



waterwheel

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual

Feminist Archives in Action

By Mary E. Hunt

Archives are the fossils humans make. We engrave ourselves on this earth—lightly of course—in order to orient those who come after us. Women's history requires archives if our stories are to outlive us. Otherwise, those who follow will have to invent the feminist movements all over again. There are enough prevailing forces against our efforts that failure to file ought not to be one of them.

My unabashed call for friends and colleagues in religious scholarship and activism to archive their papers is an effort to get us to take ourselves seriously, to be agents of our own history. One need not be a control freak to realize that others will write the stories if we don't. **Believing** that the stories are worth writing and preserving is the often difficult first step. For feminists in religion this should not be a problem since our struggles are still in progress. Indeed history can only be kinder to us than many of our contemporaries are, who thwart our efforts at equality and justice.

I have worked on three archives to date: the papers of pioneer feminist theologian and activist Anne McGrew Bennett that are now in

women and religion. Smith archivists are interested in women from a wide range of religious traditions, unlike some of the more specifically focused denominational collections. There is a certain delight in thinking that one's papers will reside for all eternity in the company of good colleagues!

In each case, I was amazed by the broad range of materials—books, articles, journals, correspondence, photos, tapes, awards, press clippings, research files—that "make up" the person or movement. I can imagine students plowing through them decades from now. They will unearth clues that will help to explain who we were and what we were doing, perhaps even more clearly than we knew at the time. To deprive them of such fertile ground seems unfair, a contradiction of the feminist truism that the personal is political. Sensitive materials can always be restricted for a period of time, but lost materials can never be replaced.

Some of my colleagues are reticent to think about their own archives. Indeed some have placed their papers, in the Archives of

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the archives at the Graduate Theological Union Library, www.gtu.edu/library/archives, in Berkeley where she enjoyed an active retirement; the papers of the Women-Church Convergence that are currently being processed at the Ann Ida Gannon Center for Women and Leadership at Loyola University Chicago, www.luc.edu/gannon, where many Catholic women's papers are located; and my own papers, Diann Neu's, and the papers of WATER that were shipped recently to the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College, www.smith.edu/libraries/lbs/ssc, which specializes in grassroots women's groups. WATER chose Smith, a women's college, which is developing a strong collection of

Women in Theological Scholarship at Union Theological Seminary, www.columbia.edu/cu/web/indiv/burke/archives/awts. I understand the feelings of those who drag their heels when it comes to making this difficult but important decision. First, many women, even among the most accomplished, find it hard to think that anyone would want their materials. So schooled are we in modesty and self-deprecation that we do not think broadly enough about our own reach. It is not hubris but generosity that motivates one to create an archive.

Second, many organizations and institutions have long disregarded and discarded

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Note: *WATERwheel* is a quarterly publication. We have gotten off of our regular schedule recently due to the rigors of moving, resettling, and restructuring. Apologies for the delay. This issue, Vol. XVII, 4 will be followed shortly by Vol. XVIII. We're back on track!



(l. to r.) Rachel, Katey, Gretchen, and Sophie extending WATER's reach

Welcome WATER Summer 2006 Interns

- Rachel Ingraham, Houghton College/ Harvard Divinity School
- Sophie Kanter, Guilford College
- Katey Zeh, Yale Divinity School
- Gretchen Zelle, Luther College

This summer's interns will be busy putting the Carol Murdock Scinto Resource Center on-line, participating in weekly seminars, assisting WATER staff, and visiting other groups in Greater Washington, DC. They have each come recommended by WATER colleagues. Thanks for your recommendations! It is not too early to think about women for next summer!

Editorial

We need Geneva Conventions for the culture wars. There are seemingly no limits to the ways people seek to stop one another from exercising their responsible freedom. Immigrants to the United States are on the front lines as they struggle to live, work, and pay taxes against enormous odds. Collective short term memory loss afflicts a society that does not realize that all but its native people, who were themselves violated, came without papers or invitation.

The anti-abortion movement has now added end-of-life issues to its agenda. A year after the Terry Schiavo debacle, legislation is pending in several states to allow hospitals to be selective about their enforcement of patients' written wishes. Horror stories abound of patients who have literally died twice after being resuscitated against their will. What is at stake is not human life but the will to control it.

Likewise, those who oppose same-sex marriage have added same-sex adoption to their hit list. For example, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Boston, under direct Vatican pressure, decided to cease facilitating adoptions after a century rather than comply with Massachusetts state law that prevents discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This disgraceful decision shows that even so sacred a value as the well being of children can be traded off against ideology.

WATER's work to bring feminist religious values to the service of social justice is the antithesis of these moves. We invite and need collaborators who can imagine beyond the bellicose and create beyond the boxes.

It is not hubris but generosity that motivates one to create an archive.

Archives...

(Continued from page 1)

the work of women. Imagining that an institution would want our papers is far from most women's minds. Yet, for generations women have made quilts into which they have sewn their history—old clothes, addresses of friends, reminders of one another's lives. Archives are today's quilts, in a sense.

Third, the preservation of materials is expensive; the processing of them is time-consuming, so there are real economic barriers to preservation as well. Happily, women's centers like Smith and Gannon are overcoming those barriers with women's historical well being in mind.

Finally, there is no denying that creating archives is a blatant admission that one will not live forever. That is not something a lot of people want to deal with. The same reticence to write a will or to delegate power of attorney functions on the archive front. But guess what—no one will live forever, so the choice is really between creating one's own archive or leaving the job to those who survive us. I am sure my daughter will thank me one day for at least having gotten the ball rolling.

A feminist historian told me that she used archives almost exclusively for her research. I asked why in the case of living people she didn't just interview them. Because our

memories are fallible, she told me, and the paper trail can often fill in blanks that our grey matter has long since lost. I saw her point, but realized yet another option is oral histories, those taped conversations with people that allow women to tell their own stories. They are a form of archival preservation. I urge groups to do their own oral histories as well as interview their colleagues.

It is instructive to go to an archive and see scholars at work. Colleges like Smith have undergraduates write papers using the archives, instilling in them the importance and the mechanics of archival work. In Gannon's newly renovated Piper Hall, writers and researchers are using the archives to produce books on feminist activist Marjorie Tuite, OP, and religious artist Virginia Broderick.

There is always a sense of excitement under the surface in those quiet rooms where scholars labor. Every once in a while a jewel is unearthed, a nugget found that clarifies an odd choice or explains a previously inexplicable decision. Eureka, the feminist human spirit lives.

Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., is cofounder and codirector of WATER.

Congratulations Carolyn Farrell!

Carolyn Farrell, director of the Ann Ida Gannon Center for Women and Leadership, www.luc.edu/gannon, at Loyola University in Chicago, is retiring after 15 years of pioneering work there. At a gala reception in her honor, the president of Loyola University announced a chair in women's studies to be named for Carolyn Farrell. The first million dollars will be transferred this summer and the next million will be raised shortly. WATER congratulates Carolyn on her wonderful work and wishes her well on her next endeavors.

She has accomplished a great deal, including the renovation of Piper Hall into a beautiful state-of-the-art center for women's studies, archives, and leadership training. This ongoing legacy of Mundelein College and the Sisters of Charity of the BVM plays a pivotal role at Loyola and is a model for other universities.

Speakers at the reception emphasized her leadership style. An excerpt from Mary E. Hunt's remarks follows:

"Carolyn knows how to get the job done—just look at this building!

She is second to no one in energy, commitment, and long hours. But where she differs from many successful women leaders is on the personal front. Some leaders are great at their work but frankly are not necessarily the nicest people in the world. Perhaps they are made hard or cold by the rigors of succeeding. Carolyn's care and warmth is the opposite of that. She empowers others without disempowering herself. She treats people with the same respect and dignity whether they are members of Congress, cement layers, or taxi drivers. She keeps her priorities in order by putting friends, community, family, and her own health and spirit first. I only hope some of us can internalize this style as we follow her lead."



Media Release:
For immediate release

Contact:
Mary E. Hunt: 301.589.2509,
240.472.4587, mhunt@hers.com
Bridget Mary Meehan: 703.283.2929,
703.671.1972, sofiabmm@aol.com

Women-Church Convergence Rejects Vatican's Statement on Gay Seminarians

Women-Church Convergence rejects as intellectually embarrassing and morally bankrupt the recent Vatican statement on gay seminarians. We denounce in the strongest possible terms the negative, fuzzy language about homosexuality unsupported by social scientific data.

We take exception to the suggestion that same-sex loving persons are incapable of healthy, affective relationships. To the contrary, many of our best and brightest Catholic theologians, pastoral ministers, and other committed members are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people whose lives exemplify the best of the Gospel. Only fear of retribution keeps many of these people from proclaiming their identities, a sad commentary on a community that claims its roots in the Jesus movement.

We recognize this statement and the gay-hunting visitations to Catholic seminaries for what they are, namely, efforts to coverup priest pedophilia by bishops who colluded in protecting those who engaged in criminal behavior. The focus on gay men, especially gay seminarians and gay seminary professors, as if a gay subculture and not a culture of duplicity were to blame, is a focus we do not accept. Just as gender is irrelevant to fitness for ministry, so, too, is sexual orientation. That truth cannot be covered up.

We propose that Catholics simply ignore this teaching. We urge Catholics instead to focus energies on developing feminist models of ministry in a "discipleship of equals" that are based on qualifications and commitment, not on male gender and presumed heterosexuality. Then, perhaps, the Roman Catholic Church can get on with the work of doing justice to end war and urge economic sharing instead of frittering away its time, resources, and what little moral credibility it may have left.

NATIONAL DECLARATION BY RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

We proclaim with one voice as national spiritual and religious leaders that violence against women exists in all communities, including our own, and is morally, spiritually and universally intolerable.

We acknowledge that our sacred texts, traditions and values have too often been misused to perpetuate and condone abuse.

We commit ourselves to working toward the day when all women will be safe and abuse will be no more.

We draw upon our healing texts and practices to help make our families and societies whole.

Our religious and spiritual traditions compel us to work for justice and the eradication of violence against women.

We call up people of all religious and spiritual traditions to join us.

April 5, 2006

The NATIONAL DECLARATION BY RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN is a project of the Faith Trust Institute. Sign it at www.faithtrustinstitute.org. Share it with colleagues and friends. Hang it up in shelters and counseling offices, anywhere women who have been abused will find it. Spread the word that religions can be helpful and must not be harmful to women's well being.

A Prayer Honoring Coretta Scott King 1927-2006



by The Rev. Elder Darlene Garner

God of our weary years:

The sun has set for another drum major for justice. So today we join our hearts with those of people around the world who grieve the passing of Coretta Scott King.

We thank You for her uplifting ministry and courageous life. In a world too often filled with hatred and rancor of every sort, she was steadfast to the end in her faith that Your justice could roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

God of our silent tears:

You have brought us, Your people, this far on the way.

Yet together we acknowledge: We are still traveling the road that leads to justice. The struggle is not yet over. The destination is not yet reached. Ours is a journey that that has just begun.

Now that the voice of Coretta Scott King is silent, we pray that You will cause to rise up within each one of us a *new voice* that will sustain us on this journey. As Coretta walked with Martin, so allow us to journey together in our pursuit of justice.

Give us, we pray, the courage to work hand-in-hand for equality.

Give us, we pray, the compassion of a heart-to-heart connection in the struggle for human rights for all people.

Even more, O God,

We pray that we, like Coretta, will be:
Wise enough... to seek justice that is not just for us.

Strong enough... to lift others up as we rise.

Humble enough... to seek right relationship with one another. And with ourselves. And with You.

So walk with us, Jesus. And let us walk on till victory is won. Amen.

Rev. Darlene Garner, Elder in the Metropolitan Community Churches, is a longtime WATER colleague.



We walk, and walk, and walk some more in solidarity with other walkers and causes. As we march, we create new roads because some of the ones that we have used in the past do not lead to the places where we need to be. Some roads have been washed away. Some lead to dead ends. Some are hidden. We march to protest injustice. We walk to get inspired. We jog to get involved. We race for the cure.

This liturgy honors walkers and runners, and challenges each to make new roads. (To join other walkers for marches or demonstrations, check Web sites like www.komen.org to find events near you like a Race for the Cure.) A version of this liturgy was created with the Loretto Community Regional Assembly in Las Cruces, New Mexico, 2006. Use it to inspire the one you need.

Preparation

Gather drums (trash cans, pots and pans, tin boxes). Set the table with bread, wine, juice, and foods. Gather luminaries (candles) appropriate for the number of participants, for example, eight luminaries for a group of 40, two for a group of ten. Choose three places or stations: one for gathering, another for storytelling, and a third for the meal.

Call to Gather

(Drummers play varieties of drums to call people to the gathering place.

A few use megaphones to call out phrases like: "Walkers needed." "Got shoes for walking?" "Race for the cure." "March to protest war." "Could you help us find the way?" "Where is the road?" "Does anyone have a flashlight?" When all have gathered, the litany begins.)

Naming the Circle

Travelers on the journey for peace and justice, walkers, marchers, runners, crawlers, cyclists, we gather to walk in solidarity with other walkers and causes. We are getting ready to walk to create new roads. Let us take a minute to meet the people with whom we are walking. Introduce yourself to those around you, saying something like: "Hi! I'm Diann. I am a walker (or runner, marcher, cyclist...)."

Litany of Solidarity

Walkers, let us begin our journey by sharing together a litany of solidarity to remember why we walk. Your response to each line is "We walk in solidarity."

Let us walk in solidarity as we struggle to make new roads.

- Response: We walk in solidarity.**
From many different journeys...
- Response: We walk in solidarity.**
From countryside and city center...
- Response: We walk in solidarity.**
Crawling, walking, running, marching...
- Response: We walk in solidarity.**
Discovering many dances of life...
- Response: We walk in solidarity.**

Acknowledging differences and similarities in strategies...

Response: We walk in solidarity.

We Walk in Solidarity Diann

Working to overcome imperialism, war, racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, militarism...

Response: We walk in solidarity.

Crossing worlds as friends...

Response: We walk in solidarity.

Working for justice and peace...

Response: We walk in solidarity.

Procession

[Women holding luminaries begin to light a path. The youngest walks along the path carrying a hobo stick (a stick with a bag filled with belongings tied to it) and leads the procession to the place chosen for storytelling. Others follow, singing and walking with purpose, swinging arms, and exaggerating walking.]

Song: "Guide My Feet," Spiritual

- Guide my feet while I run this race.
- (3x) For I don't want to run this race in vain.
- *Guide my feet while I walk this road. (3x) For I don't want to walk this road in vain.
- * Hold my hand... Stand with me...



Solidarity

L. Neu

Candle Lighting

(The women with the luminaries stand at the entrance to the place of storytelling. The participants enter singing.)

Procession

(The youngest leads the procession to the place of table sharing.)

take, bless, and drink it in memory of you, and of all who race to overcome violence and illness.

Refrain: "Spirit of the Elders"

Song: "We Are Marching in the Light of God," South African Traditional, **The New Century Hymnal**, Pilgrim Press, 1995.

Blessing the Foods

(The blesser, or the cook, holds the food, saying)

Praise to you, Companion on the Road, Manna for the Desert, for you give us this food. We take, bless, break, and eat it in memory of you and of all children who hunger for food.

Refrain: "Spirit of the Elders"

We are *walking in the light of God,
we are walking in the light of God. 2x
We are *walking, we are *walking, 2x
We are *walking in the light of God.
*Dancing... *Praying... *Singing

Storytelling

As I walk..as I walk..

The universe..is walking with me..

Beautifully..it walks before me

Beautifully..on every side..

As I walk..I walk with beauty.

—Mary Austin, personal walking chant, from *Everyman's Genius* (1925), in Rosalie Maggio, *The New Beacon Book of Quotations by Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), p. 722.

Candle Lighting

(The women with the luminaries stand at the entrance to the place of table sharing. The participants enter singing.)

Eating the Meal and Meal Talk

Song: "Keep on Walking Forward" by Pat Humphries

(The singers begin singing at the close of the meal.)

Gonna keep on walking forward,
keep on walking forward,
Gonna keep on walking forward,
Never turning back, never turning.

Song: "I Got Shoes," Spiritual

I got shoes. You got shoes.

All God's children got shoes.

When I get to heaven gonna put
on my shoes.

Gonna walk all over God's heaven,
heaven, heaven.

Gonna walk all over God's heaven.

Blessing the Bread

(The blesser holds the bread)

Praise to you, Companion on the Road, Bread of life, for you give us this bread to feed our hunger. We take, bless, break, and eat it in memory of you and of all who walk for peace and justice.

Blessing One Another

Sisters, walkers, crawlers, runners, strollers, marchers, cyclists, we are on a journey together. Let us embrace one another and give thanks for companions on the road.

Reflection

Where are you walking in your shoes? What causes do you walk for? What is your personal walking chant? Take a piece of paper and pencil. Write a personal walking chant. *(Pause)* Let us share our chants with one another.

Song Refrain: "Spirit of the Elders" by Kathy Sherman, adapted
Spirit of the elders,
Walk, oh, walk with me. (2x)

Blessing the Fruit of the Vine

(The blesser holds the wine and juice, saying)

Praise to you, Companion on the Road, Source of Life, for you give us this drink to quench our thirst. We

Song and Spiral Walk: "We Are Walking in the Light of God"

(One person begins dancing the gathered into a spiral.)

Diann L. Neu, D.Min., MSW, is co-founder and codirector of WATER.

In Memory of Her

From THE SISTER FUND, in support of WATER's Breast Cancer project in memory of **SUZETTE LOH**.

From DEBORAH M. AMATULLI, in grateful memory of **LOIS and ANGELO AMATULLI**, my parents, now both deceased.

From WATER, **JEANNETTE NORMANDIN, SSA**, a feminist minister who was kept from her work by Catholic officials, but whose witness was not lost on her church.

From WATER, **RUTH FLEBBE**, a faithful supporter whose loved ones and community miss her.

From WATER, **MARIA HARRIS**, writer, teacher, friend, partner in every sense with Gabriel Moran, who gave so much to so many, especially her JUBILEE TIME which taught us to savor growing old.

From WATER, **GRACE JANTZEN**, a feminist scholar with few peers, a committed colleague in the struggles for justice and equality, we mourn her early death and comfort ourselves with her brilliant work.

From WATER, **JEANIE WYLIE-KELLERMAN**, former editor of THE WITNESS magazine, wonderful writer, constant justice-seeker, and community-committed family person.

A GUIDE
A Guide for Women in Religion
Making Your Way from A to Z
Edited by Mary E. Hunt

An indispensable resource for everyone involved in the field of religion. This work reflects the multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-disciplinary nature of the field. It is designed to encourage creative, collaborative approaches, and to help women avoid being co-opted.

Contributors assert that teaching is but one career option for women and that publishing, the non-profit sector, and work in religious institutions are all good choices for which training in religious studies is useful. Supportive male colleagues, hiring committees, and departments may also want a copy for ready reference. *A Guide for Women in Religion* offers guidance on how to handle graduate school, dissertation writing, job interviews, promotions, resumes, health care, retirement, on-line teaching, publications, and more. (Palgrave, \$16)

CONTRIBUTORS: Rebecca Alpert, Karen Baker-Fletcher, Valerie E. Dixon, Mary E. Hunt, Janet R. Jakobsen, Rosamond Cary Rodman, Katarina Von Kellenbach

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Labyrinth Found in Washington, DC

By Mary E. Hunt

Archeologists delight at the discovery of labyrinths in the most amazing places. But what would they make of a high-tech one in an old warehouse a stone's throw from the Capitol? I bet they would be as amazed as I was to discover this ancient art form made new through interactive computer and electronic means by artist Sandra Wasko-Flood.

Sandra's studio is on the second floor of a building that will undoubtedly be renovated in the race to gentrify the area near Capitol Hill. It is filled with labyrinth-related materials, beginning with her own impressive artwork. There is also a mini-library of labyrinth books, as well as reports on her various art projects. There are wheels and spirals, sculptures, prints, and paintings that make spirituality accessible to all. Many of her big, bold pieces, as well as her moveable installations, can be assembled at conferences to create/enhance sacred space.

A stop by this studio is an invitation to experience the remarkable breadth and depth of an artist who handles prints, sculpture, photography, and painting with equal ease. It is to meet a woman who brings her amazing artistic talent to the crucible of spirituality. What emerges is aglow with insight and alive with creativity.

The *pièce de résistance* is Sandra Wasko-Flood's very dark room in which she has designed a post-modern labyrinth. It is a computer-programmed experience where one walks on glass pieces that have been arranged in the now-familiar pattern. As one walks along, lights go on and off (body weight in action). Various pictures, photos, and small objects are illuminated to create various moods depending on the program selected.

It is at first a puzzling experience (what does it all mean?) that later turns into a self-reflective time much like any other labyrinth walk. But this one is literally so when suddenly after a gentle turn one sees one's image in the mirror! Sounds add depth to the experience and help to focus one's attention and breathing. It will not be everyone's spiritual cup of tea, but for those seeking a new twist on an old form, this is a thought- and spirit-provoking experience.

Sandra has turned this work and others like it into Living Labyrinths for Peace, where visitors can discover their own ways to the Center. She has used this with groups for mourning and discussion, for retreats and art education. She has engaged with the Washington, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and the Washington Performing Arts Society in a project to paint labyrinths at schools so that children can experience their wonder. The children get involved in the creation of the forms, and then enjoy the fun of walking on their own work.

One of Ms. Wasko-Flood's extravaganzas was the development of a traveling labyrinth exhibit that premiered in the Cannon Rotunda of the U.S. House of Representatives. She also organized canvas and flag labyrinths, on which people could walk, on the lawn of the Capitol. In both instances the theme was peace, a much-needed commodity in those parts.

(www.labyrinthsforpeace.org for more information or contact her at 703.217.6706. A wonderful CD of her work is available for purchase for \$10 on the Web site. Open walks on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday, 2-6pm. Call first.)

Anderson, Pamela Sue and Beverley Clack, Editors. **CRITICAL READINGS—FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**. London: Routledge, 2004 (272 pages, \$41).

This collection provides the lay reader with an overview and the serious student with a compendium of pieces by leaders in the field: Grace Jantzen, Nancy Frankenberry, Melissa Raphael, and others.

Braude, Ann, Editor. **TRANSFORMING THE FAITHS OF OUR FATHERS: WOMEN WHO CHANGED AMERICAN RELIGION**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004 (261 pages, \$27.95).

Twentieth-century feminism and religion is a rich and varied story that the authors of these essays—including Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Judith Plaskow, Blu Greenberg, Lois Wilson, Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, Charlotte Bunch, Carol Christ, and Rosemary Radford Ruether, among others—tell in personal and compelling terms.

Daly, Mary. **AMAZON GRACE: RE-CALLING THE COURAGE TO SIN BIG**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006 (240 pages, \$24.95).

Mary Daly assesses the dreadful state of cosmic affairs. She brings her signature Hope to bear in conversation with Matilda Jocelyn Gage to conclude that women's power can and will save the planet.

Douglas, Kelly Brown. **WHAT'S FAITH GOT TO DO WITH IT?: BLACK BODIES/CHRISTIAN SOULS**. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005 (252 pages, \$18).

A well-respected womanist colleague asks the hard questions about Christianity and racism. She concludes that even though "Christianity has supported and even spawned a disturbing tradition of tyranny and terror against black bodies...there continues to be a Christian story that has protected, empowered, and advanced women...." An insightful book.

Resources

Maguire, Daniel C., Editor. **SACRED RIGHTS: THE CASE FOR CONTRACEPTION AND ABORTION IN WORLD RELIGIONS**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003 (295 pages, \$28).

Scholars from ten religious traditions (including Native American, Islam, and Buddhism) lay out the evidence for pro-choice positions despite the widespread propaganda that such groups oppose women's rights to make reproductive health decisions.

Nicholson, Zoe Ann. **THE HUNGRY HEART: A WOMAN'S FAST FOR JUSTICE**. Newport Beach, CA: Lune Soliel Press, 2004 (162 pages, \$21.95).

The ERA struggle may seem like ancient history. But it was only 25 years ago that women fasted nearly to the death in an unsuccessful effort to get it passed. Zoe Nicholson includes the role of feminist religion and spirituality in sustaining the campaign.

Plaskow, Judith. **THE COMING OF LILITH: ESSAYS ON FEMINISM, JUDAISM, AND SEXUAL ETHICS, 1972-2003**. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2005 (244 pages, \$19).

This long-awaited and deeply appreciated collection of Judith Plaskow's essays is a welcome addition to all feminist libraries. In crystal clear prose she lifts up the salient topics in feminist Judaism and feminist theology. She unpacks the complicated, multi-layered issues with intellectual and personal integrity and sets a research and action agenda for decades to come.

Ryan, Judylyn S. **SPIRITUALITY AS IDEOLOGY IN BLACK WOMEN'S FILM AND LITERATURE**. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005 (193 pages, \$17.50).

Judylyn Ryan explores the spiritual threads in the work of such contemporary cultural

shapers as Toni Morrison, Ntozake Shange, and others. She unearths resources and connections that highlight the power and effectiveness of black women in transforming injustice.

Sewell, Marilyn, Editor. **BREAKING FREE: WOMEN OF SPIRIT AT MIDLIFE AND BEYOND**. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2004 (204 pages, \$16).

Mature women's spirituality is wisdom incarnate. Read these twenty-seven essays and note the wit, insight, and grace.

Smith, Craig R. and Mark D. Buckley, Translators. **THE INCLUSIVE HEBREW SCRIPTURES: VOLUMES I-III**. Walnut Creek, CA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999 (468, 719, 841 pages; \$25, \$35, \$35).

These translations from the Priests for Equality project are as poetic as they are inclusive, as lyrical as they are faithful.

Tsomo, Karma Lekshe. **BUDDHIST WOMEN ACROSS CULTURES: REALIZATIONS**. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999 (326 pages, \$21.95).

Buddhist feminists live and work in many cultures. This collection provides a welcome introduction to their thinking and ways of shaping their tradition.

Wicker, Kathleen O'Brien, Althea Spencer Miller, and Musa W. Dube, Editors. **FEMINIST NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES: GLOBAL AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005 (263 pages, \$24.95).

The field of feminist Christian Testament studies produces some of the most challenging and disruptive thinking in the field of religion. No easy assumptions prevail as biblical studies are shaped by contemporary readings of an unjust world. This collection

provides many tools for future work.

For Young People

Carlstrom, Nancy White. **BEFORE YOU WERE BORN**. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2002 (30 pages, \$17).

Psalm 139:13-16 comes alive in these artistic pages, in these simple words. Children love to imagine and this book invites them to be central to their own thoughts.

McDunn, Linda L. **THE COLOR OF ME**. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004 (32 pages, \$16.95).

A sweet story of the creation of people of many colors. What child doesn't love a rainbow? Why not teach them that we live it every day!

Milligan, Bryce. **BRIGID'S CLOAK: AN ANCIENT IRISH STORY**. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2002 (32 pages, \$16).

This beautiful story of Brigid accompanying Mary and Joseph at the birth of Jesus by sharing her blue cloak with Mary is part of Irish lore. It is told poignantly here for children and their friends.

Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg. **ADAM & EVE'S FIRST SUNSET—GOD'S NEW DAY**. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003 (32 pages, \$17.95).

All of Sandy Sasso's books are terrific and this is no exception. Adam, Eve, the sun and the moon make for good companions.

Schwiebert, Pat and Chuck DeKlyen. **TEAR SOUP: A RECIPE FOR HEALING AFTER LOSS**. Portland, OR: Grief Watch, 1999 (51 pages, \$19.95).

Children need age-appropriate resources to help them deal with death. This gentle story is a wonderful start for young children and for all of us.



Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual
8121 Georgia Avenue, Suite 310, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4947 USA

Address Service Requested

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Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D. and Diann L. Neu, D.Min., LGSW, cofounders and codirectors
For more information about WATER:
Phone 301.589.2509; Fax 301.589.3150
E-mail: water@hers.com; Web site: www.hers.com/water

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"... as we discover the earth... we get to the living water, the very core of the knowledge of God's true and gentle will which desires nothing else but that we be made holy. So let us enter into the depths of that well; for if we dwell there, we will necessarily come to know both ourselves and God's goodness...." —Catherine of Siena