



# Fieldwork: A Novel

*Mischa Berlinski*

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## **Fieldwork: A Novel** Mischa Berlinski

A daring, spellbinding tale of anthropologists, missionaries, demon possession, sexual taboos, murder, and an obsessed young reporter named Mischa Berlinski

When his girlfriend takes a job as a schoolteacher in northern Thailand, Mischa Berlinski goes along for the ride, working as little as possible for one of Thailand's English-language newspapers. One evening a fellow expatriate tips him off to a story. A charismatic American anthropologist, Martiya van der Leun, has been found dead—a suicide—in the Thai prison where she was serving a fifty-year sentence for murder.

Motivated first by simple curiosity, then by deeper and more mysterious feelings, Mischa searches relentlessly to discover the details of Martiya's crime. His search leads him to the origins of modern anthropology—and into the family history of Martiya's victim, a brilliant young missionary whose grandparents left Oklahoma to preach the Word in the 1920s and never went back. Finally, Mischa's obsession takes him into the world of the Thai hill tribes, whose way of life becomes a battleground for two competing, and utterly American, ways of looking at the world.

Vivid, passionate, funny, deeply researched, and page-turningly plotted, *Fieldwork* is a novel about fascination and taboo—scientific, religious, and sexual. It announces an assured and captivating new voice in American fiction.

*Fieldwork* is a 2007 National Book Award Finalist for Fiction.

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