



The North Meridian Review

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Contributor Bios

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CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

Robin Marie Averbeck teaches history at CSU Chico and has a PhD from UC Davis. Her book, *Liberalism Is Not Enough*, was published in 2018. She is also an activist and the Membership & Organizing Chair for the CFA chapter in Chico. Her interests include leftist and liberal intellectual history, modern Ireland, and pagan Europe. She is currently working on a book project consisting of a compilation of essays critiquing contemporary American liberalism.

Betty J. Bruther (she/her) is an independent historian. She received her degrees from Indiana University (Bloomington) and the University of Notre Dame in history. She taught history and geography as an adjunct at the University of Indianapolis, Marian University Indianapolis, and Oakland City University via the Indiana Women's Prison. Her major interests are terrorism, paramilitarism, the ideologies behind them, medieval European and East Asian history, the history of serial murder, and the history of film.

Nancy Cook is a writer and teaching artist currently living in St. Paul. She serves as flash fiction editor for *Kallisto Gaia Press* and also runs “The Witness Project,” a program of free community writing workshops in Minneapolis designed to enable creative work by underrepresented voices. Twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize, she has been awarded grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the National Parks Arts Foundation, the Mayo Clinic, Minnesota Humanities Center, and Integrity Arts and Culture. In 2019 she served as International Artist in Residence at Artsland, County Tyrone, in Northern Ireland, and has also held residencies at Gettysburg, Harpers Ferry, Kingsbrae Gardens, and at the former Fergus Falls State Hospital in western Minnesota. She is particularly interested in exploring the intersections of geography, history, and cultural heritage in her work. More about her can be found at NancyLCook.com.

Juanita Crider serves as program advisor of the Purdue University Black Cultural Center. She is also currently a PhD candidate in American Studies and an instructor in WGSS at Purdue University with a research concentration in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies and African American Studies. Her dissertation is tentatively titled, “Coming of age Again: Menopausal Black Women and Black Feminist Reawakening in Literature, Film, Television and New Media.” This project explores how Black women theorize menopause. Her research explores whether Black menopausal women use Black feminist methods and strategies to address and construct the realities of aging. Crider asserts that these women do so, even though many fail to identify as feminists. Additionally, she argues that considering Black women in cultural gerontology scholarship provides opportunities to connect to larger theoretical and interdisciplinary

correlations between fields. Therefore, her dissertation aims to address this gap and encourage Black feminist scholars to consider how their research might be more inclusive of eldering Black women.

Susan Curtis taught History and American Studies at Purdue University from 1989 to 2019. She is the author of four books, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (1991); *Dancing to a Black Man's Tune: A Life of Scott Joplin* (1994); *The First Black Actors on the Great White Way* (1998), and *Colored Memories: A Biographer's Quest for the Elusive Lester A. Walton* (2008). As a resident of West Lafayette, Susan became involved in the effort to rescue and restore the Morris one-room schoolhouse; she served on the city's Historic Preservation Commission and on the Library Board. She is now retired in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she is working on a project to connect her family history to larger trends in US and European history.

Ilona Hegedûs is a Hungarian poet, writer, and book reviewer. She graduated from Eötvös Lóránd University (ELTE) in Budapest with a degree in English, where she was also educated as a literary translator. Her first poems were published in 2004. Since then, she has had poems published in the US, UK, France, Greece, and Hungary. At first, she was interested mainly in speculative poetry as an author, then she gradually turned towards the topics of everyday life. She also likes to write pieces for themed anthologies. Examples include poems about wolves, the night sky, the history of mankind, empathy in art and even a poem about coffee. She also completed a master's program in European Studies. She is an avid reader of news from the CEE region and beyond.

Iridessence /Essence Walker is a model, and self-portrait and performance artist based in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her work often features vintage, theatrical, and historical themes and marries them to radical self-love in a socio-political scape that marginalizes people of size and color. She is the inaugural and 2022 "Artist in Residence" for the *North Meridian Review*.

Yesmina Khedhir is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Doctoral School of Literary and Cultural Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary. She holds a B.A and MA in English from the Faculty of Letters, Arts, and Humanities Manouba, Tunisia, and was a former Fulbright foreign language teaching assistant at Stanford University (2011-2012). Yesmina's research project focuses on studying the multiple aspects of cultural memory and trauma in Jesmyn Ward's fiction. She has published several articles related to her field of study in international academic journals and conference proceedings. Her academic interests include, but are not limited to, African American literature, culture, and history, trauma and memory studies, ecocriticism, ecowomanism, and Black feminism.

Mark Latta is an assistant professor of English and Director of Community Engaged Learning at Marian University. His research and teaching interests focus on the intersections between community engagement, social change, and the ways literacy is used to resist oppression and enact futures. Latta gained his first experience teaching through an AmeriCorps term of service at Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility and remains involved in carceral education as a faculty member of the Women's College Partnership. Latta directs the Flanner Community Writing Center and has been involved in numerous social arts projects such as "CityWrite," an Indianapolis project that has collected the personal stories of over 1,100 people since 2012; "the Indy East Art Peace project," an arts-based response to community violence through peacebuilding; "I Am East 10th Street," a public art memoir installation relating the stories of those who live and work along east 10th Street; and "Moving Stories," an examination of the influence of public narratives on public transportation and transit policy. He currently directs Poetic Justice, a peacebuilding and crime prevention project integrating poetry, creative writing, and asset-based community development.

John Lepley is a labor educator in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. From 2006-2008 he was a recipient of the Gertrude and Theodore Debs Memorial Fellowship in the graduate program in labor and social reform movement history at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana.

David Milley has written and published since the 1970s, while working as a technical writer and web applications developer. His work has appeared in *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Bay Windows*, *RFD*, *Friends Journal*, and *Feral*. Retired now, David lives in southern New Jersey with his husband and partner of forty-six years, Warren Davy, who's made his living as a farmer, woodcutter, nurseryman, auctioneer, beekeeper, and cook. These days, Warren tends his garden and keeps honeybees. David walks and writes.

Doug Morris holds a PhD from Penn State University where he studied with Henry Giroux and Pat Shannon. He currently teaches at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. He has written for *Z Magazine*, *Counterpunch*, *Dissident Voice*, and *Common Dreams*. A former jazz guitarist who now focuses on folk singing and composing/performing "people's songs," his research concerns the horrors of capitalism and the needs to replace it. He is also interested in climate disaster, cinema as a form of public pedagogy, Cuba's struggle for a people first system of economics, the culture of U.S. militarism, peace and social justice, and struggles for a meaningful democracy.

Ricardo Quintana-Vallejo (PhD Purdue University) is an Assistant Professor of English at Rhode Island College. He is the author of *Children of Globalization: Diasporic Coming-of-Age Novels in Germany, England, and the United States*, published by Routledge in 2021. His research explores contemporary

diasporas and global migration in coming-of-age novels and other narratives of youth development. He has been a Fulbright, Lynn, and North Star Collective Fellow. He can be reached at rquintanavallejo@ric.edu.

Dr. Julia Schmidt-Pirro received her PhD in Musicology from the Technische Universität Berlin, Germany, in 1999 under the guidance of Prof. Helga de la Motte-Haber. She has taught courses at Georgia Southern University & Armstrong Atlantic State University, including the Honors Class, “Music and Politics.” She has published a book and several articles on European and American Avant-garde composers, including George Antheil, John Cage, and Mayako Kubo. Her co-authored article, “Employing Music in the Cause of Social Justice: Ruth Crawford and Zilphia Horton,” was selected by the editors of *Voices: The Journal of New York Folklore* for republication in the edited volume, *New York State Folklife Reader: Diverse Voices* (2013). Her most recent publication “Bringing Spirituals onto the Classical Music Stage in the Service of African American Civil Rights” appeared in *Political Messaging in Music and Entertainment Spaces Across the Globe* (Vol. 1), Vernon Press, 2022.

Timothy Sheard is a veteran nurse, a writer, and a lifelong labor and social justice activist. After publishing eleven novels and over fifty short stories, he founded *Hard Ball & Little Heroes Press* in order to bring grownups, children, parents and educators’ stories that engage the reader in the most important issues of their lives: immigrant and labor rights, gender equality, the climate crisis and the value of sharing and caring for others. During the two-year Covid lockdown, Timothy attended virtual music lessons with a teacher in New Orleans. From those lessons and his love for theatre he wrote the book, lyrics and music for his first musical *Listen to the Wind*, which he hopes to see performed one day. In the meantime, he continues to mentor and publish working class writers.

Andrea Y. Simpson is an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Richmond. Simpson has expertise in the politics of race, environmental justice, intersectionality, and social movements. “The Race, Ethnicity, and Politics” section of the *American Political Science Association* named her first book, *The Tie that Binds* (New York University Press, 1998), the “Best Book of 1998 on Racial Identity.” In 2009, the Women’s Caucus of the American Political Science Association awarded her the “Woman of Color Professional Achievement Award.”

Valeria Sinclair-Chapman is a professor of Political Science at Purdue University. She is an Americanist with expertise in legislative politics, minority representation and voting rights, political participation, coalition politics, and social movements. Her research examines the effects of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity on political institutions and engagement. She is the author of an award-winning book, *Countervailing Forces in African American Civic Activism, 1973-1994* (Cambridge University Press,

2006). She currently serves as a co-editor of the *American Political Science Review*, the nation's premiere political science journal and is a founding director of the Institute for Civically Engaged Research (ICER) hosted by Tufts University.

Harry Targ is a Professor Emeritus of Political Science Emeritus at Purdue University. He taught on US/Latin American relations, international political economy, and topics on labor studies in the Department of Political Science and the program in Peace Studies. He has served in the leadership of *The Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism* (CCDS) for many years and serves also on the steering committee of *Wisconsin Peace Action*. Professor Targ was also a thirty-year member of the *Northwest Central Labor Council* (AFL-CIO). He has published books and articles on foreign policy and international relations and U.S. political economy. He blogs at *Diary of a Heartland Radical* and can be reached at targ@purdue.edu.

Dr. Ellen M. Taylor is a professor of English at the University of Maine at Augusta, where she coordinates language and literature, and regularly teaches in the prison education program. In Maine, she organizes the annual Plunkett Maine Poetry Festival, held each April in Augusta. She is the author of three collections of poetry, *Floating* (2009), *Compass Rose* (2015), and recently, *Homelands* (2022). Taylor has published scholarship on Maine women writers Celia Thaxter, Elizabeth Coatsworth, and Kate Barnes, considering intersections between gender, language, and ecology. She lives in Appleton, Maine.

Charlie Wiles Charlie Wiles holds a degree in Political Science from Indiana University and spent several years working for the Indiana State Legislature. He operated a general contracting business renovating older homes, served as a combat medic in the US Army Reserves, and is the founding director of Peace Learning Center. In 2011, Charlie became the founding director of Center for Interfaith Cooperation (CIC). Charlie is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, he serves on the Chaplaincy Advisory Board at St. Vincent Hospital and works with several community organizations including “Veterans for Peace,” “Keep Indianapolis Beautiful,” and “OBAT Helpers,” supporting marginalized communities in Bangladesh. Happily married to Sachiko Utsumi Wiles since 1995, they live near Broad Ripple in Indianapolis, Indiana with their three daughters Lena, Aya, and Mia Utsumi Wiles.