

Outline: The Business and Pleasures of Editing the Literary Anthology  
AWP Event March 2022

**Panelists and Moderator:** Jennifer Baker, Jason Brown, Phong Nguyen, Kevin Prufer and Christine Sneed

1. Moderator (Sneed) will introduce each panelist, sharing brief biographical details.

**Jennifer Baker** is a publishing professional, creator of the Minorities in Publishing podcast, faculty member of BayPath University's Creative Nonfiction MFA program, a former contributing editor to *Electric Literature*, & editor of *Everyday People: The Color of Life—A Short Story Anthology* (2018). She is also the recipient of a 2017 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow and Queens Council of the Arts New Work grant.

**Jason Lee Brown** is the author of three books. His writing has appeared in literary journals such as *Kenyon Review*, *Literary Review*, *North American Review*, *The Journal*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Crab Orchard Review* and *Ecotone*. He is the editor-in-chief of *River Styx* literary magazine, director of the River Styx Reading Series, and series editor of *New Stories from The Midwest* (New American Press). He also co-edited the poetry anthology *The Book of Donuts* (Terrapin Books).

**Phong Nguyen** is the author of three novels-- *Bronze Drum*, *Roundabout*, and *Adventures of Joe Harper*-- and two story collections-- *Pages from the Textbook of Alternate History*, and *Memory Sickness and Other Stories*. He is coeditor, with Robert Olen Butler, of *Best Peace Fiction: A Social Justice Anthology*, and he is coeditor, with Dan Chaon, of *Nancy Hale: On the Life and Work of a Lost American Master*. He is the Miller Family Endowed Chair in Literature and Writing at the University of Missouri, where he teaches fiction writing.

Among **Kevin Prufer's** many edited volumes are *New European Poets* and *Into English: Poems, Essays, Commentaries*, both from Graywolf Press. With Wayne Miller, he directs the Unsung Masters Series, a book series devoted to archival research and anthologies that each year brings to new readers the work of a great but largely forgotten author. His ninth book of poems, *The Fears*, is forthcoming from Copper Canyon Press.

**Christine Sneed** is the author of two novels and two story collections, the most recent *The Virginity of Famous Men*. She is the editor of the forthcoming short fiction anthology *Love in the Time of Time's Up* and teaches graduate creative writing for Northwestern University and Regis University. Her work has appeared in *The Best American Short Stories*, *The O. Henry Prize Stories*, *New Stories from the Midwest*, *Ploughshares*, *New York Times*, and many other periodicals.

2. Moderator and panelists to discuss how they began editing anthologies.

3. Next, a discussion of the process of submitting anthology proposals to publishers – did the panelists work with an agent on these submissions, did they pitch the proposal themselves to

acquisitions editors, or did an editor approach them with an idea and ask them to curate the anthology?

How much of the anthology was already assembled when they went out to find a press?

5. How does each panelist confront/overcome the widespread belief that anthologies are considered to be hard sells by many presses, perhaps especially corporate ones?
6. How did the panelists find anthology contributors and how did they approach/query them? Did they write to a prospective contributor more than once if they didn't receive a reply within a week or two of their original query?
7. Discussion of any challenges that arose while working with a coeditor and/or with the contributors and how were they handled?
8. How did the panelists go about procuring rights to previously published work, if there were some reprinted texts in their anthologies?
9. How did panelists handle remuneration for contributors and for themselves (or did they only receive contributors copies)?