



# **ANTHRACIS**

**A Microbial Mystery**

**Millicent Eidson**

**ANTHRACIS: A Microbial Mystery.** MayaVerse Book 1. Copyright © 2021.

In the hottest summer on record, the spectacular southwestern desert is alive with *Bacillus anthracis* spores. Maya Maguire, new veterinarian with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, battles the largest anthrax outbreak in U.S. history. Despite lingering trauma from a childhood accident, Maya's confidence builds with a supportive team of passionate physician Manolo Miranda and tightlipped veterinarian Dave Schwartz. But Homeland Security and the FBI are suspicious when spores match Dave's home Texas Triangle of Death. If Maya can't find the source, thousands may perish. *Anthraxis* takes us to the front lines with scientists betting their lives and relationships on the investigation outcome.

**Book Club Discussion Questions**

Schedule with the author at [drmamayaguire@gmail.com](mailto:drmamayaguire@gmail.com)

1. The genre elements include mystery, thriller, women's fiction, and romantic suspense. How do each of these elements contribute to the overall arc and your enjoyment of the story?
2. The main character is a young Chinese American woman adopted as an infant by an Irish-heritage family living in the Southwest. What elements of the character's background enrich the story?
3. How do issues of immigration play into plot and character development?
4. Characters have strong diverging views on immigration and race, some informed by religion. How are these diverse viewpoints developed and justified?
5. What are some biological, regional, cultural, and religious influences on our perceptions of 'the other'?
6. How does the theme of disability influence the story?
7. The Southwest is intended as a character in itself. How does the geography and history influence the story?
8. What are differences between public health and health care? How should our society achieve a balance supporting both?
9. Does the novel's style increase engagement with the characters, alternating first-person diary entries with Maya's third-person point of view?
10. Zoonotic diseases are those in common between humans and non-human animals. How are transmission, investigation, prevention, and control more complex for zoonotic diseases than those infecting only humans?
11. What is the role of climate change in the story and for zoonotic diseases?
12. How can someone with a veterinary medical degree contribute to disease investigations?
13. Like *Anthraxis*, the television series *The West Wing* and its subsequent podcast *The West Wing Weekly* illuminate government service. How do the challenges and rewards differ depending on career, training, background, and character?
14. For authenticity, writers often rely on personal experience, while protecting privacy of those sharing life events with the author. Writers also use research and close consultation with others to create characters, plot events, and settings not their own. As a reader, do you have a preferred balance of work informed by an author's imagination, research, and representation of their background?

This book is intended for an adult audience, and may contain language, characters, themes, and content that are offensive or triggering to some readers.

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