

Virtual Summer Conversational Series & Teacher Education
July 11 - 15, 2021

“The Divining Power of Women -
Louisa May Alcott and the Fight for Woman Suffrage”

Biographies of Our Distinguished Presenters

MICHAEL BARNETT

Minister / Religious Scholar

For two decades, Michael has been compelled to speak, write, and teach on Margaret Fuller and the Transcendentalists. He is a mystic who comes from an intuitive female shamanic lineage with his DNA paternal line as Ashkenazi-Levite, who cared for the female presence of God in the wilderness Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem. For 32 years, Michael has worked as Blue Turtle, Intuitive Counselor, helping people to realize their full potential as guided by Spirit. He earned his MDiv, *magna cum laude*, at Moravian Theological Seminary, and his MEd in Secondary Education and History and Citizenship Certification at Gwynedd Mercy University, where he also taught religious studies. His speeches, articles, and poetry are published in *The Universalist Herald*, *The Journal of Unitarian Universalist History*, *American Spirit*, and *Sedona Journal of Emergence*. Michael also teaches intuitive Sacred Marriage, and writing classes and workshops. His videos, *Blue Turtle – Discover Your Intuitive Self!* are available on YouTube.

BARBARA BERENSON

Harvard Law School / Tufts University

Barbara Berenson is the author of *Massachusetts in the Woman Suffrage Movement: Revolutionary Reformers* (2018), *Boston in the Civil War: Hub of the Second Revolution* (2014), and *Walking Tours of Civil War Boston: Hub of Abolitionism* (2011, 2d ed. 2014). She is also co-editor of *Breaking Barriers: The Unfinished Story of Women Lawyers and Judges in Massachusetts* (2012). Barbara earned her undergraduate degree from Harvard College and her law degree from Harvard Law School. She is on the boards of Boston By Foot and the Royal House & Slave Quarters. Barbara also worked as a Senior Attorney at the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court until June 2019. She is currently a lecturer at Harvard Law School and teaches a course on woman suffrage at Tufts University. For more information, please see www.barbaraberenson.com

MELISSA M. CYBULSKI

Longmeadow, MA Historical Society / Emily Dickinson Museum

Melissa is a Longmeadow Historical Society board member and experienced museum educator and museum guide. Currently, she is employed as a guide at the Emily Dickinson Homestead in Amherst, MA, where she shares details of the life and work of one of America's most celebrated poetic voices. She has researched extensively, and presented locally, the life and legacy of Sarah W. Storrs, a 19th century deaf student and educator who bequeathed land and money to establish the Richard Salter Storrs Library, Longmeadow's public library. She has also curated an exhibit featuring artifacts relevant to Sarah's story that is currently on display at the Storrs House Museum in Longmeadow. She holds a BA from Providence College, and an MEd from UMASS Amherst.

CATHLIN DAVIS

California State University - Stanislaus

Cathlin is a professor at CSU-Stanislaus, where she teaches in the Liberal Studies department, preparing pre-service teachers. She first read *Little Women* at the age of 11, and has since read every single thing Alcott ever wrote. Her research focus has been on Alcott's juvenile fiction, both the novels and short story volumes. She has an extensive Alcott collection, including a few first editions, which she is not afraid to read, as books that are loved should be read.

DIANE DURAY

University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC)

Diane holds an advanced degree in Public Administration and taught Political Science and American History classes on the college level for University of Maryland University College and for several Community Colleges, both in-person and online. She has taught for the University of Maryland University College on an Air Force base in South Korea, and also taught American Studies in Russia under a Fulbright Grant. For several summers, Diane spent a month in China teaching English to Engineering students at a University in Xian. Currently, she teaches American History topics to senior citizens through a Community College program, offering such courses as History of Witchcraft in Salem, Murder and Mayhem, and Pirates and Explorers.

SUSAN GOTTSHALL

Communications Director / Freelance Writer-Producer

Susan has been passionate about women's history ever since she realized it's been left out of history books. To learn more about this rich heritage, Susan researched and wrote about the radical suffragette newspaper *The Revolution* as part of the requirements for her Master of Journalism degree at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. Currently director of communications at a national non-profit organization near Philadelphia, Susan is also a video producer and freelance writer and editor. She has also worked as a researcher at *Ms. Magazine*, and for a decade and a half, wrote a restaurant review column for *The Morning Call* of Allentown, PA.

[ELISABET] ADRIANA LANZI

University of Cordoba / Teachers Training Colleges – Buenos Aires, Argentina

Adriana teaches advanced literature and culture courses at Teachers Training Colleges in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is currently pursuing her Masters in Anglo-American Literature at the University of Cordoba, with the thesis of "The Afterlife of *Little Women* as a Feminist Text." This will be her fourth time presenting at the Summer Conversational Series in the past decade. She lives in Facundo Quiroga, a small town in Buenos Aires Province, and is the proud grandmother of five beautiful grandchildren.

KRISTI LYNN MARTIN

Scholar / Historical Interpreter

Kristi is an independent interdisciplinary scholar specializing in Concord's 19th century literary circle. As a public history and museums and archives professional, she is proud to have worked with all of Concord's literary/historical sites, including as an Historical Interpreter at Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House. Kristi received her PhD as well as a Museum Studies Certificate from Boston University, and is currently at work on a biography of the Alcott sisters.

MARIANNE MONSON

Author / Educator

Marianne received her MFA in Creative Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts and primarily writes on topics related to women's history in the frontier era. She has taught English and Creative Writing at the community college and university levels, and is the author of 11 books for children and adults, including her most recent release, *Her Quiet Revolution: A Novel of Martha Hughes Cannon, Frontier Doctor and First Female State Senator* (Shadow Mountain Press, 2020). Marianne is also founder of The Writer's Guild, a literary non-profit, and writes from a 100-year-old house in Astoria, Oregon. For more information, please visit www.mariannemonson.com.

TODD H. RICHARDSON

University of Texas - Permian Basin

A Professor of English at University of Texas - Permian Basin, Todd's writings have appeared in such journals and books as *The Concord Saunterer*, *New England Quarterly*, *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, *Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism*, and *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. He has also served as President of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society.

LORRAINE TOSIELLO

Physician / Scholar

Lorraine is a practicing physician and an independent scholar who graduated from the State University of New York - Downstate Medical School. She did her post-graduate training in Internal Medicine at St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village, NY during the AIDS epidemic, and devoted her career to the care of people infected with HIV and to the education of young physicians. Her first book combined both of those interests into *A History of the Medical Profession in Westfield, NJ: From Origins to the Twentieth Century*, which was published by the Westfield Historical Society. Her second book was born of a lifelong passion for Louisa May Alcott's work as well as a love for her hometown of New York City -- *Only Gossip Prospers: A Novel of Louisa May Alcott in New York* (December 2019). Lorraine continues to practice medicine in New York and New Jersey while working on two more books related to Louisa May Alcott.

KRISTINA WEST

Author / Academic

Krissie is a writer and academic working in the fields of American literature and childhood. Her first book, *Louisa May Alcott and the Textual Child*, was published in March of 2020 by Palgrave Macmillan while her second, *Reading the Salem Witch Child*, was published in December of 2020. Krissie's writings on Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and the Transcendentalists have regularly been published, and she is currently planning her third book -- a new biography of Louisa, her family, and her circle.