: Something's Guava Give*; **Ross Dreiblatt**: *I Am Not Brad Pitt and Other Stories*; **Jessica DuLong**: *Saved at the Seawall: Stories from the September 11 Boat Lift*; **Ame Dyckman** (and Eda Kaban, Illus.): *The New Kid Has Fleas*; *Tiny Barbarian*;

Laurie Easter: *All the Leavings*; **Renee Ebert**: *Dead Eyes in Late Summer*; **Anise Eden**: *Dead Sound*; **Millicent Eidson**: *Anthraxis: A Microbial Mystery*; **Marc Eliot**: *The Hag: The Life, Times, and Music of Merle Haggard*; **Allen Ellenzweig**: *George Platt Lynes: The Daring Eye*; **Michael Elliott**: *Have a Little Faith: The John Hiatt Story*; **Michael Emberley** (and Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick, Illus.): *I Can Make a Train Noise*; *The Message: The Extraordinary Journey of an Ordinary Text Message*; **Pamela Erens**: *Matasha*; **Ian M. Evans**: *Singing Grass*; **Ian M. Evans** (and Stephen N. Haynes and Luanna H. Meyer): *A Breast Cancer Guide for Spouses, Partners, Friends, and Family Using Psychology to Support Those We Care About*; **Shannon Denise Evans**: *The Leveling*; **Tony Tekaroniaka Evans**: *Teaching Native Pride*; **Nan Evenson**: *Good Night (Not Really)*;

Brian Fagan (and Nadia Durrani): *Climate Chaos: Lessons on Survival from Our Ancestors*; **Kim Fairley**: *Shooting Out the Lights*; **Shelley Fairweather-Vega** (Transl., and Olga Gromyko): *The As*robiologists*; **Slava Faybysh**: *The July Revolution*; **Georgia Faye**: *Down Under*; **Marguerite Feitlowitz** (Transl., and Liliane Atlan): *Small Bibles for Bad Times: Selected Poetry and Prose*; **Ellen**

Feldman: *The Living and the Lost*; **Joshua Ferris**: *A Calling for Charlie Barnes*; **Norman H. Finkelstein**: *The Shelter and the Fence: When 982 Holocaust Refugees Found Safe Haven in America*; **Carole Brody Fleet**: *Widows Wear Stilettos: A Practical & Emotional Guide for the Young Widow (Second Edition)*; **Helen C. Fogarassy**: *America Votes Obama to Biden Past Trump: A Kaleidoscopic View of the Trump Phenomenon*; **Ken Follett**: *Never*; **Susi Gregg Fowler**: *Who Lives Near a Glacier: Alaska Animals in the Wild*; **Tom Fowler**: *White Lines*; **Janet Fox**: *Carry Me Home*; **Jonathan Franzen**: *Crossroads*; **Ian Frazier**: *Cranial Fracking*; **Kinyel Friday**: *Troubled Minds*;

Anita Faye Garner: *The Glory Road: A Gospel Gypsy Life*; **C. F. Gayetty**: *The Popes' Book*; **David Gessner**: *Quiet Desperation, Savage Delight: Sheltering with Thoreau in the Age of Crisis*; **Sandra M. Gilbert** (and Susan Gubar): *Still Mad: American Women Writers and the Feminist Imagination*; **Ralph G. Giordano**: *Italian Culture in America: How a Founding Father Introduced Italian Art, Architecture, Food, Wine, and Liberty to the American People*; **Danielle Girard**: *Far Gone*; **Michael Favala Goldman**: *Slow Phoenix*; **Connie Goldsmith**: *Understanding Coronaviruses: SARS, MERS, and the COVID-19 Pandemic*; **Debra H. Goldstein**: *Four Cuts Too Many*; **Neil Perry Gordon**: *Cape Nome: The Alaskan Adventures of Percy Hope*; **Nathan Gorenstein**: *The Guns of John Moses Browning: The Remarkable Story of the Inventor Whose Firearms Changed the World*; **Jennifer Grant** (and Gillian Whiting, Illus.): *Once Upon a Time Not So Long Ago*; **William Green**: *Richer, Wiser, Happier: How the World's Greatest Investors Win in Markets and Life*; **Alexis Greene**: *Emily Mann: Rebel Artist of the American Theater*; **Eloise Greenfield** (and Colin Bootman,

Illus.): *Alaina and the Great Play*; **Linda Griffin**: *Love, Death, and the Art of Cooking*; **John Grisham**: *The Judge's List*; **Lauren Groff**: *Matrix*; **Lee Gutkind**: *My Last Eight Thousand Days: An American Male in His Seventies*; **Joseph Guzzo**: *Mousetrap, Inc.*;

Elizabeth Hamilton-Guarino: *Pinky Doodle Dance*; **Ryan Hampton**: *Unsettled: How the Purdue Pharma Bankruptcy Failed the Victims of the American Overdose Crisis*; **Joy Harjo**: *Poet Warrior: A Memoir*; **Terence A. Harkin**: *In the Year of the Rabbit*; **Bill Harley**: *Now You Say Yes*; **Mark Harris**: *Michelangelo DiCaprio: The Best Actor*; **Robie H. Harris (Michael Emberley, illus.)**: *It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, Gender, and Sexual Health*; **Carolyn Hart**: *Ghost Blows a Kiss*; **Allison Hartsoe**: *The Age of Customer Equity*; **Melvin L. Hawkins, LLC**: *Daniel's Fourth Kingdom: Fulfilling the Times of the Gentiles*; **Paula Hawkins**: *A Slow Fire Burning*; **William Hazelgrove**: *One Hundred and Sixty Minutes: The Race to Rescue the RMS Titanic*; **William Elliott Hazelgrove**: *Greed in the Gilded Age: The Brilliant Con of Cassie Chadwick*; **Deborah Heiligman** (and Gillian Flint, illus.): *Clara Lemlich*; **Bill Henderson** (Ed.): *Pushcart Prize XLVI: Best of the Small Presses 2022*; **D. J. Herda**: *Etta Place: Riding into History with Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*; **Jeffrey James Higgins**: *Furious: Sailing into Terror; Unseen: Evil Lurks Among Us*; **Christopher Hodapp** (and Alice Von Kannon): *RVs & Campers for Dummies*; **Alice Hoffman**: *The Book of Magic*; **Sarah Hoffman** (and Ian Hoffman; Chris Case, illus.): *Jacob's School Play: Starring He, She, and They*; **Linda Hogan**: *The Radiant Lives of Animals*; **Richard Holeton**: *Figurski at Findhorn on Acid (20th Anniversary Edition)*; **Dan Holly**: *Come On, People!: A Plea for Moderation and a*

Plan for Christians to Lead the Way; **Tammy Holt**: *Superpowers Activate: The Journey to Power*; **Ellen Hopkins**: *What About Will*; **Lori Haskins Houran** (and Aaron Cushley, illus.): *Bicycle*; **Katherine Howe** (and Anderson Cooper): *Vanderbilt: The Rise and Fall of an American Dynasty*; **Raven Howell**: *I Am Monster Magnificent*; **Kathryn Hulick** (and Marcin Wolski, illus.): *Welcome to the Future: Robot Friends, Fusion Energy, Pet Dinosaurs, and More!*; **Amy Huntington**: *Frankie Gets a Doggie*; **Siri Hustvedt**: *Mothers, Fathers, and Others: Essays*; **Joseph Hutchison**: *Under Sleep's New Moon*; **Frank Hyman**: *How to Forage for Mushrooms Without Dying: An Absolute Beginner's Guide to Identifying 29 Wild, Edible Mushrooms*;

Paty Jager: *Stolen Butterfly*; **Linda Jämsén**: *Odyssey of Love: A Memoir of Seeking and Finding*; **Lee James**: *Atonement; Marsh Madness*; **Victoria Jayne**: *Jacob: Odin's Fury Motorcycle Club*; **Sparrow**: *Odin's Fury Motorcycle Club*; **Jennifer Jenkins**: *American Bourbon*; **Merida Johns**: *Flower Girl*; **Jocelyn Nicole Johnson**: *My Monticello*; **Anita Johnson-Brown**: *Ameriween: The Superhero*; **Myrum Styles Murder Mysteries**: *California Nightmare; Myrum Styles Murder Mysteries: Undying Love and Mr. Bronsted; Rose of Desire; Rose of Desire* Heartbreak in the City: Saturday Love*; **Merry Jones**: *What You Don't Know*; **Timothy J. Jorgensen**: *Spark: The Life of Electricity and the Electricity of Life*;

Lisbeth Kaiser (and Stanley Chow, illus.): *Who Was Ruth Bader Ginsburg?*; **Victoria Kann**: *Rubylicious*; **Michele B. Kaufman**: *Pharmacology: An Introduction*; **Tammi Kaufman**: *A Heaven Party for Grandpa*; **Leah Rose Kessler** (and Cleonique Hilsaca, illus.): *Rat Fair*; **Liza Ketchum**: *The Last Garden*; **Liza Ketchum** (and Jacqueline Briggs Martin and Phyllis Root; Claudia

McGehee, illus.): *Begin with a Bee*; **Brendan Kiely**: *The Other Talk: Reckoning with Our White Privilege*; **Eric Kimmel**: *Shield of the Maccabees: A Hanukkah Graphic Novel*; **Eric Kimmel** (and Feronia Parker-Thomas, illus.): *The Three Latkes*; **Rachel King**: *People Along the Sand*; **Stephen King**: *Billy Summers*; **Ellen Kirschman**: *The Answer to His Prayers: A Dot Meyerhoff Mystery*; **Catherine Klatzker**: *You Will Never Be Normal*; **Marjorie Klein**: *Boom! A Miami Beach Story*; **Jiri Klobouk**: *Nearing the End*; **Amitha Jagannath Knight** (and Sandhya Prabhat, illus.): *Usha and the Big Digger*; **Michelle Knudsen** (and Gillian Flint, illus.): *Nellie Bly*; **Gordon Korman**: *Linked*; **Joshua Kornreich**: *Cavanaugh*; **Carolyn Korsmeyer**: *Charlotte's Story*; **Barbara Krasner**: *37 Days at Sea: Aboard the M.S. St. Louis, 1939*; **Claire Krulikowski**: *The Allegiance of Jesus: Why Is Peace Misunderstood?*; **Luke Jerod Kummer**: *Takers Mad*; **Angela Burke Kunkel** (and Catherine Odell, illus.): *Penguin Journey*; **Dale M. Kushner**: *M*;

Michael D. Landis: *Beer Cheese Stories*; **Mark Edward Langley**: *When Silence Screams*; **Laurie Lawlor** (and Becca Stadlander, illus.): *Fearless World Traveler: Adventures of Marianne North, Botanical Artist*; **Rebecca Lawton**: *Swimming Grand Canyon and Other Poems*; **Mel Laytner**: *What They Didn't Burn: Uncovering My Father's Holocaust Secrets*; **Joanne Leedom-Ackerman**: *PEN Journeys: Memoir of Literature on the Line*; **John Lescroart**: *The Missing Piece*; **Laura Levine**: *Murder Gets a Makeover*; **Marc Levy** (and Hannah Dickens-Doyle, Trans.): *Hope*; **Jethro K. Lieberman**: *Everything Is Jake*; **Amy Lillard**: *A Murder Like No Author*; **Sylvia Liu**: *Manatee's Best Friend*; **Kristin Loberg** (and Sanjay Gupta): *World War C: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic*

and *How to Prepare for the Next One*; **Katherine Locke** (and Nicole Melleby, Eds.): *This Is Our Rainbow: 16 Stories of Her, Him, Them, and Us*; **Larry Lockridge**: *The Great Cyprus Think Tank*; **Daniele S. Longo**: *Angels, Love, and Lost Souls*; **Phillip Lopate** (Ed.): *The Contemporary American Essay*; **Jess Lourey**: *Litani*; **Sheila Lowe**: *Dead Letters*;

Karen Mae: *Curiously Cara Meets Pharaoh Hatshepsut*; **Gregory Maguire**: *The Brides of Maracoor*; **Sarah Maizes** (and Kara Kramer, Illus.): *Atticus Caticus*; **M. L. Maki**: *Rocks and Shoals*; **Cynthia Manick**: *The Future of Black: Afrofuturism, Black Comics, and Superhero Poetry*; **Leonard S. Marcus**: *The Art of Alice and Martin Provensen*; **Leonard S. Marcus** (Ed.): *You Can't Say That!: Writers for Young People Talk About Censorship, Free Expression, and the Stories They Have to Tell*; **Lynne Marie**: *The Three Little Pigs and the Rocket Project*; **Ann Marks**: *Vivian Maier Developed: The Untold Story of the Photographer Nanny*; **Melissa Marr**: *The Hidden Knife*; **David Martin** (and Raissa Figueroa, Illus.): *The More the Merrier*; **De'Andrea Matthews**: *The Overcomers' Anthology: Volume Two—Overcoming Fear*; **Archer Mayor**: *Marked Man*; **Stacy McAnulty** (and Matthew Rivera, Illus.): *Brains! Not Just a Zombie Snack*; **Susan McCormick**: *The Antidote*; **The Fog Ladies: In the Soup**; **PJ McIlvaine**: *Dragon Roar*; **G. A. McKeve**: *A Few Drops of Bitters*; **Robin McLean**: *Pity the Beast*; **Michael Meyer**: *Exit Strategy*; **Jamie Michalak** (and Debbi Michiko Florence; Yuko Jones, Illus.): *Niki Nakayama: A Chef's Tale in 13 Bites*; **Jamie Michalak** (and Kelly Murphy, Illus.): *Dakota Crumb: Tiny Treasure Hunter*; **Anne Michaud**: *American Czarina: Melania Knauss Trump, Immigrant First Lady of the United States; Why They Stay: Sex Scandals, Deals, and Hidden*

Agendas of Eight Political Wives (2nd Edition); **Casey Michel**: *American Kleptocracy: How the U.S. Created the World's Greatest Money Laundering Scheme in History*; **Kirsten Mickelwait**: *The Ghost Marriage*; **Christy Mihaly** (and Mariona Cabassa, Illus.): *Barefoot Books Water: A Deep Dive of Discovery*; **Claudia Mills**: *The Lost Language*; **Claudia Mills** (and Grace Zong, Illus.): *Boogie Bass, Sign Language Star*; **Stephen Moore**: *All Roads Lead to the Birchmere: America's Legendary Music Hall*; **Thomas S. Mullaney** (and Christopher Rea): *Where Research Begins: Choosing a Research Project That Matters to You (and the World)*; **Kate Myles**: *The Receptionist*;

Judi Nath: *Digesting Foods and Fads; Sins Against Science: How Misinformation Affects Our Lives and Laws*; **Vernita Naylor** (and Nikita Nikol Naylor): *Speaking in Colors*; **Nina Neefe**: *2020: A Cat Odyssey*; **Lesléa Newman** (and Taia Morley, Illus.): *As Babies Dream*; **Erik Nordman** (with Jason Reblando, Photog.): *The Uncommon Knowledge of Elinor Ostrom: Essential Lessons for Collective Action*; **Kristen Nordstrom** (and Paul Boston, Illus.): *Mimic Makers: Biomimicry Inventors Inspired by Nature*; **James R Norwood**: *Heirs of the Ancients*; **Peter Joffre Nye**: *Hearts of Lions: The History of American Bicycle Racing, Second Edition*;

Randy O'Brien: *Gettysburg by Morning*; **T. L. Orcutt**: *Hunter of Illusions*; **Toni Ortner**: *Blue Lyrics*; **Su Orwell**: *Escape Artists*; **Jacquelyn A. Ottman**: *Connecting from a Quarantine Kitchen: My Shelter Island Pandemic Story*; **Ruth Ozeki**: *The Book of Form and Emptiness*;

Angela Page (and Mia Altieri): *There's a Dead Girl in My Yard*; **Dennis Palumbo**: *Panic Attack*; **Jodie Parachini** (and Dragan Kordić, Illus.): *Beautiful Jim: The World's Smartest Horse*; **Kathleen**

Parrish: *Second Son: A Novel of the Deep South*; **Katherine Paterson**: *Birdie's Bargain*; **Ann Whitford Paul**: *Who Loves Little Lemur?*; **Steve Paul**: *Literary Alchemist: The Writing Life of Evan S. Connell*; **Gin Peace**: *Frigga the Red*; **Mary L. Peachin**: *Sleeping Around . . . Challenging My Comfort Zone*; **Sara Pennypacker** (and Jon Klassen, Illus.): *Pax, Journey Home*; **Bruce D. Perry** (and Oprah Winfrey): *What Happened to You?: Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing*; **Micki R. Pettit**: *A Kiss for Maggie Moore*; **Nathaniel Philbrick**: *Travels with George: In Search of Washington and His Legacy*; **Gail Smith Pierce**: *Wrestling with an Angel*; **Leslie Pietrzyk**: *Admit This to No One*; **Michelle M. Pillow**: *Feral Prince; Night Magick; The Sixth Spell*; **Steven Pinker**: *Rationality: What It Is, Why It Seems Scarce, Why It Matters*; **Eileen Pollack**: *Maybe It's Me: On Being the Wrong Kind of Woman*; **Michael Pollan**: *This Is Your Mind on Plants*; **Judy Polumbaum**: *All Available Light: The Life and Legacy of Photographer Ted Polumbaum*; **John Pomfret**: *From Warsaw with Love: Polish Spies, the CIA, and the Forging of an Unlikely Alliance*; **Margaret Porter**: *The Limits of Limelight*; **Padgett Powell**: *Indigo: Arm Wrestling, Snake Saving, and Some Things in Between*; **Emilly Prado**: *Funeral for Flaca: Essays*; **Douglas Preston and Lee Child**: *Bloodless*;

Thomas Lloyd Qualls: *Happiness Is an Imaginary Line in the Sand*;

Judith Ruskay Rabinor, PhD: *The Girl in the Red Boots: Making Peace with My Mother*; **Diana Rajchel**: *Hex Twisting: Counter Magick Spells for the Irritated Witch*; *Urban Magick: A Guide for the City Witch*; **Chris Raschka**: *Saint Spotting: Or, How to Read a Church*; **Elizabeth Raum**: *Storm Warning*; **Heather Remoff**: *What's Sex Got to Do with It?: Darwin, Love, Lust, and the Anthropocene*;

Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich: *It Doesn't Take a Genius*; **Brad Ricca:** *True Raiders: The Untold Story of the 1909 Expedition to Find the Legendary Ark of the Covenant*; **Alex Richards:** *When We Were Strangers*; **Michelle Richmond:** *The Wonder Test*; **Candace Robb:** *The Riverwoman's Dragon*; **Peyton H. Roberts:** *Beneath the Seams: A Social Impact Novel*; **Peter Robison:** *Flying Blind: The 737 MAX Tragedy and the Fall of Boeing*; **Adam Rogers:** *Full Spectrum: How the Science of Color Made Us Modern*; **David R. Roth:** *The Femme Fatale Hypothesis*; **Mandy M. Roth, Michelle M. Pillow, Robyn Peterman, Yasmine Galenorn, and Renee George:** *Aged to Perfection: A Magical Paranormal Women's Fiction Romance Collection*; **Sarah L. Roth:** *Biding My Time*; **Peggy Rothschild:** *A Deadly Bone to Pick*; **Edward Roy:** *Bullets in the Fire: The Saga of New York Red*; **Brenda Scott Royce:** *Monkey Mystery*; **John Russell:** *A Knock in the Attic*; **Lynn Sally:** *Neo-Burlesque: Striptease as Transformation*; **Cynthia Saltzman:** *Plunder: Napoleon's Theft of Veronese's Feast*; **Sandy Eisenberg Sasso** (and Roy DeLeon, Illus.): *The Raven and the Dove, The Big Fish, and the Stubborn Donkey: Stories of Animals from the Bible*; **Kate Scannell:** *Lethal Control*; **Jeff Schnader:** *The Serpent Papers*; **E. M. Schorb:** *A Portable Chaos* (Revised Edition); **Paul Schullery:** *The Bear Doesn't Know: Life and Wonder in Bear Country*; *Real Work: The Ditchman's Tale*; **Laura Scott:** *Dogged by Death*; *Tailing Trouble*; **Stephen D. Senturia:** *A Different Purpose*; **Susan Shapiro** (and Kenan Trebinčević): *World in Between: Based on a True Refugee Story*; **Tracy Shawn:** *Floating Underwater*; **Sandy Sheehy:** *Imperiled Reef: The Fascinating, Fragile Life of a Caribbean Wonder*; **Katie Shelly** (Illus.; and Dan Richer, Katie Parla, and Eric Wolfinger,

Photog.): *The Joy of Pizza*; **Katie Shelly** (Illus.; and Nina Kraus): *Of Sound Mind*; **Andrea Siegel:** *Plotz!: A Romantic Comedy About the Safe Disposal of Low-Level Radioactive Waste*; **Traci Silva:** *The Girl in the Back Seat: My Walk with God Through Domestic Violence*; **Marilyn Singer** (and Edwin Fotheringham, Illus.): *A Raven Named Grip: How a Bird Inspired Two Famous Writers, Charles Dickens and Edgar Allan Poe*; **Marilyn Singer** (and **Leah Nixon**, Illus.): *Best Day Ever!*; **Karin Slaughter:** *False Witness*; **Dirk Smillie:** *The Business of Tomorrow: The Visionary Life of Harry Guggenheim: From Aviation and Rocketry to the Creation of an Art Dynasty*; **J. P. Smith:** *The Summoning*; **Jane Smith:** *Miss Meow*; **Joann Smith:** *A Heaven of Their Choosing*; **SaraKay Smullens:** *Burnout and Self-Care in Social Work: A Guidebook for Students and Those in Mental Health and Related Professions* (2nd Edition); **Dorothy Potter Snyder:** *Meaty Pleasures*; **Michael Solomowitz:** *Behind the Fourth Wall*; **Frances Southwick:** *Prognosis: Fair: A Trauma Case Study for Clinicians*; **Ruth Spiro** (and Irene Chan, Illus.): *Angular Momentum on Hanukkah!*; **Ruth Spiro** (and Greg Paprocki, Illus.): *The Presidency*; **Elaine Spooner:** *Outside the Spotlights: Conversations with Unsung Creators Behind the Screens in Hollywood*; **Jyotsna Sreenivasan:** *These Americans: Short Stories and a Novella*; **Walter Stahr:** *Salmon P. Chase: Lincoln's Vital Rival*; **Diane Stanley:** *Second Sleep*; **Peter J. Stavros:** (Mostly) *True Tales from Birchmont Village*; **Alice Pearce Stevens** (and Matt Huynh, Illus.): *Rhinos in Nebraska: The Amazing Discovery of the Ashfall Fossil Beds*; **Pamela Stockwell:** *A Boundless Place*; **Zara Stone:** *Killer Looks: The Forgotten History of Plastic Surgery In Prisons*; **Conrad J. Storar:** *Story Monsters Among Us*; **Michelle G. Stradford:** *Self*

Love Notes: Uplifting Poetry, Affirmations & Quotes; *Waves of You: Love Poems*; **Linda Leopold Strauss** (and Sara Infante, Illus.): *Numbers Everywhere*; **Elizabeth Strout:** *Oh William!*; **VL Stuart:** *Masters of Magic*; **Anne McCrary Sullivan:** *The Everglades: Stories of Grit and Spirit from the Mangrove Wilderness*; **Susan Sussman** (and Gertrude Chandler Warner): *The Beekeeper Mystery*; **Nita Sweeney:** *Depression Hates a Moving Target: How Running with My Dog Brought Me Back from the Brink*; *You Should Be Writing: A Journal of Inspiration and Instruction to Keep Your Pen Moving*; **Justin Swingle:** *The Air Between Our Tubs: Borrowed Dreams*; **Mitzi Szereto:** *The Best New True Crime Stories: Crimes of Passion, Obsession & Revenge*; *The Best New True Crime Stories: Partners in Crime*; *The Best New True Crime Stories: Well-Mannered Crooks, Rogues & Criminals*; **Don Tassone:** *Francesca*; *Snapshots: Seventy-Five Short Stories*; **Waddy Thompson:** *The Wise Guide to Winning Grants* (2nd Edition); **E. S. Thornton:** *Touch the Dead*; **Edward Tick:** *Coming Home in Viet Nam*; **Amy Timberlake** (and Jon Klassen, Illus.): *Egg Marks the Spot*; **Steven Tingle:** *Graveyard Fields*; **Graham Todd:** *Barman*; **Camilla Trinchieri:** *The Bitter Taste of Murder*; **Gina Troisi:** *The Angle of Flickering Light*; **Stanley Trollip:** *Wolfman*; **Glennette Tilley Turner:** *A Man Called Horse: John Horse and the Black Seminole Underground Railroad*; **Lisa Unger:** *Last Girl Ghosted*; **Richard Vetere:** *Live Fast, Die Young & Leave a Good-Looking Corpse: A Memoir of the 1970s*; **Ray Villareal:** *Chronicles of a Luchador*; **Brenda Wada:** *Because I'm Awesome!: A Trail of Fun*; **Kate Walter:** *Behind the Mask: Living Alone in the Epicenter*; **Qian Julie Wang:** *Beautiful Country: A Memoir*; **Brad Weismann:** *Lost in the Dark: A World History of Horror Film*; **Abigail Wender** (Transl.; and

Iris Hanika): *The Bureau of Past Management*; **Monica West**: *Revival Season*; **Tracey West** (and Kayla May, illus.): *The Underdogs*; **Julie Weston**: *Miners' Moon*; **Annette Whipple** (and Juanbjuan Oliver, illus.): *Woof! The Truth About Dogs*; **Dianne White** (and Ramona Kaulitzki, illus.): *Winter Lullaby*; **Thomas Wiewandt**: *Fossils Inside Out: A Global Fusion of Science, Art & Culture*; **Wallis Wilde-Menzozi**: *Silence and Silences*; **Hans Wilhelm** (and Erica Salcedo, illus.): *Pigs at a Party*; **Nyasha Williams** (and Sóf'ya Glushkó, illus.): *I Affirm Me: The ABCs of Inspiration for Black Kids*; **Preslaysa Williams**: *A Lowcountry Bride*; **Susan Willson**: *Making Sense of Menopause: Harnessing the Power and Potency of Your Wisdom Years*; **Gerald Winter**: *Unconscious*; **Jonah Winter** (and Jeanette Winter, illus.): *The Little Owl & the Big Tree: A Christmas Story*; **Deanna Witkowski**: *Mary Lou Williams: Music for the Soul*; **Meg Wolitzer**: *Millions of Maxes*; **Mandy-Suzanne Wong**: *Listen, We All Bleed*; **Lee Woodman**: *Lifescapes*; **Marianne Woolbert-Maxwell**: *Victim of the Defense*; **Addie Woolridge**: *The Bounce Back*; **Darla Worden**: *Cockeyed Happy: Ernest Hemingway's Wyoming Summers with Pauline*; **Kim Wozencraft**: *Neglect*; **Lawrence Wright**: *The Plague Years: America in the Time of Covid*;

Xu Xi (and Robin Hemley): *The Art and Craft of Asian Stories: A Writer's Guide and Anthology*;

Philip Yancey: *A Companion in Crisis: A Modern Paraphrase of John Donne's Devotions*; *Where the Light Fell*; **Joyce Yarow**: *Sandstorm*; **John Young**: *Fire in the Field and Other Stories*;

Jane Breskin Zalben (and Yevgenia Nayberg, illus.): *A Bear for Bimi*; **Erin Zinkhan**: *Tiny But Mighty Baby: A Parents' Guide to Navigating Your Child's Diagnosis of Intrauterine Growth Restriction*; **Clark Zlotchew**: *A Presence of Absence*

* MEMBERS MAKE NEWS

The National Book Awards announced its 2021 longlists the week of September 12. **Lauren Groff's** *Matrix* and **Robert Jones Jr.'s** *The Prophets* were longlisted in the Fiction category. Bo-Young Kim's *On the Origin of Species and Other Stories*, translated from the Korean by Joungmin Lee Comfort and **Sora Kim-Russell**, was longlisted in the Translated Literature category.

Peggy Adler's essay "Genealogy of the House at 151 East Main Street" won the Connecticut Society of Genealogists' "Tell Your Family Story" Essay Contest.

Amal's *My Key* won the 2020 Key Colors Illustrators Competition Gold Medal.

Adria Bernardi won the 2021 FC2 Catherine Doctorow Innovative Fiction Prize.

Leslie Bratspis's *White Dunes* won the 2021 Speak Up Talk Radio Firebird Book Award.

Priyanka Champaneri's *The City of Good Death* was shortlisted for the 2021 Center for Fiction's First Novel Award.

Lawrence Coates's *Boom* won the 2020 Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society Prize in the Novella category.

Michael Coffino's *Truth Is in the House* won a Pacific Book Award in the Historical Fiction category, an International Impact Book Award in the Friendship category, and three Firebird Book Awards in the categories of Social/Political Change (first place), African American Fiction (first place), and Multicultural Fiction (second place). The book also received honorable mentions at the Los Angeles Book Festival, the New York Book Festival, and the Hollywood Book Festival.

Brett Dakin's *American Daredevil: Comics, Communism, and the Battles of Lev Gleason* was nominated for the 2021 Eisner

Award in the category of Best Comics-Related Book.

Linda Eve Diamond was awarded the 2021 REELpoetry Film and Video Prompt Award at the REELpoetry International Poetry Film & Video Festival. The winning video poem, "A Moving Portrait," blends her poem with the video artwork by Matvey Rezanov that inspired it. The poem was selected for entry in the festival through a Public Poetry contest. She was honored with the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS) Founders Award. In addition to receiving the first place prize for her poem "A Thin Line," she was awarded third place for her poem "Light Fades," and honorable mention for a third poem. She also received a 2021 Artists Embassy International award for her poem "Art Beats."

Chris Dickon's *Dutch Children of African American Liberators: Race, Military Policy and Identity in World War II and Beyond*, coauthored by Mieke Kirkels, won the African American Historical and Genealogical Society's award for Best Multicultural Book of 2021.

Maia Evrona received a Fulbright Senior Scholar Award to Spain and Greece in support of her poetry.

Clyde W. Ford's *Think Black* received the 2021 Washington Center for the Book Award in the Creative Nonfiction category.

Howard Gardner received the 2021 United Sigma Intelligence Association Award in recognition of his contributions to arts, science, and humanity.

Terence Harkins's *The Big Buddha Bicycle Race* was awarded a 2020 Silver Medal in Literary Fiction by the Military Writers Society of America.

The Night Bazaar Venice: Thirteen Tales of Forbidden Wishes and Dangerous Desires, edited by **Lenore Hart**, won the 2020 Shirley Jackson Award in the category of Edited Anthology.

Mark A. Herschberg's *The Career Toolkit: Essential Skills for Success That No One Taught You* was a Human Relations Indie Book Award Gold winner in the Workplace Human Relations Indie Book category. It received a silver medal in the Readers' Favorite Book Reviews & Award Contest in the Nonfiction-Occupational category. It also won the 2021 NYC Big Book Award in the Career category and was named a finalist in the 2021 Independent Author Network Book of the Year Awards in the category of Nonfiction-Career/Occupational.

Linda Hogan's *A History of Kindness* won the 2021 Oklahoma Book Award in the Poetry category and was a finalist in the Poetry category in the 2021 Colorado Book Awards. She was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the *Los Angeles Review of Books* on February 19.

Arthur Hoyle's *Mavericks, Mystics, and Misfits: Americans Against the Grain* won the 2021 Independent Press Award in the Biography: Historical category. It was also a finalist in the 2020 National Indie Excellence Awards.

Martha Hodes was appointed for a two-year term as interim director of the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library, beginning September 2021. Hodes was herself a Cullman Center Fellow in 2018–19.

Karla Huebner's *Magnetic Woman: Toyen and the Surrealist Erotic* won the 2021 Czechoslovak Studies Association Book Prize.

Mark Langley's *Death Waits in the Dark* won the 2021 Feathered Quill award for Best Mystery Novel and the American Book Fest Award in the Multicultural category. His novel *When Silence Screams* won the Public Safety Writers Association Award in the Fiction category.

Barry Longyear's *The War Whisperer, Book 5: The Hook* won the 2021 Prometheus Award for Best Novel.

Mark Monmonier received the Chancellor's Citation for Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award for "extraordinary contributions to the undergraduate experience and research excellence, that have fostered innovation and supported student veterans."

Michelle M. Pillow received a Mississippi Arts Commission Grant. The \$500 grant will be used to distribute review copies in promotion of her Order of Magic paranormal women's fiction series.

Vanna Nguyen's *The Life She Once Knew: The Incredible True Story of Queena, the Bloomingdale Library Attack Survivor* received a bronze medal in the 2021 FAPA President's Book Award in the category of Biography/Autobiography/Memoir.

Ann Regimbal's *Mary Magdalene's Stations of the Cross* won the 2021 Christian Indie Award in the Gift Book category.

Margaret Rodenberg's *Finding Napoleon* was a 2021 International Book Awards Best New Fiction finalist, a 2021 American Fiction Awards Finalist in Best New Fiction and Historical Fiction, and a 2021 Readers' Favorite Book Awards Honorable Mention in Fiction: Historical (Personage).

Lois Roma-Deeley has been named the new Poet Laureate of Scottsdale, Arizona. She will serve her term until December 24, 2024.

John Russell's *Riding with Ghosts, Angels, and the Spirits of the Dead* won a Bronze Medal in the Readers' Favorite International Book Awards Contest. It also received a Silver Award from the Nonfiction Authors Association. His book *A Knock in the Attic* received a Gold Award from the Nonfiction Authors Association.

Jeff Schnader's short story "The Champion" won first prize in the League of Utah Writers 2020 Quills Creative Writing Contest, in the category of Fiction. His forthcoming novel, *The Serpent Papers*,

was named a finalist in the 2021 Blue Moon Novel Competition.

Maya Smith won the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Studies, presented at the 2021 Modern Language Association Conference, for her book *Senegal Abroad: Linguistic Borders, Racial Formations, and Diasporic Imaginaries*.

Elle Thornton's *The Girl Who Swam to Atlantis* won the 2021 Florida Author Project Contest in the YA category. The contest is held by the Indie Author Project.

Monique Truong won the 2021 John Dos Passos Prize for Literature. The award "honors America's most talented but underappreciated writers."

Richard Vetere's *Caravaggio* won the Golden Palm Award for the Best Screenplay at the 2021 Beverly Hills Film Festival.

Thomas Wiewandt's *Fossils Inside Out: A Global Fusion of Science, Art & Culture* won the 2021 Silver Benjamin Franklin Award from the Independent Book Publishers Association and was named a finalist in the 2021 Next Generation Indie Book Awards.

Xu Xi was named the new Jenks Chair in Contemporary American Letters at the College of the Holy Cross. The William H. P. Jenks Chair in Contemporary American Letters is an endowed professorship that brings distinguished creative writers to the English department for two- to five-year appointments.

* IN MEMORIAM

Etel Adnan, 96, died on November 14 in Paris. The Lebanese American writer was best known for her 1978 novel *Sitt Marie Rose*, a brutal kidnapping tale centered around Lebanon's civil war, and based on a true story.

Eve Babitz, 78, died on December 17 in Los Angeles. She was a self-made star, a sparkly

blonde from Hollywood High School with connections to the worlds of film, music, and partying. “An It girl of nineteen-sixties Los Angeles,” wrote *The New Yorker’s* Jia Tolentino in a 2017 review of a re-release of Babitz’s first work, *Eve’s Hollywood*, first published in 1974. With a canny sense for blowing through acceptable norms, and the nerve to write all about it, Babitz chronicled life on the scene through the 1960s and ’70s, publishing eight works of fiction and nonfiction, including *L.A. Woman*, *Fast Company*, and *Sex and Rage*.

Marie-Claire Blais, 82, died on November 30 in Key West, Florida. The French Canadian novelist divided her time between Florida and Quebec, and was best known among readers in her native French language. She published her first novel, 1959’s *La Belle Bête*, when she was 20.

Robert Bly, 94, died on November 21 in Minneapolis. He was a prolific poet who first came to national attention during the Vietnam War, writing piercing antiwar verses and cofounding American Voters Against the Vietnam War. He won the National Book Award for 1968’s *The Light Around the Body*, a collection of poetry written in protest of the war, then donated his \$1,000 prize to the draft resistance movement. Two decades later, amid a rich career as a poet, he released what would prove to be his best-known work, *Iron John: A Book About Men*. His message that American men had grown soft unleashed a national discussion in which he fully engaged, leading retreats and seminars, while continuing to write essays and poems. Four decades after he had spoken out against the Vietnam War, he published *The Insanity of Empire: A Book of Poems Against the War in Iraq*.

Roberto Calasso, 80, died on July 28 in Milan. The Italian writer and intellectual was best known for 1988’s *The Marriage of Cadmus*

and *Harmony*, one of many works that explored ancient mythology. He was also the widely admired director of Adelphi Edizioni, the Florentine publishing house where he worked for 60 years. “He was always finding writers who hadn’t had their due,” Jonathan Galassi told *The New York Times*, “and he was always good at publicizing them when he published a book. . . . He was kind of a literary magician.”

Eric Carle, 91, died on May 23 in Northampton, Massachusetts. He was best known for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, but in the course of his career he produced more than 70 children’s books and sold more than 170 million copies worldwide. He won the Children’s Literature Legacy Award (previously called the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award) in 2003.

Bernette Ford, 70, died on June 20 in Brooklyn, New York. A pioneer for women of color in writing and promoting children’s books, she is the author of 1990’s memorable *Bright Eyes, Brown Skin*. She also had a long career as an editor, creating the Cartwheel imprint while a vice president at Scholastic, and launching the series Just for You at Color-Bridge Books, a packaging and consulting company she founded in 2003.

Patricia Reilly Giff, 86, died on June 22 in Trumbull, Connecticut. She began writing for children in her forties, publishing more than a hundred books for children and young adults, including her popular series Kids of the Polk Street School, and two Newbery Honor titles, *Lily’s Crossing* and *Pictures of Hollis Woods*.

Noah Gordon, 95, died on November 22 in Dedham, Massachusetts. The Jewish American novelist found far more success overseas than at home. While his debut book, 1965’s *The Rabbi*, did moderately well in the U.S., his subsequent titles saw little success here but did massively well overseas, especially in Germany,

where in the 1990s, six of his books were bestsellers at the same time.

Almudena Grandes, 61, died on November 27 in Madrid. Considered one of Spain’s most important and recognized authors, she had a major breakthrough with 1989’s *Las edades de Lulú* (*The Ages of Lulu*), which was adapted into a feature film, as were several of her other works. She was equally well known for her outspoken feminism.

Loise Greenfield, 92, died on August 5 in Washington, D.C. She was a prolific writer who produced biographies of Black historical figures and children’s books that highlighted Black family life. She is perhaps best known for her 1978 poetry collection, *Honey, I Love, and In the Land of Words*, for which she won a Coretta Scott King Award. She published her last book, *The Women Who Caught the Babies: A Story of African American Midwives*, at 90.

bell hooks, 69, died on December 15 in Berea, Kentucky. Born Gloria Jean Watkins in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, hooks adopted her grandmother’s name for her published work. She was a singular force, a trailblazer who pointed out that the mainstream (white) feminist movement was doing little to address racism and other forms of discrimination, and she didn’t waste time. She began writing the landmark book that brought her to national attention, *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (1981), when she was still a student at Stanford (and a part-time telephone operator). She earned a doctorate in English literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and went on to have a rich and varied academic career that she designed for herself, teaching African American studies at Yale and women’s studies at Oberlin, and years on, ending up by choice at Berea College in rural Kentucky. She would publish more than 30 books—on race, women, men, and for children in

the course of her career, and her legacy includes the bell hooks center at Berea, created in 2014.

Eddie Jaku, 101, died on October 12 in Sydney. A Holocaust survivor who vowed never to set foot in his native Germany again, Jaku (shortened from Jakubowicz) immigrated to Australia and dedicated his life to helping “people who were down.” He published a best-selling memoir, *The Happiest Man on Earth*, in 2020.

Brendan Kennelly, 85, died on October 17 in Listowel, Ireland. He was a beloved and prolific Irish poet, completing more than 50 volumes in the course of his career. His 400-page epic poem, *The Book of Judas*, published in 1991, was a bestseller in his native country.

James Loewen, 79, died on August 19 in Bethesda, Maryland. He was well known for trying to correct the American historical record, especially on matters of race, as best seen in his seminal work, 1995's *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*.

Janet Malcolm, 86, died on June 16 in Manhattan. The longtime writer for *The New Yorker* was renowned for her excoriating essays on journalistic ethics and her own well-documented issues with them. Her best known work was 1989's *The Journalist and the Murderer*.

Lee Maracle, 71, died on November 11 in Surrey, British Columbia. She broke ground as an early member of Canada's First Nations author movement, writing tales of Indigenous peoples. Her first submission to a publishing house was rejected with the brutal comment “Indians can't read.” Her autobiographical novel, *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel*, was published by a small house in 1975, and she went on to write novels, essays, and poetry, all powerfully focused on the Indigenous world.

Leila Meacham, 83, died on September 19 in San Antonio,

Texas. An English teacher who published her best-selling debut novel, *Roses*, at the age of 70, she went on to write seven more books before her death, most recently 2019's *Dragonfly*.

Jill Murphy, 72, died on August 18 in Cornwall, England. She was a children's book author and illustrator best known for a pair of long-running series, *The Large Family* and *The Worst Witch*.

Gary Paulsen, 82, died on October 13 in Tularosa, New Mexico. He was the author of more than 200 books, many of them young adult novels that focused on exploring (and surviving) the great outdoors. Perhaps his best known work was 1987's *Hatchet*.

Robert Quackenbush, 91, died on May 17 in Manhattan, New York. He was the author and illustrator of more than 200 children's books, introducing characters such as Detective Mole and Miss Mallard, who later became television stars. In his seventh decade, he earned a degree as a psychoanalyst, working with children in his studio, which also served as a workshop for children and adults.

Lucinda Riley, 55, died on June 1 in Norfolk, England. The internationally best-selling Irish author came to writing after a brief career as an actress in her early twenties. Her final work, *The Missing Sister*, reached number one in the *The Bookseller's* Original Fiction chart just a week before her death.

Takao Saito, 84, died on September 24 in Tokyo. The prolific writer and illustrator of manga created the iconic series *Golgo* 13 in 1968. Initially published in weekly magazines, the series broke multiple records, including a world record for the most volumes ever released in a single comic series when the 201st edition was released in July 2021.

Joan Schenkar, 78, died May 5 in Paris. She began her career as a playwright before switch-

ing to biographies, with 2009's highly praised *The Talented Miss Highsmith: The Secret Life and Serious Art of Patricia Highsmith*, seen by critics as a career peak.

Greg Tate, 64, died on December 7 in New York City. He was a prominent music writer and critic who made his name writing for *The Village Voice* in the 1980s. His work would later be issued in a pair of critically acclaimed anthologies, 1992's *Flyboy in the Buttermilk: Essays on Contemporary America* and 2016's *Flyboy 2: The Greg Tate Reader*.

Stephen Vizinczey, 88, died on August 18 in London. The fiction writer, who fled Hungary after the failed uprising in 1956, is best remembered for the cultural stir he set off with his debut novel, 1965's *In Praise of Older Women: The Amorous Recollections of András Vajda*. The work broke new ground for frank depictions of sex.

* DECEASED MEMBERS

Fostenia Baker
Eric Carle
Anne Conover Carson
Laura H. Chapman
James S. Fleming
Mary Campbell Gallagher
Don Gold
Noah Gordon
Eloise Greenfield
Ann Grifalconi
Richard Hammer
Eric Zebedee Lucas
Priscilla Johnson McMillan
Victor R. Muravin
Julia Older
Robert Quackenbush
Lea Bayers Rapp
Anne Rice
Robin Robertson
Katharine Munzer Rogers
Lester Rowntree
Henry Butterfield Ryan
Joan Schenkar
William Sharfman
Don Skiles

JOAN DIDION

December 5, 1934–
December 23, 2021



The Authors Guild pays tribute to the incomparable Joan Didion and greatly mourns her passing on December 23, 2021, at the age of 87. An award-winning journalist, novelist, memoirist, screenwriter, playwright, and longtime Authors Guild member, Didion was a literary icon whose distinct writing style and ability to build dramatic tension out of seemingly spare sentences were often imitated but rarely matched.

Born and raised in Sacramento, California, and educated at UC Berkeley, she moved to New York after she won an essay-writing contest sponsored by *Vogue*, where she worked for several years. Didion first broke out as one of the New Journalists in the late 1960s. With narrative essays such as “[Slouching Towards Bethlehem](#),” “The White Album,” “[On Self-Respect](#),” and “On the Morning After the Sixties,” she forever transformed how we reported, viewed, and understood the world, notably California, which served as a source of inspiration and disillusionment throughout Didion’s career.

She published her first novel, *Run River*, in 1961, followed by *Play It as It Lays* (1970), which became a 1972 film. With her husband, novelist John Gregory Dunne, she also wrote the screenplays for *Panic in Needle Park* (1971), *A Star*

**JUST AS PEOPLE REMEMBER
EXACTLY WHERE THEY WERE
WHEN MEN LANDED ON THE
MOON, WRITERS REMEMBER
THE FIRST TIME THEY READ
“THE WHITE ALBUM.” OR THE
GREAT ESSAY “WHY I WRITE.”**

Is Born (1976), *True Confessions* (1981), and *Up Close & Personal* (1996).

Didion turned next to political reporting, filing long essays on the civil war in El Salvador and Cuban émigré culture in Miami, published in book form as *Salvador* and *Miami*, respectively. Her searing 1991 *New York Review of Books* commentary “Sentimental Journeys,” on the Central Park Five case, proved extraordinarily prescient given the later exoneration of the five convicted African American teenagers, who spent up to 13 years in jail. She also spent months covering Al Gore’s 2000 presidential campaign.

Didion’s memoir *The Year of Magical Thinking*—about Dunne’s sudden death, followed shortly by the tragic illness and passing of her daughter, Quintana Roo—won the 2005 National Book Award for Nonfiction and was a finalist for both the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Pulitzer Prize for Biography, Autobiography, or Memoir. She adapted the book into a 2007 Broadway play starring Vanessa Redgrave. In 2019, *The Guardian* named *The Year of Magical Thinking* one of the 100 best books of the twenty-first century.

The Authors Guild honored Didion with its Service to Literature Award at our [2015 Annual Benefit](#). At that event, Authors Guild Council

Member Roxana Robinson, who served as Guild president at the time, said of Joan Didion:

“Her writing is so electrifying, so powerful, that for writers, every new work of hers was like a national event. Just as people remember exactly where they were when men landed on the moon, writers remember the first time they read *The White Album*. Or the great essay “Why I Write.” Or entered the bare, beautiful landscape of her novel *Play It as It Lays*.”

In response to the news of Didion’s passing, Robinson said, “There are certain moments that brand themselves into our consciousness, moments that stand as intersections between our public and private lives. These moments create a tremor that runs through the entire country. Joan Didion’s death is one of those moments, as was her writing.”

A writer to the very end, Didion published her final book, *Let Me Tell You What I Mean*, earlier in 2021. **AG**

ANNE RICE

October 2, 1941–
December 23, 2021



The Authors Guild remembers our colleague Anne Rice, who died December 11, 2021, at the age of 80. The author of 41 novels and a spiritual memoir, Anne was best known for her Vampire Chronicles series, which began with the 1976 publication of *Interview with a Vampire*, based on a short story she had written years earlier. In addition to the Vampire Chronicles, she wrote four other series: Lives of the Mayfair Witches, Ramses the Damned, Sleeping Beauty, and the Wolf Gift Chronicles, as well as several stand-alone novels, including *The Feast of All Saints* and *Exit to Eden*. She had a robust fan base whose members, including a large number of LGBTQ+ readers, identified strongly with the gothic romance, otherness, and self-created families in her fiction.

Anne grew up in New Orleans, where she lived until she was 16. After her mother died, her father remarried and moved the family to Texas, where she became high school friends with the [poet Stan Rice](#). The two stayed in touch by mail

**“EVERY WRITER KNOWS FEAR
AND DISCOURAGEMENT.
JUST WRITE—THE WORLD IS
CRYING FOR NEW WRITING.”**

after Anne left for college at Texas Woman’s University and then moved to San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury district. After Stan proposed to her via letter, they married and settled in San Francisco, where Anne pursued her BA in political science and later received her MFA in English and creative writing from San Francisco State University, where Stan would later teach. In 1972, eleven years after they married, their five-year-old daughter, Michele, died of leukemia. According to *The New York Times*, Anne described how her grief and loss of direction after Michele’s death led her to writing fiction.

“I wanted to write and write and write, and pour out my emotions, and make stories, and create something,” she said during a 1993 television interview with ABC. “That was my response to seeing something die and something pass out of my hands like that, and seeing this beautiful child die, no matter what I did or anybody else did.”

Four years later, Knopf published *Interview with a Vampire*. Though it received mixed reviews initially, it went on to sell more than eight million copies and was adapted for a blockbuster film starring Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt. Rice published her last book, *Blood Communion: A Tale of Prince Lestat*, in October 2018. All told, her books have sold more than 150 million copies.

Rice was a faithful member of the Authors Guild for 45 years, first joining in August 1976.

Guild members and staff recall her (and her husband) as lovely and humble. We extend our condolences to her son, Christopher Rice, a successful author who sometimes collaborated with Anne on books, and to her sisters, Karen O’Brien, Micki Jenkins, and Tamara Tinker.

Often inundated with requests by fans interested in becoming writers, Anne is remembered for sharing the following advice: “Every writer knows fear and discouragement. Just write—the world is crying for new writing. It is crying for fresh and original voices and new characters and new stories. If you won’t write the classics of tomorrow, well, we will not have any.” **AG**

* RECENT PROGRAMMING

This past fall and winter, we launched a virtual edition of **Business Bootcamps for Writers** while producing more **From Manuscript to Marketplace**, **Money Matters**, and more online events. Find recordings online at authorsguild.org/whats-new/seminars-member-events/webinar-recording-archive.

BUSINESS BOOTCAMPS FOR WRITERS

- * **Paths to Publication: Traditional and Small Press**
October 18, 2021, 7:00pm
- * **Paths to Publication: Alternatives to Traditional Publishing**
October 19, 2021, 2:00pm
- * **Finding Your Agent: 7 Steps to a Successful Query Letter and Mistakes to Avoid**
October 26, 2021, 2:00pm
- * **Legal Vetting for Manuscripts to Manage Risk**
October 28, 2021, 2:00pm
- * **Your Legal Rights and Making Your Contracts Work for You**
November 1, 2021, 12:30pm
- * **The Editorial Acquisition Process: A Look Behind the Scenes**
November 3, 2021, 7:00pm
- * **Marketing for Indie Authors**
December 7, 2021, 2:00pm
- * **Best Practices in Marketing, Promotion, and Reader Engagement**
January 18, 2022, 7:00pm
- * **Making the Switch from Academic to Trade Publishing**
February 4, 2022, 4:00pm
- * **Rejected: Emotional and Practical Tips to Move Forward**
February 22, 2022, 2:00pm
- * **Minding Your Poetry Business**
April 20, 2022, 6:00pm

FROM MANUSCRIPT TO MARKETPLACE

- * ***The Passenger* by Chaney Kwak**
October 6, 2021, 2:00pm
- * ***The City of Good Death* by Priyanka Champaneri**
November 9, 2021, 2:00pm
- * ***One of the Good Ones* by Maika Moulite and Maritza Moulite**
November 12, 2021, 1:00pm
- * ***Lotería* by Karla Arenas Valenti**
November 18, 2021, 4:00pm
- * ***The Centaur's Wife* by Amanda Leduc**
December 2, 2021, 2:00pm
- * ***Sevastopol* by Emilio Fraia, translated by Zoë Perry**
December 6, 2021, 1:00pm

MONEY MATTERS

- * **Navigating Difficult Conversations Around Money**
November 16, 2021, 11:00am
- * **Diversifying Your Income**
December 9, 2021, 3:00pm
- * **Tax Tips for Authors 2022**
February 17, 2022, 2:00pm

OTHER EVENTS

- * **Latinx KidLit Book Festival: From Manuscript to Marketplace: Three Publishing Journeys in KidLit**
December 7, 2021, 7:00pm
- * **DVCon 2022: Build-a-Brand**
January 22, 2022, 11:30am
- * **Stimulating the Creative Economy: A Conversation with Teresa Leger Fernández**
March 22, 2:00pm
- * **AWP: Book Tour Revolution**
March 25, 2022, 10:35am

- * **AWP: A Reading & Conversation with Rivka Galchen & Ruth Ozeki**
March 26, 2022, 3:20pm

* UPCOMING PROGRAMMING

This spring, we will wrap up **Business Bootcamps for Writers** with some specialty topics developed in partnership with writers' organizations that serve various genres and regions. Additional webinars in 2022 cover marketing strategies, publishing contracts, and more.

Register early for each event to reserve your spot and pre-submit a question for the panelists. Webinars last approximately one hour and feature a live Q&A at the end. Automated closed captions are available for all live webinars. The Authors Guild Foundation makes our programs free and open to the public, but the recordings of many events are only available to AG members. Please contact us at support@authorsguild.org with any questions or to request accessibility features.

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