

Jennifer Lyons Literary Agency 2026 London HIGHLIGHTS

FICTION

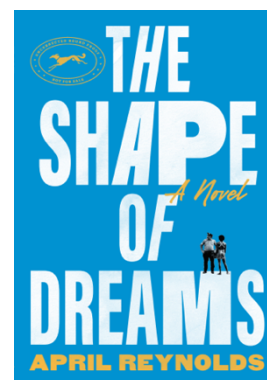
THE SHAPE OF DREAMS

April Reynolds

Alfred A. Knopf, February 2026

- Appearance on CBS Television
- Release event with audience of 200 at the Strand bookstore
- Kirkus (starred) review

"The Shape of Dreams is a powerful prayer, a novel that indicts the injustice for which there is no quick solution. . . . [It is] a song of furor and tenderness that will leave its mark." —Walter Mosley, bestselling author of the Easy Rawlins series



A trio of women bond in friendship as a neighborhood tries to seek justice from a system that has forgotten them.

It's the mid-eighties in East Harlem: a twelve-year-old black boy's murdered body is found by Mathilda "Twin" Johnson, an unlikely hero who's both the neighborhood's troublemaker and its conscience. When she breaks a cardinal rule, "don't call the cops," her decision ensnares a community and brings unmanageable grief to a mother. Anita, a postal worker and army widow is determined to solve her son Tyrone's murder, and her quest for justice galvanizes the neighborhood, which is itself a complex character in this teeming novel, with its Mets fans and gossips, immigrant shop owners and latch-key kids who are desperate to help a friend. The local dreamers include a charismatic man of the cloth, a teenage girl with a Whitney Houston voice and no prospects, and Anita's opinionated friend Wanda, whose truant son the police harass and arrest on a regular basis.

Everyone is struggling.

Anita, Wanda and Twin, the triad of this vibrant novel, are drawn into the neighborhood drug trap, while a singer, a preacher, and the church ladies who follow him believe their dreams can shape a city. Will the three be able to break away from crack's dangerous allure? Will the reverend's pressure on the authorities to find Tyrone's killer yield answers? Will justice come to East Harlem?

In the end, during the New York Mets' banner summer of 1986, this community will come together to mourn, fight for a better life, and shape their dreams as best they can.

Praise for THE SHAPE OF DREAMS

One of Bustle's "Most Anticipated Books of Winter 2025-26"

“Sweeping and emotionally charged. . . . With its blend of social urgency, lyrical prose, and moral clarity, *The SHAPE OF DREAMS* positions Reynolds once again as a vital voice in contemporary American fiction—one unafraid to confront injustice while honoring the resilience that binds communities together.” —*Harlem World*

“Captivating. . . . Vividly drawn. . . with sharp, enduring voices. . . . Reynolds transports the reader to a gritty world blighted by urban decay yet full of resilience and strength.” —Booklist

“Engrossing. . . . Reynolds deftly weaves. . . a crafty murder mystery in the multihued form of an urban symphony. . . with poignant warmth and unflinching precision.” —Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

“Reynolds paints a vivid portrait of East Harlem during the Reagan era. . . . Without losing track of its well-developed characters, the novel morphs into a gripping whodunit, as the neighbors try to solve [a boy’s murder] while the police drag their heels. Readers will savor this rich tableau of a resilient community.” —*Publishers Weekly*

THE SHAPE OF DREAMS offers a loving tribute to Harlem and the restorative power of female friendship while exposing the tiny soul fractures sustained by good people trying to get by in a broken world. With exquisite grace and reverence, Reynolds explores the inevitable heartbreaks of motherhood and wearying loneliness as the three women at the novel’s center seek justice for a murdered son. Reynolds captivates as much as she reminds us that in the midst of unspeakable tragedy, the strength of the human spirit endures. Elegant, powerful and truly unforgettable.—Laura Warrell, author of *Sweet, Soft Plenty Rhythm*

Set in East Harlem in the mid-eighties, at the dawn of America’s crack epidemic, April Reynolds’s *THE SHAPE OF DREAMS* is ostensibly the tale of a child’s tragic murder and a mother’s desperate quest for justice. But like all revelatory novels about New York, it also tells the secret history of a community, of its neighborhood’s written-off eccentrics who are also its eyes and ears, of its all-too-fallible leaders tasked with holding it together, and its denizens trying to forge dignified lives without losing their humanity in their struggle to survive. Vivid and heartbreaking, unyielding and gritty, it is, in the end, about the alliance of three unforgettable women who refuse to succumb to the overwhelming forces determined to rob them of their agency. A story, then, for right now.—Adam Ross

About April Reynolds, Author

April Reynolds is a novelist and professor of Creative Writing at Sarah Lawrence College. She is a recipient of the Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Award and a PEN Prize. She lives in New York City with her two sons.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: PDF of Manuscript. Finished Book

Rights Sold: North American to Alfred. A. Knopf/Vintage

All translation rights available

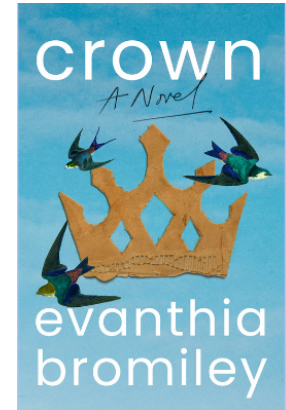
CROWN: A NOVEL

Evanthia Bromiley

Grove Press, June 17 2025

- **Nominated in 2025 by National Book Critics Circle for the John Leonard Prize**
- **Southwest Book of the Year**

A suspenseful, lyrical debut novel tracking three days leading up to the eviction of a pregnant single mother and her nine-year-old twins from a trailer park in the American Southwest.



Jude Woods is on the brink of eviction. Pregnant, jobless, and mother to Evan and Virginia, she has three days to box up her family’s life and find a safe place to live. In the Woods’ quiet trailer park, neighbors keep to themselves, but it’s no secret Jude and her twins are in jeopardy—the eviction notice slapped on their front door like a white shout.

When Jude’s contractions flare just as their power is shut off, she rushes to the hospital instructing Evan and Virginia to hide in their car in the surrounding fields. If the children are discovered outside alone, they will be taken from her. Jude labors through the night in a crowded emergency room while the twins, desperate in the heat of the cramped car and spurred by their wild imaginations, strike out along the dangerous riverbank in search of a new home for their growing family.

As night hurtles toward morning lockout, both mother and children reckon with what it means to live and dream in a modern America insistent on slamming doors. Poetic and distinct, the voices of the three Woods open to a chorus of waitresses and oil men, veterans and graffiti artists as CROWN trawls the laundromats, public bus systems, and waiting rooms of a forgotten blue-collar city. In this mesmerizing, singular debut, the tenacious spirit of a young family and their community comes to profound and moving life.

Praise for CROWN

“Lyrical, unflinching, and emotionally compelling. Evanthia Bromiley has a particular strength in the way she portrays this family in jeopardy, never skimping on their emotional lives, but instead creating complex, layered scenes and moments of deep characterization. She has found opportunities to render beauty within otherwise bleak circumstances.” —Dominic Smith, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Last Painting of Sara de Vos*

“Bromiley debuts with a remarkable portrait of a jobless single mother as she navigates an impending eviction, pregnancy, and the watchful gaze of child protection services. In lyrical and pared-down prose, Bromiley toggles between the complex points of view of each family member . . . It’s a knockout.”—Publishers Weekly (starred review)

“Virginia and Evan’s quest to get home through unknown territory builds to a taut climax that will leave readers breathless. Bromiley is also a master of the rhythms and realities of working-class life, in which keeping yourself together is a daily negotiation with bureaucracy and a chafing reminder that others have it worse. Though this is a story of contemporary life, it lives within the rich tradition of the literature and song of American struggle. This could be a story of the Dust Bowl or a city shelter; Jude

could be the mother in Dorothea Lange’s indelible photo. Full of ordinary royalty, shining with the triumph of staying human and extending grace even in deprivation.” —Kirkus Reviews

About Evanthia Bromiley, Author

Evanthia Bromiley is a graduate of the Warren Wilson MFA Program for Writers and the recipient of scholarships from the Aspen Institute, a Lighthouse Fellowship, a Lisel Mueller scholarship, and Elizabeth George and Carol Houck-Smith awards. Her short fiction and creative nonfiction can be found in AGNI, Prairie Schooner, Five Points, and elsewhere. When not writing, she works in impacted schools with young writers and their teachers as they sharpen their craft and voices, telling stories of growing up in the American Southwest. She lives in Durango, Colorado.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Finished Book

Rights Sold: North American Grove/Atlantic/French rights sold to Plon

Translation rights available

SALTWATER COWBOYS

By Elizabeth Becker

Zibby Books

Coming Spring 2027

COVER TK

- **Atmospheric and emotionally rich novel about facing grief, owning up to the past, and the healing power of coming home**
- **Inspired by the *Misty of Chincoteague* books by Marguerite Henry and the legend of the Juno, a Spanish ship filled with gold that sank off the coast of Virginia in 1802, leaving millions of dollars on the bottom of the sea, and one survivor.**
- **For fans of *The Cliffs* by J. Courtney Sullivan and *The Last Romantics* by Tara Conklin**

A disgraced memoirist returns to her childhood home off the Eastern Shore of Virginia to confront her siblings and grief and to rescue her career, but uncovers a secret history related to a sunken Spanish ship that may hold the key to professional redemption and personal salvation.

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Frances Lunn grew up running free on Assateague Island, a place made famous by wild ponies and haunted by whispers of lost treasure in her bloodline. Frances hasn’t been back in years, not since the success of her best-selling memoir was cut short after her sister Maeve told a journalist it was nothing more than lies.

With the 100th anniversary of the annual pony swim approaching, their dad’s old friend and infamous treasure hunter Murphy Sullivan, resurfaces. He’s looking for a map in a Lunn family bible, and Frances’ brother begs her to help him get there first, promising he can convince Maeve to retract her statement. Hoping to rebuild her reputation and put rumors of the treasure to rest for good, she agrees.

But just like when they were kids, Frances is swept up in the hunt for clues, chasing the treasure without considering the consequences. As they hit another dead end, secrets between the siblings begin to surface, and the past Frances has tried to outrun comes rushing in with the tide. Face-to-face with the

siblings she abandoned and the love she left behind, Frances will have to confront the loss of her father if there's any hope of making amends with those she loves.

Excerpt from SALTWATER COWBOYS

Assateague belonged to the wild things, and we were the wildest of them all.

We raced into the foaming ocean like sandpipers, oblivious to the cold of the Atlantic even in the heart of winter. We held court with the horses who roamed the island in bands, who like us, had saltwater in their veins, who swam through the black night of a shipwreck to emerge in the pink dawn, wet and shivering but free.

We were at home amidst the bayberry thickets, the pine strewn clearings where gnarled cedars stood like sentinels, in the marsh mud and shimmering green cord grass, on land that shifted and migrated with the tides.

We were the rulers of our own dominion, feasting on the clams we found with our toes, on plump, briny oysters, on the tiny silver fish we caught in nets in the shallows, on the sweet ripe blackberries that left our hands sticky and stained dark purple.

Regal herons and egrets considered us their equals. Mallards allowed us to pet their jeweled feathers. Even the stallions, feral and unbroken, turned docile in our presence, as gentle as house cats.

Our childhood was vast and incandescent, without boundaries. We pitied the children who lived in yards and playgrounds, who didn't run free on soft white dunes, or kayak across still blue water dotted with moon jellies, or sit under skies overflowing with stars, who had never touched a single part of the world truly wild.

And it was our salvation. The narrow strip of sand, with its gentle coves and inlets, the barrier island that had protected Chincoteague for centuries from countless storms. It sheltered us too, when my father went out on his boat on a June day that started with blinding clarity, only to turn dark and violent as a storm careered across the ocean.

It became our home when he never came back.

About Elizabeth Becker, Author

Elizabeth Becker is the author of *THE MOONLIGHT HEALERS* (Graydon House, February 2025), which has sold internationally in Spanish (Harper-Spain), Portuguese (Harper-Brazil), Russian (Azbooka-Atticus), and Serbian (Balans Knjige) – Handled by Harlequin). A former pediatric nurse and Pushcart Prize-nominated writer, she has worked as a correspondent for *Richmond Magazine* and the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, and her award-winning essays have been featured on national sites including [OprahDaily.com](https://www.oprah.com), Motherwell, Scary Mommy, Motherly, Swamp Pink (formerly Crazy Horse), and Winning Writers. She received a degree in creative writing from the College of Charleston before earning a bachelor's degree in nursing. She lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, with her husband and four young children. Find her on Instagram, [@elizabethbeckerbooks](https://www.instagram.com/elizabethbeckerbooks).

Praise for Elizabeth Becker's THE MOONLIGHT HEALERS:

"Gorgeously written with impeccably drawn characters, *The Moonlight Healers* by Elizabeth Becker is a dazzling debut. I absolutely loved this richly-imagined, magical, healing story spanning generations of mothers and daughters with a beautiful and impossible gift." – Jillian Cantor, *USA Today* bestselling author of *Beautiful Little Fools*

"*The Moonlight Healers* is a bravura turn. Elizabeth Becker's novel is a lustrous and nuanced exploration over generations of women that shows the magic we are capable of bestowing on others, and ourselves." — Jeffrey Dale Lofton, award-winning author of *Red Clay Suzie*

“*The Moonlight Healers* is a profound tale of love, family legacy, secrets, and the extraordinary power within us all. ...a deeply felt debut, brimming with impossible choices and powerful love.”

— Patti Callahan Henry, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Secret Book of Flora Lea*

“In this tender, wise, and moving debut set in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, a young girl discovers her family's gift of healing. I loved the way Becker wove together the story of generations and the incredible power of one heart to touch another. I wish I could live inside the Winston's family peach orchard, and I know that readers will love visiting it too!” — Polly Stewart, author of *The Good Ones*

“What if you could heal the sick, provide relief to the dying, and even bring back the dead? Such are the tantalizing possibilities at the heart of Elizabeth Becker's debut novel *Moonlight Healers*. Becker masterfully transports the reader to war-torn France and modern-day Crozet, an idyllic small town nestled in the shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountains. *Moonlight Healers* is a page-turning family drama with elements of historical fiction and magical realism plus a generous dash of romance. I savored every word.” — A.H. Kim, author of *A Good Family* and *Relative Strangers*

“The *Moonlight Healers* is an emotionally heartfelt debut that explores the moral dilemmas of life and death through the hands of a folk healer. Becker beautifully connects the characters through the historical lens of the grandmother and a granddaughter who discovers her family's secret gift decades later. A magical, deeply moving story that will stick with you long after the book is closed.”

—Dana Elmendorf, author of *In the Hour of Crows*

“*The Moonlight Healers* weaves a lyrical, magical love story about mothers, daughters, and the ties that bind us across generations. Elizabeth Becker is a dazzling writer, and her unforgettable characters will always have a place on my bookshelf.” —Katharine Schellman, author of *Last Call at the Nightingale*

[Publisher's Weekly](#)

Becker's enchanting debut tracks the magical healing abilities passed down through one family for several generations. - Becker skillfully braids the timelines to create a powerful ode to the strength of those who have dedicated their lives to healing and caregiving work. The magical elements are light enough that this is sure to have crossover appeal. Fans of Heather Webb and Alice Hoffman ought to take a look.

“A lovely, moving novel.” — Cari Dubiel, **Booklist**

[The Historical Novel Society](#) – reviewed by Linda Harris Sittig

“For a debut novel, this was an amazing story. The dual narratives complement each other, the characters are authentic, and the plot moves forward with excellent pacing. A great read with an ending I did not see coming. Highly recommended.”

[Southern Review of Books](#) | by Mackenzie Mandley, March 17, 2025

“While not as explicitly witchy, *The Moonlight Healers* is reminiscent of Alice Hoffman's 1996 novel *Practical Magic*, focusing on female friendships and the consequences of magic, even when used with good intentions. Both novels are rendered with dreamy prose that vividly paints their settings in a way that readers will find themselves sinking deeper and deeper into.”

Agent: Jessica Felleman

Genre: Fiction, Women's Fiction, Bookclub Fiction

Wordcount: Approximately 95,000 words

Materials/Manuscript Available: Unedited Draft, Accepted Draft Expected June 1, 2026

Rights Sold: North American English

Rights Available: UK, all translation, Film (Handled with Debbie Deuble Hill and Alec Frankel at IAG)

SOON YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE US

Chin-Sun Lee

Creature Publishing (World English)

Spring 2027

Cover TK

- Creature Publishing is a new publisher of feminist horror, with books that have been finalists for the Bram Stoker Award, and an author list that includes You-Jeong Jeong (*The Good Son*, etc.)
- Chin-Sun Lee's debut novel *UPCOUNTRY* was one of Publishers Weekly's "Big Indie Books of Fall 2023"
- A novel for fans of Frances Cha's *If I Had Your Face* and Ira Levin's *Stepford Wives*

SOON YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE US is literary, speculative, and darkly feminist horror: a sharply observed consideration of identity and the compromises we make to navigate an increasingly synthetic world.

In the Los Angeles of the near future, radical cosmetic surgery is ubiquitous, and prominent surgeons from Seoul have expanded their practices to the epicenter of American entertainment and media, where an expansive Koreatown flourishes, despite rampant racial tensions and deep economic division.

Lily Han is a striving investigative journalist who just got her big break: she will host a TV series exploring the intersection of the beauty industry and feminism. It's a huge opportunity that could move her social status from 'Insecure' to 'Retained'. The catch: to explore extreme plastic surgery, she'll have to undergo extreme plastic surgery. Ambition trumps her misgivings.

Her public transformation draws the attention of the radical #AsIs movement, whose followers shun cosmetic enhancement. Their activism escalates from strident protest to domestic terrorism. Lily loses her job and finds herself in a misguided love affair with the surgeon who performed her cosmetic procedure, revealing a project far darker than Lily could have imagined.

PRAISE for Chin-Sun Lee:

"... a novel of remarkable depth and insight into the human condition, and the ways in which luck, class, and circumstance shape individuals' destinies. Gripping, compassionate, and gorgeously written, *Upcountry* has the power to haunt." – Kate Folk, author of *Out There*

"Propulsive and prismatic ... Chin-Sun Lee is a dazzling storyteller." -- Tsering Yangzom Lama, author of *The Carol Shields Prize* longlisted *We Measure the Earth with Our Bodies*

"An engrossing, quietly original take on what women must do to survive in 21st-century small-town America." -- *Kirkus*

About Chin-Sun Lee, Author

After leaving a career in the fashion industry, **Chin-Sun Lee** received her MFA in Creative Writing/Fiction from The New School. She is a first-generation Korean-American, raised in Los Angeles. Her first novel, *UPCOUNTRY*, was published by Unnamed Press in 2023.

Agent: Pamela Malpas/JLLA

Materials Available: edited manuscript expected June 2026

Rights sold: all translation rights available

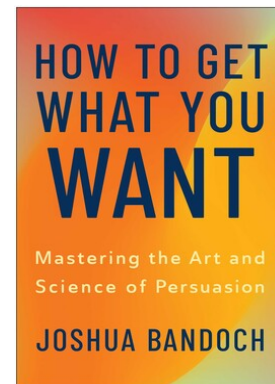
NON-FICTION

HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

Mastering the Art and Science of Persuasion

Joshua Bandoch

BenBella Books, April 2026 (Hardcover) Brilliance, (Audio book)



- \$52,000 worth of pre-sales, [TEDx Talk](#) sold to Korea
- 20 podcast interviews scheduled across a range of categories, including business, general interest, communications, real estate, and public policy. Examples include The American Business Podcast (144k subscribers) and Strong Towns (180k subscribers).
- To be reviewed in *City Journal*, a premier policy journal.

“This book gives readers confidence to advocate for themselves, whether interacting with family members, business associates, or even politicians. A solid roadmap to successful persuasion techniques.” —Library Journal

Joshua Bandoch, Ph.D. brings a unique blend of mastery applying insights from a wide range of fields to any persuasion situation and extensive practical communications work as a speechwriter, consultant, elite university instructor, and policy advocate as Head of Policy at the Illinois Policy Institute to teaching anyone how to become a persuasion genius.

As politics and technology increasingly divide us, we’re losing the ability to communicate and persuade others. In political discussions, we dismiss anyone who doesn’t think like us, making constructive conversation, let alone agreement, impossible. As technology gets better every day at sucking us in, we’re forgetting how to even talk to each other. Far from being persuasive, we push people away or don’t even interact with them in the first place. Most books on persuasion either double down on how to make your point and move on if someone doesn’t agree, or offer surface tactics that quickly dissipate.

HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT is different. It combines groundbreaking research with practical experience persuading at the highest levels to give you a fresh approach that will get you what you want and need when it matters. It has three simple steps. Adopt the “persuader’s mindset.” Use knowledge of how our brains work to your advantage. And apply tested techniques to any situation. Whether you’re trying to get a job, negotiate a salary, have a tough conversation, reduce your rent, deal with a lawyer, score a great price on a new car, or get a free room upgrade at check in, Persuasion Genius teaches you how to navigate any political, professional, or personal situation more effectively to get what you want and need each and every day.

Excerpt from HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

Take a piece of paper, roll it up into a ball, throw it at someone, and try to make it stick to them. Did it? Nope. It just annoyed, and maybe offended them.

And yet, that’s how we usually try to “persuade.” We take our logic, roll it up, then throw it at

others, certain it'll stick. If we hit someone in the head with our logic-rock, we'll knock something loose and make them start thinking like us. If we just collect enough data, discern the "truth," get our logic locked and loaded, then fire it at our opponent, we'll win, making them a loser in the process, which will motivate them to join us and become a winner.

Totally unrelated question: Has anyone ever persuaded you of anything this way? Nope.

We like to think persuasion is a "rational" endeavor. After all, if reason doesn't guide us, what does? Irrationality? The "Age of Reason" that reigned a few centuries ago during the Enlightenment held up reason as the ideal, and the best means of improving the world.

There's just one minor problem with viewing "persuasion" as primarily "rational": it fundamentally misunderstands the human mind, so it's counterproductive. An abundance of neuroscience and psychology research definitively shows reason doesn't come first in our cognitive processes. Which means our persuasive endeavors can't start with it.

The crucial upshot of this misunderstanding is that we focus on being "right," which prevents of us from making a difference, which is what persuasion is all about.

So: How does persuasion happen?

It starts with feelings. How come? Because our cognitive sequence always (yes, always) works like this: We feel first, then reason. Reason is never first. All human brains are wired this way. Sure, sometimes we feel then, a fraction of a second later, reason. Often, though, there's a notable delay before reasoning kicks in. Reasoning frequently arrives too late to matter in what we think, say, and do; sometimes, it never arrives. Just think of a time you were so overcome with anger you could only feel, and did something you still regret.

About Joshua Bandoch, Author

Josh Bandoch is the Head of Policy at the Illinois Policy Institute. His policy research focuses on empowering people to rise out of poverty, increasing social mobility, improving housing affordability, and removing barriers to opportunity (e.g. burdensome regulations). His writing has appeared in popular outlets like *National Review*, *Real Clear Policy*, *Real Clear Markets*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Crain's Chicago Business*, *The Washington Examiner*, *The Washington Times*, and *Discourse*. He is the author of *The Politics of Place: Montesquieu, Particularism, and the Pursuit of Liberty* (University of Rochester Press, 2017). He was a postdoctoral fellow at Brown University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He earned his bachelor's in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland, College Park, and his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: PDF of finished manuscript, Finished Book

Rights sold: Korean rights, all other translation rights available

Audio book: World, English

THE LONG REVOLUTION: CREATING A UNITED STATES AFTER 1776

Nathan Perl-Rosenthal

Basic Books, June 2, 2026

“Perl-Rosenthal’s earnest epilogue concludes that our Revolution is still in progress, and an appendix contains half a dozen 19th-century orations whose fervor may amuse readers who will likely be grateful that they don’t have to sit through them. An unexpected source of historical insights.”—Kirkus Review



For America’s 250th birthday, a provocative argument that a “Long Revolution” formed the violently beating heart of American politics for decades after 1776.

In the century after Independence, many Americans believed that their Revolution was still in progress. Far from a unifying national myth, the Revolution was for generations of Americans a source of radically conflicting political ideas. Nowhere was this clearer than on the Fourth of July, when Americans gathered for speeches that, as one orator put it in 1834, aimed to “examine the present, and to look forward to the future.”

In *The Long Revolution*, historian Nathan Perl-Rosenthal mines thousands of Independence Day orations to offer a stirring and revelatory new history of this long American Revolution. In the words of local notables and national celebrities, men and women, white and Black, he identifies the contrasting visions, intense anxieties, and radical power evoked by the Revolution deep into the nineteenth century. This is a history of the American founding for today’s fragmented and anxious political moment, helping us find a usable past to guide us toward our own uncertain future.

Praise for THE LONG REVOLUTION

“Nathan Perl-Rosenthal’s delightful *THE LONG REVOLUTION* shows how much the story of America remains unsettled—and ours to make anew. Through his remarkably close, detailed, and ultimately inspiring study of the changing meaning of the Fourth of July, he shows how the true strength of the United States isn’t in any piece of parchment, but in the thousands of small towns and big cities where decade by decade Americans made the Founders’ vision their own.”—Garrett M. Graff, bestselling author of *The Only Plane in the Sky*

“Nathan Perl-Rosenthal, a brilliant young historian, has figured out a way of performing a CT scan on the early American soul: by reviewing almost 2,500 Fourth of July orations delivered during the first hundred years of the United States. The result is a memorable, and clarifying, portrait of a nation that was still figuring out what it was—an urgent project back then, and one that we might revive now.”—Nicholas Lemann, author of *Redemption*

“*The Long Revolution* is a timely and elegant national birthday present. At a time of backlash and complacency, Nathan Perl-Rosenthal shows us how generative and questioning the Fourth of July could be—and for whom.”—David Waldstreicher, author of *The Odyssey of Phillis Wheatley*

About Nathan Perl-Rosenthal, the Author

Nathan Perl-Rosenthal is a professor of history, French and Italian, and law at the University of Southern California. His writing has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, and *the Los Angeles Times*. The award-winning author of *The Age of Revolutions and Citizen Sailors*, he lives in Los Angeles and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Agent: Jennifer Lyons

Materials Available: Finished manuscript

Rights sold: World English and all translation rights available

THE SAINT OF ZERO FVCKS

By Diego Garijo

BenBella Books, Coming Spring 2027

Cover TK

- [A memoir from professional MMA fighter turned drag-queen](#)
- [Garijo's memoir is Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* meets *Trejo* by Danny Trejo, and for readers who enjoyed Julia Fox's *Down the Drain*](#)

Description

Diego spent his childhood and young adult life making the worst of bad decisions, convinced from a young age that he was destined to suffer and die. From a neglected childhood in Mexico to the painful invisibility of being undocumented in the US, Diego leaned hard into being as bad and violent as he could be, lost in the pain of societal abyss and abandonment. When he's deported to Mexico things only get worse, but at 21 he's saved by a surprise green card. Back in the US, Diego finds stability in professional fighting. When an injury in the ring causes partial blindness, Diego steps away to heal and unearths a hidden desire to self-evaluate, self-discover, and reimagine his masculinity, which leads him to drag.

As he spends more time as Lola, Diego begins to unmake himself; to free himself from the traditional separation of the masculine and feminine, to seek more art in his life, and to heal.

A culturally conscious, unapologetic, and truly wild ride through the life, mind, and body of an artist who has always lived extremes, *RETIRED PSYCHO* is a shocking and in your face story that doubles as an honest and vulnerable excavation of the power of the choices we are given, and an ultimately uplifting story of how one man was able to find freedom in reinvention.

Excerpt from THE SAINT OF ZERO FVCKS

I won't lie; I'm not a great drag queen.

I'm a two-hundred-pound muscular man riddled with injuries, a wide back, a tree-trunk neck, and a penchant for savagery. I can be rough and careless, so I'll never be the most graceful dancer on stage, but I'm surprisingly not bad either. In fact, that's half of the entertainment value I bring to this spectacle. Just imagine squeezing my mangled feet that I have broken multiple times at the gym or in a fight into a narrow woman's high heel. It doesn't matter what size shoes I find, they are always too

narrow. I feel like I'm trying to squeeze a sausage into a toothpaste tube. When I'm Lola, I'm dead fvcking serious about being Lola, like everything else I've ever done.

....

I have two birth certificates, one with my father's name, and one with my grandfather listed as my father. It wasn't a mistake at the hospital, my parents had two different stories of how my life began.

My mother and father met in a brothel. Picture the Mexican version of *Pretty Woman* if Julia Roberts was an alcoholic and Richard Gere was a fascist dictator. I was born in Guanajuato, Mexico in 1979. They were married when they had me, but I have no memory of ever seeing them in the same room together. Guanajuato was a small bicycle town in those days known for its colorful houses and underground museums filled with hundreds of mummies. It was also the birthplace of my namesake, famed artist Diego Rivera.

...

This is where the tale of two Diegos begins. My father's Diego was kidnapped as an infant by my mother's father and hidden until my father paid a handsome ransom for my return. My mother's Diego was whisked away in the middle of the night to escape a father who was abusive. Years later I would discover neither story was exactly true.

About Diego Garijo, Author

Diego Garijo was born in Leon Guanajuato, Mexico and smuggled into the United States when he was seven years old. A multi-disciplinary artist, professional fighter, and drag queen with a cult following, Diego has been featured in a number of print, radio, podcast, and television news and feature stories, most recently in [VICE magazine](#) and on BBC radio. He lives in Los Angeles.

Agent: Jessica Felleman

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RESTRICTED

The Changing State of American Censorship in Ten Films (and Eighteen Seconds)

Eric Grode

Apollo Publishing (World English), 2028

Cover TK

- [A look at the shifting social culture of the U.S., as reflected in the film industry](#)
- [A book for fans of Mark Harris' *Pictures at a Revolution* and *The Big Picture: Money and Power in Hollywood* by Edward Jay Epstein](#)

From Thomas Edison's 1896 short, *The Kiss* to 2024's *Terrifier 3*, the American film business has been shaped by, and continues to shape, a shifting boundary on the limits of acceptability. The fenceposts in that boundary include vague social mores, self-enforcement mechanisms like the "Production Code", governmental restrictions, Supreme Court rulings, and, of course, the American Motion Picture Association's film rating system (R, PG, NC-17, etc.).

The collision of art and commerce stokes creativity, even as it constrains it. Cultural critic Eric Grode looks back at how what American audiences - and government – would accept grew, then contracted, and grew again, through an idiosyncratic selection of ten films that marked important turning points. It has been decades since an analysis of this creative tension in film has been published; in that time, the industry has meaningfully changed. To be read alongside Mark Harris's *Pictures at a Revolution* and Chris Nashawaty's *The Future Was Now*, *RESTRICTED* looks back at how we got where we are, and where we might be going. Through the lens of the film industry, he records broader social change in the United States

Excerpt from RESTRICTED:

Grove Press may have been new to the movie business in 1968, but it was a battle-scarred veteran of the provocation business. Shortly after purchasing the book imprint for \$3,000 in 1951, Barney Rosset quickly established it as the nation's leading platform for the literary avant-garde, publishing everyone from Samuel Beckett to Malcolm X to Jack Kerouac.

Grove's previous battles over books may have given the company a general battle strategy. But by the time the U.S. government had impounded the actual physical copy of *I Am Curious (Yellow)*, both Hollywood and Washington, D.C., had entered perhaps the most tumultuous upheaval in American history over what could be said and shown on the screen.

At the same time, the Supreme Court was weighing in on a case that would result in the U.S. government's most in-depth foray into the world of pornography and obscenity.

In the SCOTUS ruling on *Stanley vs. Georgia*, Justice Thurgood Marshall wrote: "If the First Amendment means anything, it means that a state has no business telling a man, sitting alone in his own house, what books he may read or what films he may watch."

Grove leapt into action and released a publicity mailing about the printed screenplay, saying: "CLEARED BY THE COURTS! The complete script, plus stills, of the movie that just won a major censorship battle in the U.S. courts."

~

It wasn't until March 1969 that "I Am Curious (Yellow)" was finally allowed to open in New York City. Buoyed by more than a year of pent-up demand, theaters charged a then-unprecedented \$4.40 per ticket. Among the ticket buyers were the recently married Aristotle and Jackie Onassis. Their opinions differed on the film, with Aristotle apparently enjoying it considerably more than Jackie. When she left the 57th Street theater alone mid-screening, she was greeted on the sidewalk by photographers who had received a tip that the former First Lady was at a skin flick. Despite wearing high heels and a leather skirt, Jackie managed to fell paparazzo Mel Finkelstein with a judo move known as a "major outer reap." The fallout from this offered still more headlines for the film.

And while *I Am Curious (Yellow)* screened without incident (legal, judo or otherwise) in dozens of U.S. cities over the course of that year, the Second Circuit Court decision was not legally binding elsewhere in the country. This scared theaters in some cities from booking the film, at which point Grove would take matters into its own hands, rent a movie theater in that city and keep the box office for itself. "In Minneapolis," Roset later wrote, "we actually purchased a theater just to show the film and sold it when the run was over!"

About Eric Grode, Author

Eric Grode is an arts/culture critic with 350+ bylines in the *New York Times* and a former vice president of the New York Drama Critics Circle. As director of the U.S.'s first graduate studies program in arts journalism, he routinely collaborates with the most powerful critics working today.

Agent: Pamela Malpas/JLLA

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Rights sold: all translation rights available

UNDESIRABLE:

The Vietnam War and a Father's Battle for Justice.

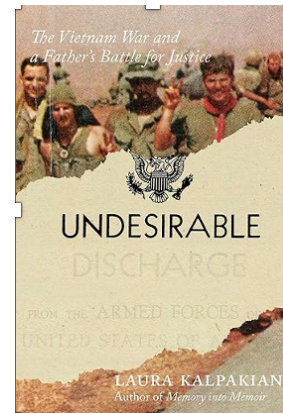
Laura Kalpakian

University of New Mexico Press (World English)

Summer 2026

- A dramatic story of paternal devotion to a 'prodigal son'
- A reflection on the cost of war on soldiers and their families
- "Saving Private Ryan" meets "A Few Good Men"

UNDESIRABLE is a story about the cost of war, and the dedication of a father to his son.



In January 1969, angry after a quarrel with his father, nineteen-year-old Doug Johnson—in what will be a fateful choice—decides to enlist in the Army. Once in Vietnam, Doug becomes addicted to amphetamine and heroin, repeatedly goes absent without leave (AWOL), and is court martialed and imprisoned. To avoid a second court martial, he at last agrees to accept an “undesirable” discharge that will deny him veterans’ benefits and any recognition of his wartime service. In late August 1970, drugged, malnourished, and clutching the sandal of a dead Vietnamese soldier, Doug staggers off a plane into the arms of his father.

But Doug’s return home is only the beginning of this story. For **UNDESIRABLE** recounts another war: Doug’s father against the US Army. For three years, the father (himself a veteran of the Second World War) fights to have his son’s “undesirable” discharge changed to “honorable.” Half a century later Laura Kalpakian—a devoted daughter and sister, and a novelist with an eye for story arc and character development—exhumes the evidence her father collected. From these documents she assembles a heartbreaking story of a father’s love for his son and a son’s experience at war. **UNDESIRABLE** demands that we ask what society—and government—owes to military veterans for the physical, psychological, and emotional sacrifices they and their families make.

Excerpt from **UNDESIRABLE**

In a single envelope in the basement I found a thick sheaf of papers stapled together, labeled, “In The Order They Were Received” written in my mother’s neat hand across the top.

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The pitch and intensity of my father's letters that summer of 1970 escalate to near-insane. Reading them I was reminded of the Tim O'Brien story "The Things They Carried," that I assigned to students when I taught Creative Writing. The narrative gathers momentum as the reader moves into it; the reader feels the weight, the burden, the velocity, stress and terror that the characters endured. The same is true of my father's letters; they gather momentum, fear and rage.

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As June moves into July, Bill slathers letters on one and all, far and wide, military, politicians, chaplains. The tone and content change again in mid-July, awash in rage, and unleavened desperation. "Please in the name of God, do something today." He writes to Congressman Mendel Rivers (Chair of the Armed Services Committee). At the peak of his anguish, Bill is increasingly unhinged; his letters are enraged and incautious.

~

The Johnsons felt certain their phone was being tapped that summer; Helen and Mom watched from the kitchen window as a truck parked down the street working on the phone lines for days.

~

July 6 Bill Johnson to the Confinement Officer: "I am advised that my son, Pfc. Douglas S. Johnson is being held in pre-trial confinement...I am requesting the following information:

1. Has this trial been held? If so what was the outcome. If not, what is the date of the trial?
2. Name and address of his defense counsel.
3. When may I expect the Army to return my son to the US?
4. Is my son hospitalized?"

~

July 16 "Sir, this is the second court martial my son will have received in the matter of 14 months in Vietnam. You and the court may ask yourselves why should the court be lenient to the point of exoneration in this situation when the first time apparently failed? Perhaps Mr. Commander I can answer your intelligent and natural question in this letter."

About Laura Kalpakian, Author

Laura Kalpakian is an award-winning novelist (THE GREAT PRETENDERS, THE MEMOIR CLUB, etc.) and the author of the nonfiction MEMORY INTO MEMOIR: A Writer's Handbook. She has taught memoir writing for more than two decades.

Agent: Pamela Malpas/JLLA

Materials Available: complete manuscript (94,000 words)

Rights sold: all translation rights available