

## Author Biography

### **Aimee Maude Sims**

Editor of *RAW: A Poetic Journey* and Founder of NuWine Press.

Aimee Maude Sims is a multimedia journalist and book publisher who also writes poetry, original music, teaches private instruction in vocal and instrumental music, and freelances web and editorial services. Sims holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science/Urban Affairs from Barnard College, a Masters of Science in Journalism from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and completed studies in web design at Medger Evers College. She worked for *The Associated Press* and interviewed gospel stars such as Kirk Franklin and Cece Winans. Sims' award-winning work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, and papers around the world.



She was the winner of the first John Lennon Songwriter Scholarship award presented by Yoko Ono and founded "Rhythms of Aqua" a three-woman band that produced two independent albums and performed as opening act for Sade and India Arie on their "Lover's Rock" Tour. Sims is currently Minister of Music for The Potter's House Church of the Living God where she prepared the choir for a performance of "You Raise Me Up" with Josh Groban at Madison Square Garden.

### **Contributor Bios:**

Gene Naden is 60 years old and lives in Chicago with two cats, Nevada and Kringle. He develops software for the Accenture Corporation and is writing a novel called "Cold Fog."

Daniel Loftin is 55 years old and lives in Spokane, Wash., where he is a candidate in the Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies at Gonzaga University. His dissertation in progress is on the topic of gay men in ordained Christian ministry.

Corey J. Black is 49 years old and single and lives in Chicopee Falls, Mass. He has held executive positions in finance departments with various companies and is looking forward to getting back into the work force as soon as the Lord is willing.

Benyamin Reich is a multi-disciplinary artist born in Bney Brak, Israel, in 1976, and currently residing in Berlin. He studied art at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Bezalel Academy of Art in Jerusalem, and Naggar School of Photography, Jerusalem.

Jason Martin is a 35-year-old gay Christian who lives in Norman, Okla. He lives with a lesbian couple and their godson.

The Rev. Martha Spong lives in Portland, Maine, and has two grown sons and one daughter still at home along with a cat and a dog. She is the pastor of North Yarmouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.

The Rev. Wm. M. Austin, III, also known as Trey, is originally from South Carolina and is a father to two beautiful children. He currently resides in Colorado Springs, Colo., where he serves as Chairman of the Open and Affirming Committee at First Congregational United Church of Christ.

Ray Barreras is a retired professor of chemistry and medical education living in Atlanta, Ga. He was employed for 27 years at Morehouse School of Medicine, occupying several positions. He writes a great deal of poetry and is also an enthusiastic quilt maker.

Deborah Mckeever, also known as D. Red Mckeever, resides in the Bronx with her life partner of 16 years. She has been employed by the city of New York Human Resources Administration for 26 years and is currently the deputy director of housing services for the HIV/AIDS Services Administration.

The Rev. Dr. Christopher D. Rodkey, 34, lives in Lebanon, Pa., with his wife, Traci, and children Christian and Annaliese. He holds both the Ph.D. in theology and philosophy from Drew University and the doctor of ministry degree from Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Tricia Lea Douglas is 40 years old. She lives in North Carolina and is now separated from her husband.

Samantha Hubbard is 39 years old and lives in Grand Island, Neb., but she still considers the farm near Huntley, Neb., her home. She taught Language Arts for 14 years, and now spends most of her time supporting the endeavors of her husband, her children, her parents, and her cat.

Tonetta Landis, a native of North Carolina, is a high school teacher and freelance writer. She is interested in the bifurcation of identity in the queer community and in communities of color in the United States as well as in the developing world. She currently resides in Washington, D.C.

Susan D. Nielsen, 47, lives in Skokie, Ill., with her son. In the fall of 2010, she realized she is gay. She is a school administrator.

Michael D. Bobo is 34 years old and lives in Claremont, Calif., with his wife of seven years. He is the Christian Literature Examiner for Examiner.com. Michael writes poetry and social commentary on The Bobo Blog.

Allison Anderson is 41 and originally from San Diego, Calif. She now resides in Miami, Fla. She is an amateur photographer and writer and is an active member of Riviera Presbyterian Church.

Dennis Rager and his life partner, Mace, are active members of the Riverside Church in New York City and its social justice programs.

Kelvin Barlow Flournoy is 27, and lives in Greenville, S.C., with his husband. He is currently working on a Human Service degree with the expectation of being the co-pastor of ReBirth Church and the Executive Director of the Freedom Community Center.

James Bernard Agius is a 30-year-old teacher who lives in St. Paul's Bay on the smallest European Union island country of Malta. James is a very passionate person and works and performs best when he is passionate about things.

James R. Huffman is 66 years old and lives in Grand Island, N.Y., with his wife of 45 years and his cat of 20 years, the Artful Dodger. He is Professor of English Emeritus from SUNY Fredonia, where he taught courses on literature and cultural issues for 30 years.

Michael K. Wooten is 24, lives in Greenville, S.C., and is a member of the proud LGBT and Queer family. He loves to celebrate life with his friends and coworkers. He is one of the founders of PRISM PC, an interfaith organization that aims to provide an open environment for LGBT, queer, questioning youth and their allies.

Renair Amin, 35, is a Philadelphia native currently residing in Brooklyn, N.Y. She serves as Minister-Elect of Restoration Temple Ministries. She has been performing her poetry for the past seven years. Her first poetry collection, "Mental Silhouette," was released in May 2011.

Susan M. Peiffer is 35 years old and is a Catholic Theologian working in the non-profit sector with teenage slam poets and youth from GLBTQ- identified guardians. She lives in Wilmington, Del., and shares a life with her transgender partner in Colorado.

Trudie Barreras is a retired high school chemistry teacher living in Atlanta, Ga., with her husband. They have been married for 52 years. Trudie's avocations besides writing include art. Trudie has two cats, Stash and Shadow, who are her Centering Prayer partners.

Bob Gibeling is a single baby boomer who lives in Atlanta. He is a lifelong member of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Gibeling traveled across the U.S. and Canada for ten years, telling his coming out in faith story to other Lutheran churches, bishops and governing bodies as national staff executive for Lutherans Concerned/North America.

Barbara Caesar-Stephenson was born in 1948, She was called to preach at the age of 12 when women were widely expected to "keep silent in the church." In 1998, she founded a Pentecostal, holiness-styled church open to LGBT believers while many other traditional churches were exorcising "gay demons" out of homosexuals.