F**rom Montgomery, Alabama come Jacqueline Trimble’s triumphant, despairing, hilarious, heartbreaking poems. These poems are about the big topics: Race, Gender, History.  Not content with simple answers or easy platitudes, Trimble engages the contrasts and contradictions, even absurdities, of American life in the twenty-first century. Her grace is in the anger distilled to the bitter draft you savor as it bites, in thinking to ask whether Jean-Paul Sartre ever asked Simone de Beauvoir to go to the Winn-Dixie, in the fairy tales she rewrites and the myths of America she questions. This book you hold in your hands will teach and inspire and delight you. Be ready.** F**rom Montgomery, Alabama come Jacqueline Trimble’s triumphant, despairing, hilarious, heartbreaking poems. These poems are about the big topics: Race, Gender, History.  Not content with simple answers or easy platitudes, Trimble engages the contrasts and contradictions, even absurdities, of American life in the twenty-first century. Her grace is in the anger distilled to the bitter draft you savor as it bites, in thinking to ask whether Jean-Paul Sartre ever asked Simone de Beauvoir to go to the Winn-Dixie, in the fairy tales she rewrites and the myths of America she questions. This book you hold in your hands will teach and inspire and delight you. Be ready. Jennifer Horne, Tell the World You’re a Wildflower**

From the personal to the political, from the mythical to the real, from the romantic to the common, Jacqueline Trimble explores a variety of topics in engaging and at times even arresting poems in American Happiness.  From suffering the ignominious death of an alcoholic father, to humorously examining her chosen poetic profession, to calling upon African American women to abandon their silence in the face of racial assault/violation, to climbing into the psychology of the young white man who executed nine black parishioners in Charleston, South Carolina, Trimble exhibits careful control of her craft, forges sunlight through clouds of confusion and misunderstanding, and urges readers to envision alternative realities to the racial and political issues embedded in American culture.

American Happiness is not a “happy” book.  Nor is it a soothing or comforting book, and it does not profess to be.  It takes its titular inspiration from the nearly picture-perfect Andy Griffith Show and claims the failure of that vision to embrace all  Americans.   Standout poems such as “Church Women,” “Cinderella Finds Happiness with Her Third Husband,” “The Geography of Passion,” “Lineage,” “American Happiness,” “Another Thing to Worry About,” and “Ethnophaulism for the News” showcase a socially and racially conscious poet whose subjects are integrally woven into the beauty of her creations.  Reading the ironically titled American Happiness provides not only a slice of the poet’s and America’s lives, but it calls into question and implicitly invites readers to ponder whether or not this is indeed the land of the free and the home of the brave.  That thoughtful questioning/pondering is well worth the reading.

​**Trudier Harris, PhD**

**Martin Luther King Jr., Heroism, and African American Literature (2014).**

**In American Happiness, Jacqueline Trimble wonders, “Oh, my beloved country, what is to become of us,/ caught as we are in our own imagined terror?”  One thing that is to become of us: we now can read and listen to Trimble’s very fine first book of poems.  It may even be a book that helps us to release the hold upon us of terror and that schools us in compassion and the humor needed for survival.  Trimble’s first collection – like good wine, properly and slowly seasoned – is smart, funny, mature, and engaging.  Trimble writes her uneasy though definite love of place – America, the South, Alabama – in a manner that shows us that the wisdom is in the humor.  Please read this book, and join me in eagerly awaiting Trimble’s next book of poetry.**

**— Hank Lazer, 2015 recipient of the Harper Lee Award, author of 22 books of poetry.**