

David P. Miller – Two Poems

Victory Parade

My friend, turn your volume down.
Your outrage is impenetrable.
Each practiced curse and epithet,
locked into each other one
like iron snap-together bricks,
allows me the taste of smother

or the taste of turn away.
It's a well-wrought weapon,
this "political incorrectness"
you've perfected to obsession.
A dare to me to stop your mouth.
Your fury rears your monument.

Your fury could become
your epitaph. Take care.
After tears are dust,
epitaphs are no one's souvenirs.
Win arguments by assault,
then glaze your skull

with ashes. We close our eyes
to monuments which cannot
be admired. We remember
deaths of those enslaved
to build them. How many deaths
does your precision cherish?

Oh, they excite me too,
these weapons. Lips that slice,
teeth in rage, whiplash tongue.
My head lined with wounds
I've made myself. A sufferer
so splendid in his testimony

there are no other sufferers.
A victory parade through
a city of missing children.

Kent State Plus Fifty

Let this incite your education.
Imagine your own fists that fourth of May.
The Guard had guns and they could kill us.

Thirteen students bled on Blanket Hill.
Tin soldiers, parents' curses, and four dead.
Let this incite your generation.

Power to the people! Don't smile behind your hands.
We brought the war back home because
the Guard had guns and they would kill us.

*Let me tell you how it is on any day.
Any solitary lobo with a twitch, stalking
the hallways, generates our education.*

*All power to the desks desperate
flat against our classroom doors.
They have guns and they could kill us.*

*All power to the student teachers
whose internships conceal us in the cloakroom.
Maybe this will generate your education.
Our generation carries guns. We can kill us.*

David P. Miller's collection, *Sprawled Asleep*, was published by Nixes Mate Books in 2019. His chapbook, *The Afterimages*, was published by Červená Barva Press in 2014. Poems have recently appeared in *Meat for Tea*, *Hawaii Pacific Review*, *Turtle Island Quarterly*, *Seneca Review*, *Thimble Literary Magazine*, *Unlost*, *J Journal*, *Lily Poetry Review*, *FUSION*, and *What Rough Beast*, among others. His poem "Add One Father to Earth" was awarded an Honorable Mention by Robert Pinsky for the New England Poetry Club's 2019 Samuel Washington Allen Prize competition. He was a librarian at Curry College in Massachusetts, from which he retired in 2018.