

ERICA S. PERL

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Award-winning author of more than forty books for young readers across picture books, early readers, chapter books, Middle Grade and Young Adult fiction, nonfiction, graphic and illustrated formats, and short fiction, with national and state awards, bestseller recognition, and a significant publishing track record. **Experienced low-residency MFA faculty member** with extensive graduate-level teaching experience, developmental feedback expertise, and grounding in critical and inclusive pedagogies.

TEACHING AND MENTORSHIP

Genres Taught and Mentored

- Picture books
- Early readers
- Chapter books
- Middle Grade
- Young Adult
- Nonfiction
- Graphic and illustrated literature
- Short stories
- Poetry and verse forms for young readers

Vermont College of Fine Arts – MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults Faculty, 2023 to present

- Graduate-level teaching and mentorship across all genres and formats listed above
- Leader of Picture Book Intensive (2024, 2025, 2026)
- Manages semester-long mentorship cycles including packet-based developmental feedback
- Provides editorial letters, margin notes, revision plans, and craft guidance
- Lecturer on writing craft and writing life strategies
- Faculty representative to Jewish Affinity Group and contributor to community initiatives

Johns Hopkins University – Carey Business School, Executive Education Faculty, 2023 to present

- Instructor in three-day Written Communication course for graduate and executive learners
- Developed curriculum emphasizing clarity, structure, audience, and writing process
- Designed individual and collaborative writing exercises and facilitated group critiques

Selected Teaching, Workshops, Residencies, and Speaking Engagements

- Middle Grade Fiction Workshop Leader, Aspen Summer Words (2022)
- Workshop Leader and Lecturer, SCBWI National and Mid-Atlantic (2020 to present)
- Graphic Novel Workshop Leader, Exeter Community Library (2025 and 2026)

- Writer in Residence, American International School of Lusaka (2018)
- Visiting Author at schools and community literacy programs nationwide
- Visiting Lecturer at colleges including American University; Washington and Lee University; University of Maryland; Frostburg State University; Shenandoah University; Malone University

APPROACH TO TEACHING

- Grounded in critical and inclusive pedagogies.
- Experienced practitioner of Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process and contemporary inclusive workshop models.
- Emphasis on student-centered learning, creative risk-taking, individualized mentorship, development of craft skills, and emotional authenticity.
- Experienced in low-residency MFA structure: residency-based instruction followed by sustained packet feedback and mid-semester conferences.

Author of Children's Literature

March, 2005 to present

- Significant publishing track record with national awards, state awards, and bestseller recognition
- More than forty published books for young readers with several forthcoming titles
- Speaker and/or Panelist at the National Book Festival, NCTE, ALA Annual, SLJ Leadership Summit, National AFT-TEACH, National Head Start, as well as multiple state library conferences
- Accomplished teaching artist at schools nationwide

SELECTED PUBLISHED WORK

Novels (Middle Grade and Young Adult)

- *The Challah Project*, HarperCollins, 2028
- Co-authored Middle Grade Project (title TBA), 2027
- *White Bird: A Novel*, with R.J. Palacio, Knopf, 2023
- *All Three Stooges*, Knopf, 2018 -- **National Jewish Book Award, Sydney Taylor Book Award Silver Medal**
- *The Capybara Conspiracy*, Knopf, 2016
- *When Life Gives You O.J.*, Knopf, 2011 -- **Sydney Taylor Book Award Bronze Medal**

Picture Books

- *Welcome to the Family*, Penguin, 2028
- *Billy the Kid* series, with Dolly Parton, Penguin -- **New York Times Bestseller**
- *The Three Little Guinea Pigs*, FSG, 2023 -- **Chickadee Award (Maine State Book Award)**
- *When Carrot Met Cookie*, Penguin, 2021
- *The Ninth Night of Hanukkah*, Sterling, 2020 -- **Sydney Taylor Book Award Bronze Medal**

Chapter Books and Early Readers

- *Arnold and Louise* series, Penguin, 2018 to present (two forthcoming titles)

- *Whale, Quail, Snail* series, Simon and Schuster, 2020 to present
- *Truth or Lie* series, Random House, 2019 to 2023
- *Craftily Ever After* series (as Martha Maker), Simon and Schuster, 2017 to 2020

Short Stories and Essays

- *My School Visit Was Cancelled; I Fought Back and Won*, School Library Journal, May, 2025
- Short story, *Festival of Lights* anthology, Albert Whitman and Co., 2024
- Los Angeles Times Op-Ed, 2020
- Modern Love podcast, New York Times and WBUR, 2018

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONORS

- *New York Times* Bestseller, *Billy the Kid Makes It Big*
- National Jewish Book Award, *All Three Stooges*
- Sydney Taylor Silver and Bronze Medals, *All Three Stooges*, *The Ninth Night of Hanukkah*, *When Life Gives You O.J.*
- ALA Notable, *When Life Gives You O.J.*
- Maine Chickadee Award
- Multiple state book award lists (FL, KS, ME, MN, MO, MS, VA, MA, VT, RI)
- Fellow, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts
- DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Fellowship, received annually since 2017
- Reuben Award for Best Illustrated Book, *Ninety-three in My Family*

PROFESSIONAL LITERACY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

First Book, Washington, DC

Vice President, Publisher and Author Relations, 2009 to 2016

- Led *Stories for All Project*, a national initiative increasing access to diverse children's literature
- Directed *Authors in Action*, connecting authors and illustrators with underserved communities
- Expanded and diversified the First Book Marketplace for schools and programs in need
- Managed publisher relationships and supervised team of five

CREATIVE AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- Children's Book Guild of Washington, DC, President 2021 to 2022
- Temple Micah, Washington, DC, Board of Directors, 2022 to 2025
- Active Member: Authors Against Banned Books (AABB), The Authors Guild, SCBWI

EDUCATION

- JD, Tulane Law School, Order of the Coif, Law Review Board of Editors
- BA, Hampshire College, Political Science and Philosophy
- Harvard Extension School, Fiction Writing Workshops
- The New School, Children's Writing and Illustration coursework
- Washington Improv Theater, full sequence of improv training