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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Claire M. Caterer was born in Detroit, Michigan, and raised in the suburbs of Kansas City. A writer from the age of five, Claire has published fiction in *Woman's World* magazine as well as in *Ellery Queen* and *Alfred Hitchcock* mystery magazines. She holds a degree in French from the University of Kansas and spent several years working in New York publishing. Today she is back in the Kansas City metro area, where she writes full time and shares her home with her husband, daughter, two dogs, and a host of imaginary friends. *The Key & the Flame* is her first novel.

## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### **How did you get started writing?**

It grew organically out of the reading process. I don't remember a time when I wasn't making up stories. I loved reading from a very young age, and the more books I read, the more I wanted to create my own.

I started writing book-length manuscripts from about age 10 and had my first short story published at age 18. I have several unpublished novels for adults in my desk drawer, but I realized when I started toying with the idea for *The Key & the Flame* that I missed writing stories for kids. They're the best audience in the world.

### **Which writers have influenced you?**

I loved magical stories as a kid. I read just about every kind of book, but those were my favorite. C.S. Lewis, Roald Dahl, E.B. White, J.R.R. Tolkien—these writers didn't just write fun stories; their prose was gorgeous. They hypnotize readers and pull them into their fictional

worlds until the real world disappears. Kate DiCamillo, Lauren Oliver, and Jacqueline West have that talent as well. And of course I'm obsessed by all things Potter.

**What's your writing process like? Do you sit in a café or write on your lunch hour at the office?**

I actually did write during my lunch hour on the office typewriters at HarperCollins when I worked there in the early 1990s. But these days I most often write in my little back-bedroom office at home. I can't say I write full time—I still do some freelance editing on the side—but about 85 percent of my work time is spent writing.

**Getting published these days is tough. How did you manage to find your agent and publisher?**

Mine was a very old-fashioned kind of journey: Send out queries and hope for the best. I did a lot of research on agents and contacted those who I thought would be a good fit for the manuscript. Chris Richman of Upstart Crow Literary offered to represent me, and we did quite a bit of work on the manuscript before he submitted it to Ruta Rimas at Margaret K. McElderry Books / Simon & Schuster. I'm a firm believer in the idea that if you study the market and write the best book you can, you'll find an agent and publisher. It certainly helps to network at conferences and the like, but it's not just about who you know.

**Is it worth it to pursue writing books in this changing publishing climate?**

Of course! I'm convinced that books will always be with us, in whatever form they take. I'm excited by the resurgence of the independent bookshops and by the wide-open opportunities for writers. And I think this is an interesting time for publishers, too. With the torrent of writing available to readers now—from traditional to self-published in various forms—publishers can play the role of curators and tastemakers. I hope they embrace that role.

**What's next for you?**

I'm working on edits for the sequel to *The Key & the Flame*. Tentatively titled *The Wand & the Sea*, it's scheduled to be published in 2014. I'm also getting started on the third book in the series.

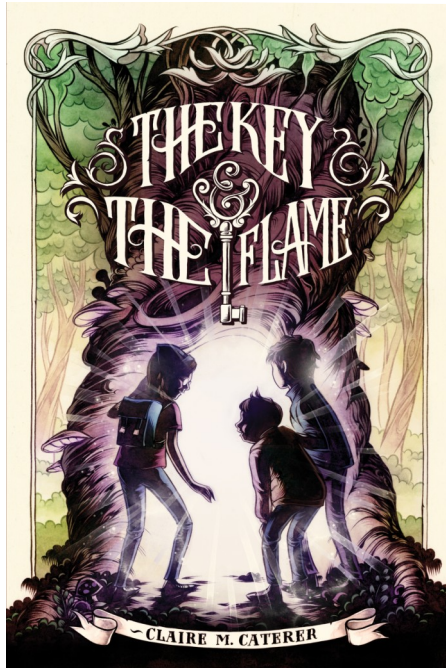


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## ABOUT THE BOOK

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Eleven-year-old Holly Shepard wants nothing more than to seek adventure outside of her humdrum American life. She gets her chance at last when her family travels to England and Holly receives an unusual gift: an iron key that unlocks a passage to the dangerous kingdom of Anglielle, where magic is outlawed and those who practice magic are hunted. When her friend Everett and brother Ben are captured by Anglielle's ruthless king, Holly must rescue them. But that means finding—and using—the magic within herself and learning which magical allies she can trust. *The Key & the Flame* is the first in a five-part fantasy adventure series for ages 8 and up.

**Margaret K. McElderry Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster**  
ages 8-12 (grades 3-7), 468 pages | \$17.99  
available in hardcover & ebook formats  
ISBN-13: 9780802723406 / ISBN-10: 0802723403  
published April 2, 2013

## REVIEWS

“A time-traveling, wand-slashing tale, full of an endearing cast of characters.”

—[Kit Grindstaff](#), author of *The Flame in the Mist*

“Caterer is especially good at creating believable children in all of their human imperfections.”

—[Publisher's Weekly](#)

“So wrought with magic and adventure that it makes you wish you were a kid again.”

—[Valen Steel](#)

“A wonderful debut filled with adventure, mystery, and magic.”

—[Kristen Kittscher](#), author of *The Wig in the Window*



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Readers may contact me at:  
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[Book Cover: high resolution](#)

(1688 x 2550 pixels; 3.53 MB)

[Book Cover: lower resolution](#)

(487 x 739 pixels; 332 KB)

[Author photo: high resolution](#)

(894 x 1253 pixels; 498 KB)

[Teacher’s Guide to \*The Key & the Flame\*](#) (.pdf file)