

**ROSS LOCKRIDGE JR.**

Author

Ross Lockridge Jr. is the author of *Raintree County*, a 1,060-page epic many have called The Great American Novel. Graduating from IU in 1935 with a 4.33 grade point average—the highest GPA ever accumulated at the university—Lockridge entered a doctoral program at Harvard in 1940, announcing he would write a dissertation on Walt Whitman. In reality, he began writing *Raintree County*.

In 1946, he carried the 20-pound manuscript to publisher Houghton Mifflin in a suitcase. Within five weeks the novel was excerpted in *Life* magazine, won an enormous monetary prize and movie contract from MGM Studios, and was the Main Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club. But the publisher, the studio, and the book club wanted significant cuts and revisions.

Lockridge, already depressed, found the situation unbearable. The day before his novel was announced as the No. 1 national bestseller, he took his own life. His obituary was carried on the front page of *The New York Times*. —C.S.



Courtesy photo



Photo by Roni Griffith

**EDGAR MEYER**

MacArthur 'Genius' Musician

A groundbreaking virtuoso of the double bass, Edgar Meyer first learned to play from his father—the string orchestra director for the public schools in Oak Ridge, Tennessee—and went on to study with Stuart Sankey at the IU School of Music.

He has since performed and recorded extensively in the rarefied realm of solo classical bassists and was a member of the progressive bluegrass supergroup Strength in Numbers with Béla Fleck, Sam Bush, Mark O'Connor, and Jerry Douglas. He has also composed music alone and collaboratively that crisscrossed through genres of bluegrass, jazz, and classical, which have earned him a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship and five Grammy Awards.

In 2020, he collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma, Stuart Duncan, and Chris Thile for the second time on an album called *Not Our First Goat Rodeo*. —T.Z.T.



Photo by Jim McGuire

**SYLVIA MCNAIR**

Singer

Grammy Award-winning opera singer and recitalist Sylvia McNair has performed in the great concert halls of Europe and America, with the world's most famous conductors, before the U.S. Supreme Court, and at the 80th birthday celebration of Pope John Paul II.

McNair, who received a Master of Music degree with distinction from the Indiana University School of Music in 1983, had her operatic debut as Sandrina in *L'infedeltà delusa* in 1982.

A soprano, she went on to enjoy a prolific opera career during which she recorded more than 70 albums. For years, she performed at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, as well as at the Vienna State Opera and the San Francisco Opera, among others.

For a time, McNair served on the IU Jacobs School of Music voice faculty. She currently resides in Bloomington and volunteers for several charitable organizations. —S.B.

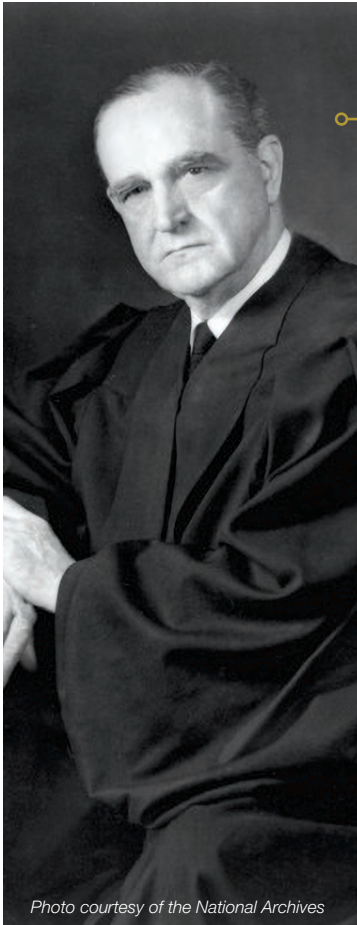


Photo courtesy of the National Archives

## SHERMAN MINTON

Supreme Court Justice

Sherman Minton, a one-term Democratic U.S. senator born in Georgetown, Indiana, is the last member of Congress to have been appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

When Minton attended IU in the early 1900s, he was in good company. Among his friends were future governor of Indiana Paul V. McNutt and future presidential candidate Wendell L. Willkie.

Minton graduated from IU in 1913 and earned a law degree in 1915. From 1935 to 1941, he served in the U.S. Senate, where he befriended Harry Truman. In 1949, Truman had an opportunity to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court. He nominated Minton.

Serving just seven years on the court, Minton was key in at least one major ruling—*Brown v. Board of Education*. He died in 1965. —C.S.



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## RYAN MURPHY

Television Honcho

Ryan Murphy, best known for creating and producing popular television series such as *Nip/Tuck* (2003–10), *Glee* (2009–15), and *American Horror Story* (2011–present), studied journalism at IU in the mid-1980s. While a student, he was a member of the Singing Hoosiers and interned in the style section at *The Washington Post*. He went on to work as a journalist before beginning scriptwriting in the late 1990s. He started his career in television with the teen comedy *Popular*, which debuted on The WB in 1999.

Murphy has received six Primetime Emmy Awards and has been called “the most powerful man” in modern television. He recently signed the largest developmental deal in television history with Netflix, to the tune of \$300 million. —C.S.

## PAUL H. O'NEILL

Treasury Secretary

Former Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill was the son of an Army sergeant who grew up on military bases all over the United States. He finished high school in Anchorage, Alaska, and college at California State University, Fresno, before earning his master's in public administration from IU.

O'Neill began his public service career at the Veterans Administration, followed by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, where he later became deputy director. He was appointed Secretary of the Treasury by President George W. Bush in 2001.

The tensions and conflicts that arose when he held that position—particularly regarding his perspective on the war on Iraq—were illuminated in the 2004 book *The Price of Loyalty* by Ron Suskind.

A year before O'Neill died in 2020 at age 84, IU renamed its School of Public and Environmental Affairs in his honor. —T.Z.T.



Photo by Michael Geissinger, courtesy of the Library of Congress

## JANE PAULEY

Broadcast Journalist

Born in Indianapolis in 1950, award-winning journalist Jane Pauley took just one journalism class before graduating with a B.A. in political science from IU in 1972.

She began her career at WISH-TV in Indianapolis before moving to Chicago to become the first female co-anchor of a major evening newscast. Just 10 months later she was chosen to replace Barbara Walters on the *Today* show, beginning a long network television news career.

Pauley made history again when, in 2016, she replaced Charles Osgood as the host of *CBS Sunday Morning*, making her the only female anchor of a Sunday morning news program.

An author, actress, and mental health advocate, Pauley is married to cartoonist Garry Trudeau, creator of the comic strip *Doonesbury*. —C.S.



Photo by Michele Crowe/CBS