



Young to Publishing Group

Quarterly Newsletter SUMMER 2004

THE YOUNG TO PUBLISHING GROUP IS AN INITIATIVE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN PUBLISHERS' (AAP) DIVERSITY RECRUIT AND RETAIN COMMITTEE THAT STRIVES TO GIVE ENTRY-LEVEL AND JUNIOR INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES (TYPICALLY WITH 0-5 YEARS OF PUBLISHING EXPERIENCE) A CHANCE TO BUILD A COMMUNITY OUTSIDE OF THEIR OWN PUBLISHING HOUSE AND TO EDUCATE THEMSELVES ABOUT THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE. MEMBERSHIP IS FREE, AND IS OPEN TO ALL "YOUNG" (NOT FAR ADVANCED IN GROWTH, JUNIOR, LACKING EXPERIENCE) PERSONS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY A BOOK PUBLISHING HOUSE.

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FROM THE CHAIR

by Kate Williams
(HarperCollins Publishers)

Dear YPG:

As I approach the 5-year mark in my publishing career, I have decided that it is time to step down from my position as chair/president of the YPG and allow the group's "new blood" to determine the needs and the future of the organization.

The decision to turn over the organization that I nurtured and coddled from its inception has not been easy. But with the Program and Planning Task Force at record strength and the AAP in full support of the YPG, I am able to walk away knowing that the YPG will continue to be a force in the publishing industry.

In the past three and a half years, the YPG has grown to over 700 members nationwide and has created a real sense of community among the entry and junior level employees of the publishing world. This could not have been accomplished without the Program and Planning Task Force, and I am sure that the vitality, purpose, imagination, talent, and

passion of the PPTF members will continue to push the YPG to the next level.

The YPG's parent committee (the Diversity Recruit and Retain Committee) has named Carin Siegfried as the new YPG president. A vice-president will be named in the next couple of months.

Thank you for being a part of the Young to Publishing Group and best of luck to each of you throughout your publishing careers—where I am sure our paths will cross again.

Sincerely—
Kate Williams

Where members learn about the many aspects of the industry through the guidance of a guest speaker.

Lunch Box NYC

by Kimberly Quinta
(Taylor and Francis/Routledge)

April's BBL was about Legal Issues in Publishing, specifically the "Author Contract." The speaker was Karen Zubin, a Contracts Manager at Scholastic, Inc. She went over the basic aspects common to most author contracts.

A publisher can have contracts with another publisher (for reprint rights, condensed versions, book clubs, etc.), with wholesalers, and with authors. She focused her talk on author contracts because the issues and language dealing with royalties are similar from big to small houses.

First, a P&L (profit and loss statement) is done before a publisher decides to go after a book. When profitability is determined, the publisher makes an offer to an author or their agent. The offer is made on the financial assumptions made in the P&L, so the publisher doesn't really want to negotiate too much because it throws all of their other calculations out of whack.

In a royalty contract, the publisher wants to control the broadest amount of rights—they want to publish throughout the world, in all languages, in any form. In return, the author gets financial terms—the advance, the royalties, subrights income, etc. The publisher always wants all the rights they can get, regardless of whether they intend to use them. They can always license the ones they don't use to third parties and get a cut of the money.

The author's contracted obligation is to deliver a complete and acceptable manuscript to the publisher by the delivery date. If the author doesn't deliver, or delivers a sub-par effort, they are in breach of contract. The publisher is obligated to publish the book within a specific time frame once it's accepted. If the publisher doesn't end up

publishing it, the author just keeps the advance as damages/settlement for claims.

The contract terminates if there is a breach by the author or the publisher, or if the book goes out of print and all rights to the book revert to the author.

May's Brown Bag Lunch was a light-hearted romp through the world of International Book Fairs. Our speaker was Lance Fitzgerald, a Director of Subsidiary Rights for Penguin Group, (USA) Inc.

Subrights makes money for the company by selling subsidiary rights at the international book fairs. There are three major book fairs: Frankfurt, London, and Bologna, which is mostly children's publishing. Mr. Fitzgerald wanted to focus on the largest, the Frankfurt Book Fair. Beginning in June, book scouts, who are paid by foreign publishers to find the next hot American book, try to make Frankfurt appointments with subrights managers. In August/September, the "rights list" is created, which tells what rights are available for each book. Mr. Fitzgerald spends a week in London beforehand to meet with the UK publishers, so that he can devote actual Fair time to other people. Then he gets to Frankfurt, and his life is non-stop meetings. He meets with publishers and editors, and subagents who represent books for other publishers. He goes to the actual Fair, and has more meetings, making friends and starting to make connections all over the world.

During the evening are the social events, where everyone is talking about books. The nights are about connecting with familiar people who you might not have had meetings with during the day. It's all very hectic and tiring, but there are very many hot deals made at the Frankfurt book fair, and things can even escalate into bidding wars for books that everyone wants.

Finally, June's Brown Bag Lunch speaker was our second Living Legend—Jane Friedman, President and CEO of Harper-Collins.

Ms. Friedman started her career as a Dictaphone typist at Random House, and worked her way up through various departments. During her time there, she saw many changes in publishing—the beginning of author tours, the advent of multitasking on the job, and many other things. She finally left Random House in 1997. She wasn't afraid to take risks to move up. For example, she helped launch Random House's audio book publishing program.

When Ms. Friedman arrived at HarperCollins, it was in dismal shape. She's worked hard to strengthen the company, and they've won countless honors since for their fine publications. With a series of strategic acquisitions (ex: William Morrow and Avon Books), during the time she's been at HarperCollins, profits have increased by more than 1,000%! The company has reached out to niche audiences, for example publishing more books in large print, and re-energizing Amistad, their African American imprint.

Ms. Friedman believes that good publishing is good business, and that authors are the main asset of any house. She describes HarperCollins as a very author-centric house. She states that as publishers, we have to embrace change as it comes along and make it work for us. Three of the biggest changes in publishing she's seen recently are superstores like Barnes & Noble, Oprah Winfrey's re-energizing of reading groups/book clubs, and on-line retailers like Amazon.com.

All in all, Ms. Friedman's talk was very informative and inspiring, and a transcript should be available to YPG members soon.

LITTLE BIG MOUTH AND YPG ROSTER

IF YOU HAVEN'T FILLED
OUT THE DATABASE FORM,
DO IT NOW!

CONTACT AGARINGER@PUBLISHERS.ORG

**It's your YPG ...
So if you have any
questions, comments,
or suggestions to
make it a better
organization, email
[carin.siegfried@
stmartins.com](mailto:carin.siegfried@stmartins.com)**

Publishing is not just in NYC...
and neither is the YPG! See what our
other chapters are up to.

CHAPTERS Lunch Box

by Meg Lemke
(Houghton Mifflin)

UPDATE FROM A RENEWED YPG BOSTON

YPG Boston has thrived this year. Our membership has grown significantly, in size and also in the diversity of publishers represented. We now have members from Houghton Mifflin, St. Martin's Bedford, Beacon Press, Da Capo Press, Pearson, South End Press, MIT Press, Harvard University Press, Time Warner, Thomson, and others—and I get emails from a new publisher almost weekly. YPG Boston also bridges departments and divisions within member publishers. I'm in Adult Trade at Houghton, and YPG gives me the opportunity to talk regularly with colleagues from Childrens, McDougall Littel, Classwell, etc., whom I would very rarely cross paths with otherwise.

YPG Boston meets about monthly, alternating between speaker lunches and after-work gatherings (usually at local

bars). The brown bag events have been standing-room-only. Speakers have dished details about the business and their own career trajectories, in open and friendly forums. Deanne Urmy and Heidi Pitlor, both editors in Houghton, shared their discomfort with labels like “edgy” while they spoke frankly about balancing their literary sensibility with market demands.

Alex Camlin, art director at Da Capo, reunited with his former boss, Michaela Sullivan, art director at Houghton, to speak passionately about the role and ownership of the artist in jacket design. And last month, Carla Gray and Lisa DiSarro, of Houghton Trade Marketing, shared their strategies for BEA, and discussed its market-driving power. Carla's secret to bringing Book Sense to the Houghton Mifflin booth was the best story: she planned to (and did) bring a live cable feed in of the Belmont Stakes. Planned for July is a talk with sales directors Anne Bunn (MIT Press) and Gary Gentel (Houghton Mifflin).

Our first social event was a cozy, chatty pub night at the Plough & Stars in Cambridge, where it's rumored Ploughshares was founded. And most recently, we joined the packed crowd at Harvard Bookstore for the “slapdance across America tour,” celebrating Simon and Schuster's publication of Davy Rothbart's *Found* book. I'm a fan of zines, *Found* being one favorite, and I remember my excitement when I saw first saw the deal for this book on Publisher's Lunch. The event was a lesson on bringing the underground to the mainstream without losing integrity. Beforehand, I put in a note to info@FOUND,

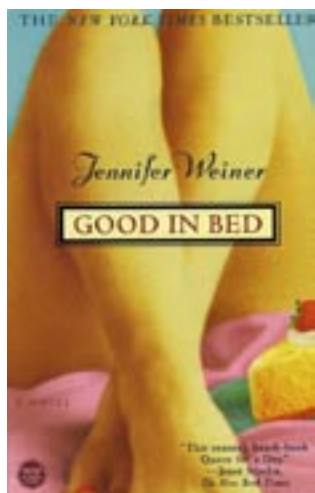
and Davy himself wrote back within hours to invite YPG to the after-party. It was a blast, we met FOUND crew and friends (Davy was flown last-minute to Letterman) and made valuable connections with Harvard Bookstore staff. Harvard bookstore is a key independent, and has been voted Bookstore of the Year by PW. The event was such a hit that we're planning sometime in the future to bring YPG together with other local booksellers for a night out.

I welcome any young-to-the-industry professionals in the Boston area to contact me about joining Boston YPG—and please let friends know about the group. We also welcome suggestions and comments. I can be reached at Meg_Lemke@hmco.com, and my co-chair, Suzanne Cope, is at Suzanne_Cope@hmco.com.

NOT IN
NEW YORK,
BOSTON,
OR SAN DIEGO?

INTERESTED IN
STARTING A
YPG CHAPTER
IN YOUR AREA?

email: carin.siegfried@
stmartins.com
or kristen.weber@twbg.com



Good in Bed by Jennifer Weiner
Atria Books, 2001
Washington Square Press, 2002

I picked up this book after hearing that HBO is considering it for a series to follow up *Sex and the City*. Refreshingly, Jennifer Weiner takes Carrie Bradshaw to a new level.

Cannie Shapiro works as an entertainment reporter for a Philadelphia newspaper with her own apartment, a funny little rat terrier, and the signature dysfunctional family that she has not yet learned to overcome. And now she has bigger problems. When her pot-smoking, dog-disliking ex publicly humiliates her by writing an article titled “Loving a Larger Woman,” Cannie goes through desperate measures to get a “Mr. Big” of her own interested in a fabulous plus-size female.

This sharp, funny and achingly real story is an utterly engaging journey until the

very end when Cannie's predicament becomes too convoluted and her character unrecognizable. Cannie's paramour, the doctor from her weight clinic who first gives her the news that she's pregnant, proves lovable in spite of all her doubts and there's never a moment you are not rooting for him—even in the moments you stop rooting for her.

Only slightly reminiscent of Bridget Jones, *Good in Bed* proves to be well written, endearing, and often hilarious. Weiner is a pro at showing, shot for shot, a real woman's doubts and the ultimate triumphs of someone who learns acceptance is the best route to love.

And if we're lucky, perhaps Cannie, our favorite “Ms. Big” will find her place on the silver screen. —Elizabeth Fisher

Whether its NEW or just in the news, look here for the latest trends in the publishing world.

The Latest Trends

by Hannah Pfeifle
(Harcourt)

For those of us who do not have the executive paycheck we all dream about, if we can't pull a few strings to get the book for free from a colleague at a competing publisher, used books can be a cheap and viable alternative. The Strand and 7th Ave Books in Park Slope are two local favorites, but many around the country look to online retailers to get their books on the cheap, making used books easier to find than ever before. Amazon used to be a cheap option simply because of their steep

discounting, but since late 2000 they also offer used options right next to the new listing.

Alternately Alibris and Abebooks are two web sites that started out as used book retailers. Abebooks has quietly been selling new books on their web site for three years, bringing in about 10 per cent of their business. At this year's BEA, however, they made an official announcement of their new book offerings, a push they hope will eventually account for a third of its listings. The announcement is meant to entice smaller and independent publishers to list their titles on the site. Unlike Amazon, Abebooks is simply a intermediary; they don't warehouse any books or keep their own inventory.

Ironically, while those of us in the industry like to get our books for free and balk at the idea of paying full price, these used book sales are potentially hurting the very companies we work for. A recent study that came out in May suggests the online used book market is increasingly taking market share from new book sales. One factor helping used book retailers is a weak economy, an environment in which everyone likes to find a good bargain and in which everyone is reluctant

to spend unnecessary cash on luxury items. Perhaps used book sales will flatten out in the event of another economic boom, but in the meantime publishers are still worried.

Many publishers rely on their backlist as a steady source of revenue. Used book sales yield no return to the publisher and also bring no royalties to authors. Hence in a July 12 article on the subject, the *New York Times* likened Amazon to Napster. Lorraine Shanley of Market Partners International was quoted, "Used books are to consumer books as Napster was to the music industry." But do publishers really consider this an issue? And what can they do about it? For now, no one seems to be able to provide an answer. Many in the used book business claim they are increasing all book sales by increasing demand for books in general. Publishing executive recognize there may be a problem, but are only in the early stages of defining and fixing it.

I'm reminded of Jane Friedman's Brown Bag Lunch speech in June. She talked about recognizing an opportunity and capitalizing before anyone else believed in it. If you have an idea on how to fix this problem, your publisher may be anxious to hear from you.

Dear Gentle Readers,

Having seen first hand the lack of guidance many people new to the industry face, I heard a calling. An exemplar of impeccable manners, a mentor of implacable decorum, and an arbiter of good taste, I feel compelled to share my experience, knowledge, and counsel with publishing neophytes. Please send complaints, queries, and shocking tales of bad behavior, which are thoroughly enjoyed. Identifying details will always be changed and kept in confidence.

Question: They've got me editing seven of my boss's books. How can I possibly find time to meet agents and acquire books of my own?

Answer: This situation can be tricky. If you are still below the level of Editor, you most likely need to grin and bear it. If you are an Editor, then it's more troublesome. But even as a lowlier Assistant, you need to grow your own acquisitions list in order to get promotions, raises, and to catch the eye of agents with projects perfect for you. The unfortunate answer is: your free time will suffer. Be as organized as possible—keep on top of schedules and abreast of the status of all your books as problems tend to be less time-consuming if detected early. Streamline

lengthy processes—a little bit of effort on the front end, increasing the efficiency of your job, will pay off in the long run.

However, if you find that you're simply unable to get your work done, or next season you're assigned even more manuscripts and you're wearing out, then likely you have to talk with your boss. First, try to find out if your workload is usual in your department. Perhaps your neighbor is working on the same number of titles—but they're all offsets, taking a fraction of the time?

If you are lucky, your boss simply didn't realize that he or she had unintentionally overloaded you, and it is easily fixed. But more likely your department is shorthanded and overworked. Do they plan to hire anyone new? If not, perhaps a summer intern could be requested? Even if there's nothing your boss can do right now to help, simply letting him or her know that you're at the threshold of what you can reasonably handle will likely mean that the next several projects will be assigned to your peers. Whatever you do, don't insist on having projects reassigned, as that will give the impression you can't handle the job. It is in your boss's best interest for you to stay happy and to work well at your job—simply approach him

or her calmly and thoughtfully and present your concern in a way that demonstrates how helping you will help them ("I know Author X is important to you and I want to be able to devote my utmost attention to her, but I'm afraid Author Y's numerous minor complaints are distracting.")

Question: I'm leaving Backward Publishers for Greener Pastures Books and would like to tell off Backward for their antiquated ideas. Should I burn bridges or let it lie?

Answer: Let it lie.

MS. JEANNE GREEN
welcomes queries, gossip, and rants on all aspects of publishing culture. She rarely answers letters personally, will not open attachments, and guarantees anonymity to all.

Ms. Jeanne Green's address is
ypgadvice@hotmail.com

It all started when . . .

Travel through time and see the publishing industry change!

Publishing Past

by Alaina Wong
(Simon and Schuster)

Everyone's talking about graphic novels these days. From true graphic novel imprints to publishers who dabble in stand-alone titles, everyone's getting on the bandwagon. But what about the precursor to all of this—comic books?

Comic strips first appeared in newspapers in the late 19th century, and early comic books were simply pamphlets containing reprints of syndicated comic strips. Funnies on Parade, arguably the first American comic book, was published by Max Gaines in 1933. It was eight pages long, printed in an easy-to-handle 9-inch by 12-inch format. Soon, publishers realized that it was less costly to produce original comic book content than to buy reprint rights for existing comics. Early books introduced Lil' Orphan Annie, Dick Tracy, and Popeye to the American public.

The first major comic book hit was National Periodical Publications' Action Comics #1, which introduced Jerry Siegel's Superman in 1938. The success of Superman led to a frenzy of publishing in the superhero genre, and the Golden Age of comic books began. Costumed characters such as Captain America, Plastic Man, Green Lantern, and Flash ruled the pages of comic books everywhere, especially during WWII. With the end of the war, sales of superhero comics plummeted, and by 1950 the Golden Age was over.

Though the superhero genre was struggling, new genres began to appear. Science fiction, jungle adventure, teen humor (such as Archie), and funny animal comics were added to the mix. However, American society soon began blaming comic books as a cause of crime and juvenile delinquency. Comics were banned from schools and their distribution was limited; they grew darker and more violent as the horror and true crime genres flourished. In 1954, some publishers banded together to form the Comics Code Authority and drafted a self-regulation agreement called the Comic Code that restricted violence and sexuality in comics.

This paved the way for comic book publishers to return to the superhero genre. In 1956, National reintroduced The Flash, and this second wave of superhero popularity was named the Silver Age. In 1961, Stan Lee and Jack Kirby created the Fantastic Four

for Marvel Comics, and the series was a huge hit. Marvel began developing superhero characters with human failings and inner demons, such as Spiderman, Iron Man, The Amazing Hulk, and the X-Men.

In the 1970s, underground comics—published independently of the established publishers—became popular. Catering to the youth counterculture of the time, these comics offered a candid, irreverent style that was new to the publishing landscape. Some attribute the start of the underground comic movement to R. Crumb's Zap Comix #1 in 1968. At the same time, interest from publishers in enforcing the Comics Code Authority began to wane. The Code was relaxed, horror comics were reintroduced, and the Silver Age of comics was replaced by a more modern age.

In the 1980s, DC Comics published The Dark Knight Returns and Watchmen, which were extremely popular and had a huge impact on the comic book industry. A more realistic, darker tone was adopted, and anti-heroes such as the Punisher, Wolverine, and Spawn were all the rage. Superheroes were no longer immortal. Social issues appeared in storylines for the first time. Image Comics, Dark Horse Comics, and many other new comic book publishers began to pop up. The American public wanted their superheroes more human, more flawed, more tragic, and ultimately more realistic. This remains the case even today. Move over, Superman. "Grim-and-gritty" is here to stay.

TOWER OF BABEL II: ANOTHER HUBRISTIC GRASP AT TRANSCENDENCE

On April 14th, the assistants of Henry Holt rounded up the publishing world's dewiest generation to bask in the well-appointed gloom of Proof (239 Third Avenue). Eyeing one another over the slick rims of their cosmo glasses, assessing their peers for prospects professional and otherwise, and wincing at the offerings of those exuberant few who rose to the karaoke stage, over fifty attendees enjoyed an evening of networking, karaoke, and contributing to a good cause.

Danny Reid, an assistant editor at Holt, said of the event, "Any American who cares about books should see publishing assistants sing Cher."

The event raised over 300 books to be donated to the Used Book Café, located on Crosby Street in Soho, which contributes 100% of its profits to Housing Works, a non-profit that provides housing, healthcare, and other services to New Yorkers with HIV and AIDS.

"It was great to have so many people turn out and to see that our peers in publishing know how to have a good time, particularly when it's for a worthwhile cause," said Supurna Banerjee, one of the event's organizers. "This is by no means the last you'll see of us. Keep an eye out for future events."

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Brought to you by the Diversity/Recruit and Retain Committee of The Association of American Publishers, as part of our BOOK YOURSELF A CAREER Campaign.

Diversity Spotlight

by Alaina Wong
(Simon and Schuster)

Thanks, everyone, for completing our Diversity Programming Questionnaire! We received a whopping 181 responses, and got some very helpful feedback from the group. For the most part, people were supportive of seeing YPG events incorporate more diversity with regard to speakers and topics of discussion.

The majority of respondents (60%) agreed that a YPG diversity initiative was needed. Within this group, this percentage who felt that an initiative was needed was even higher among self-identified minority respondents

(71%). Those of you who indicated that you were interested in helping plan events, expect to be contacted very soon!

One of the most interesting findings dealt with the issue of mentors. 69% of respondents felt they could be better served by a mentoring program. This included people who did not currently have a mentor but wanted one, as well as people who had a mentor but felt unsatisfied with the relationship. Some respondents expressed interest in having mentors from a different area of publishing in order to broaden their knowledge of the industry. Other respondents desired mentors that were more experienced in the industry than their current mentors. Some more senior members of the YPG (those who have worked in the industry for 2+ years) were interested in having mentors as well. In response to these statistics, the YPG will be considering a few changes to its current program in the fall.

As expected, most respondents were interested in social/networking events. Our summer social event is coming up in August, so that will be a great chance for you to party with other YPG members. Interest in guest speakers was also high, and going forward we will make a greater effort to include

more diverse topics and speakers (and not just in February!). There was some interest in the book club and newsletter ideas. The viability of having a book club will be discussed at an upcoming meeting of those of you who wanted to help plan events.

As for the newsletter, rather than creating a separate publication, the YPG will include a "Diversity Spotlight" in its regular newsletter going forward.

Finally, a number of respondents expressed interest in community outreach. For example, many people commented on the importance of reaching diverse job candidates interested in the field. While the YPG is not directly involved in this area, the AAP is. When the school year rolls around in September, we'll be looking for more people to help in this area, so stay tuned!

**CONTRIBUTE TO
THE NEWSLETTER
SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS
to the YPG newsletter editor:
kristen.weber@twbg.com
(letters to the editor, book reviews, articles, etc.)**

After a long, long winter, warm weather is finally upon us. While this is lovely in most ways, it makes for a hellish commute.

The hotter it gets in the city, the hotter it gets on subway platforms, and if you're standing in the wrong spot, the stronger the urine smells. Even worse, there is no guarantee of getting an air-conditioned car when the train arrives. In the past two weeks, I have already gotten onto five different subway cars with no air-conditioning. During. Rush. Hour.

I used to think that nothing could be more unpleasant than spending 20 minutes hanging onto a metal bar (designed for 7-foot tall people to reach comfortably), trying not to inhale too deeply as my face is buried in some former frat guy's armpit. Nothing against ex-frat guys, but their armpits are always in my face.

Anyway, I have now found out that summer heat changes all the rules. If I get on a car without air-conditioning, I now have two options. Either stay on the sweltering not-so-crowded car or try to cram myself into an adjacent air-conditioned car. Neither choice is agreeable.

If I choose to pack myself into the air-conditioned car, I now have two more options. Fight my way to a metal bar that I can't reach and stare down 3 armpits (those darn ex-frat boys!!) as I hang on for dear life. Or just stand crushed between people and not have to hold on to anything. Sure, I'll get jostled a bit, but at least I can draw an occasional breath of sweet, fresh air. At this point, the air-conditioning really does not matter because I'm sandwiched between so many people.

Hmm... I remember more air-conditioning before all the Metro Card prices were raised.

So by the time the train pulls into my station, I am stuck. Plenty of people want to get off at my stop, but never the people immediately around me. There is no room to maneuver, and the train operator tries to shut the door while people are still trying to exit. This in turn causes a sudden panic among the people waiting on the platform. They start pushing their way onto the train while we are still trying to get off the train. So my face goes from being shoved into armpits (I swear I'm not obsessed with armpits) to being hit

by closing subway doors (ouch) and the flying fists and elbows of angry commuters trying to squeeze themselves through the same doorway (again, ouch).

The pure sense of freedom upon emerging from this fray is quickly superseded by the wave of heat from the subway platform and the stench of urine. But at least this time, I can run like hell for the nearest exit and finally enjoy the beautiful weather outside!

It's a great city . . .
well, most of the time.

The NYC Bitch Box

by Shirley Chan
(Penguin USA)