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Introduction: A Time of Reflective Survival

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Introduction: A Time of Reflective Survival

Wesley R. Bishop

Another year has passed, and here we are again with the fall issue of *The North Meridian Review*. Academic publishing is incredibly slow, moving at a pace that makes a snail seem like a sprinter. For those unfamiliar with this glacial process, it can seem annoying and unnecessarily cumbersome, but personally I have always found it somewhat refreshing. As part of a generation of writers that grew up with the internet, a sphere of text with a speed limit around the velocity of light, it is comforting to know that in some venues projects are measured in months, years, and sometimes even longer.

Yet that feature, which means academic writers and editors must choose their words carefully to avoid being obsolete before going to print, makes commenting on the immediacy of a rapidly changing world somewhat difficult. 2020 and 2021 have certainly been those types of hyperactive years. A global pandemic, massive protests, an attempted insurrection in the American capitol, and the tumultuous final year of Donald Trump's presidency were events almost custom-tailored for tweets, hashtags, and minute-by-minute updates. Therefore, as the pieces of this current issue formed and rolled in over the course of a year, we at *NMR* were not surprised to see an emerging theme—reflective survival.

I write this introduction from the campus of Marian University Indianapolis, a quiet corner of an unassuming Midwest city, but this year has shown that despite illusions of separation and isolation we are interconnected in profound ways. Millions have now died from the pandemic, and new variants still pose untold risks to our communities. Likewise, for much of the rest of the world the crisis has not even been alleviated due to hoarding of vaccines. And so, we have a situation where the bigotry of borders rears its ugly head yet again, hoarding vaccines for certain people, denying it to others. For those of us who have survived this first wave of pandemic, we reflect on what our survival means. What world is emerging from these multiple crises? What world do we fear, what world do we dream of, and where can we find ourselves in that negotiated in-between? Our peer-reviewed scholarly article by Indiana State University professor Adeyemi Doss explores this by asking us to question the divide of public and private conceptions of Blackness. Daniel Lockhart and Michelle Moyd, in our prose section, deal specifically with the themes of isolation, ruin, and persistence in an age of disease. Ricardo

Quintana Vallejo, our new poetry editor, put out an excellent call for poems discussing the pandemic. Numerous poets from around the world responded with a host of viewpoints.

That said, the fall issue of *NMR* is never dedicated to a single issue. Valentina Concu and I finish a two-part series translating and discussing testimonies from the Italian Holocaust, and Marcia Eppich-Harris, Luanne Castle, Daniel Morris, and Wm. Anthony Connolly write on topics ranging from memoir to the threat of political tyranny. We conclude, as always, with a book review section examining new titles in the various fields of the humanities.

This journal originated out of the collective vision of a group of Indiana-based thinkers, writers, and artists, and was originally thought to be housed in the Department of History and Social Sciences at Marian University. Yet, as stated above, the world often moves faster than academic publishing, and in the summer of 2021 it was decided that the department would no longer exist, being split into two separate schools. What this means for the future of the journal remains to be seen. This journal's central mission has been, and will continue to be, a space for reflection both in times of survival and prosperity. As long as we continue to publish, we will remain a humanities journal for humanity, a humane space in the face of inhumane forces. Where we go from here as a publication, a city, a country, and a global civilization is not yet written, but no matter where we go next the practice of surviving, reflecting, surviving again, and reflecting more will always be needed for us, the residents of the North Meridian—from the Circle City to around the globe.

Dear reader, it is a pleasure and privilege to bring you this year's fall edition of *The North Meridian Review: A Journal of Culture and Scholarship*.

Wesley R. Bishop
Managing and Founding Editor
The North Meridian Review
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Biographies

Dr. Adeyemi Doss is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Multidisciplinary Studies, where he teaches various classes in sociology. He holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in African American and African Diasporic Studies with a minor in Philosophy from Indiana University, Bloomington. As a scholar, Dr. Doss' research interests are shaped by a growing trend towards producing scholarships that address issues facing African American men and boys. His research raises important questions about black subjectivity, patterns of black spatial mobility, and embodied resistance.

Luanne Castle's *Kin Types* (Finishing Line Press), a chapbook of poetry and flash nonfiction based on family and regional history, was a finalist for the 2018 Eric Hoffer Award. Her first collection of poetry, *Doll God*, winner of the 2015 New Mexico-Arizona Book Award, was published by Aldrich Press. Luanne has been a Fellow at the Center for Ideas and Society at the University of California, Riverside. She studied English (specialties in American literature, history, theory, and poetry) at the University of California, Riverside (PhD); Creative Writing, English, and History at Western Michigan University (MFA); and Creative Writing at Stanford University (certificate). Her Pushcart and Best of the Net-nominated poetry and prose have appeared in Copper Nickel, American Journal of Poetry, Pleiades, River Teeth, TAB, Verse Daily, Lunch Ticket, Glass: A Journal of Poetry, Broad Street, Studies in American Jewish Literature, The Review Review, and other journals, as well as many anthologies and craft texts. Luanne blogs about writing, cats, and everyday life at writersite.org and about genealogy at thefamilykalamazoo.com. She can also be found at luannecastle.com. Luanne divides her time between California and Arizona, where she shares land with a bobcat and other wildlife.

Peter Cole is a professor history at Western Illinois University in Macomb and a research associate in the Society, Work, and Development Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. Cole is the author of the award-winning *Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area* (University of Illinois Press, 2018) and *Wobblies on the Waterfront: Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era Philadelphia* (University of Illinois Press, 2007). He edited *Ben Fletcher: Life and Times of a Black Wobbly*, 2nd ed. (PM Press, 2021) and coedited *Wobblies of the World: A Global History of the IWW* (PM Press, 2017). He is the founder and codirector of the Chicago Race Riot of 1919 Commemoration Project.

Valentina Concu is an Assistant Professor of Linguistics and Head of the German Department at the Institute of Foreign Languages at the Universidad del Norte, in Barranquilla, Colombia. She did her undergraduate studies in foreign language at the University of Cagliari (Italy) and the Universität Potsdam (Germany). She received her first M.A. in German and Spanish also from the University of Cagliari and lived in Germany for 7 years where she taught Italian in public and private schools. In Fall 2013, she started her graduate studies at Purdue University, (USA). In July 2015, she got her second M.A. in German and started her Ph.D. in Linguistics right after. She received her Doctoral Degree in February 2021. Her research interests focus on but are not limited to historical corpus linguistics, historical pragmatics, complexity theory, complex network science, second language acquisition, and cultural studies.

Wm. Anthony Connolly is a writer and librarian living on the Delmarva Peninsula with his wife Dyan and their two dogs, Hemingway Short Story and Professor Leo Tolstoy.

Marcia Eppich-Harris holds a PhD in Shakespeare and Dramatic Literature and taught at the college level for roughly fifteen years. She is a playwright and a founding member of the Indiana Playwrights Circle (IPC), where she is the Scene Nights Coordinator and serves on the steering committee. Marcia's writing includes plays, fiction, poetry, scholarship, and reviews. Her creative writing is influenced by the literature and history of the ancient Greeks and Romans, the British Medieval and Renaissance periods, as well as current events. She focuses thematically on politics, philosophy, the arts, gender, family, and culture. Marcia is also the artistic director of *Southbank Theatre Company*, in Indianapolis.

D.A. Lockhart is the author of *Breaking Right* (Porcupine's Quill, 2021) and *Bearmen Descend Upon Gimli* (Frontenac House, 2021). His work has appeared in *Best Canadian Poetry in English 2019*, *New Poetry from the Midwest*, *TriQuarterly*, *ARC Poetry Magazine*, *Grain*, *Belt*, and the *Malahat Review* among many others. He is a Turtle Clan member of Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Lenape), a registered member of the Moravian of the Thames First Nation, and currently resides at the south shore of Waawiiyaatanong (Windsor, ON-Detroit, MI) and Pelee Island. He is the publisher at Urban Farmhouse Press and the Poetry Editor at the *Windsor Review*.

Daniel Morris is a Professor of English at Purdue. His latest book of poems is *Blue Poles* with Marsh Hawk Press.

Michelle Moyd is Ruth N. Halls Associate Professor of History at Indiana University, Bloomington, where she is also the Associate Director of the Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society (CRRES). She is the author of *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2014) and co-author, with Yuliya Komska and David J. Gramling, of *Linguistic Disobedience: Restoring Power to Civic Language* (Palgrave, 2018).