



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

Editorial

Let history read that the first quarter of 1998 was a time that tried peoples' souls. How else does one describe the endless parade of problems that have turned Washington from a serious city to a school for scandal?

If it is any comfort to readers around the world, we for whom the wars and sexploits of the year are local news do not have any more clarity about the players than you do. But one thing we might agree on is that the wrong issues have been problematized all along.

Sex is easier to discuss than welfare reform; dalliances make better headlines than raising the minimum wage. The rumble of war, the rattle of sabers can be kept quiet under the din of accusations and counter-attacks. The place of the UN in peacekeeping takes a back seat to who said/did what to whom when and how often. Confucius might have quipped that we are condemned to live in tawdry times. We would add that fiddling while Rome burns has been shown to be dangerous.

But what if Paula Jones had been Paul, and Gennifer Flowers Gene, and Monica Lewinsky Mike? How would the American electorate feel and would the President's ratings still reflect a "don't ask/don't tell" morality that seems to be normative? What is it about powerful men and their entitlement to women?

It is hard to live and work in Washington and maintain some semblance of dignity when the jokes fly and the pundits squeal. But the task of religious feminists remains focused on justice—in the press, in the White House and most of all with the people whose food, clothing, shelter, health insurance and jobs lie in the balance between goodness and gossip, between public service and public scandal.



Enough Already: Distractions To Justice

By Mary E. Hunt

I am struck by the fact that in religious circles sexuality sticks on our agenda like old food on a dirty plate when so many more pressing issues need our attention. Witness: the recent Methodist trial of a clergyman alleged to have presided at the marriage of two lesbians. While a wise jury of his peers acquitted him, most such cases do not have such happy outcomes. Besides, is this kind of work the most pressing agenda for religious groups when planetary survival, the well being of people who are poor amid a robust economy, and the education of children deprived of basics all beg attention? I think not. I will look at the issue of sexuality from within the Christian tradition though I suspect what I have to say may have implications beyond it as well.

is possible to counsel people about relationships in pastoral settings with the most minimal preparation and the most deeply rooted prejudices. Rather than seeing sexuality in global economic and political terms, most discussions in churches focus on sexuality in the most individualized and privatized way. Sex has become a kind of cottage industry in church circles. It is hard to imagine what churches would do if this were not part of their portfolio, indeed if people looked to them for guidance on responsible investing, how to stop sexual harassment, or what to do about inequities in the job market.

A second reason why sexuality is so central is that few people look to churches for moral guidance on much of anything any more. Older Roman Catholics remem-

*Sex has become a kind of cottage industry
in church circles.*

There are three explanations for the current agenda. First, to my mind, sexual ethics are dealt with by churches in micro terms, when the injustices of our society are really macro problems, because churches can't handle the big issues. Sexual issues are those about which people can venture opinions without really knowing very much. It is easy to mouth platitudes about fidelity and chastity, marriage and singleness, sodomy and celibacy without really being informed about the latest biological and psychological findings. It is easy to sound smarter in the pulpit than a talk show host (competition being what it is) without having to take a course in contemporary sexology. Heaven forfend, it

ber when the bishops spoke and people listened, indeed when church officials had political clout, when their views could influence war and peace and the market place. Unfortunately, we need some moral guidance, though not from them, as the stock market creates not the rich and the poor but the invested and the divested, when the death penalty is applied "liberally" even to women in a show of faux feminism in Texas of late. Alas, professional, progressive religious voices seem to have less and less volume, and even less influence.

Where are the religious leaders, Peter Steinfelds asked in a recent *New York*

(Continued on page 2)

WATER is a feminist educational center, a network of justice-seeking people that began in 1983 in response to the need for serious theological, ethical and liturgical development for and by women. We work locally, nationally and internationally doing programs, projects, publications, workshops, retreats, counseling and liturgical planning which have helped thousands of people to be part of an inclusive church and society.

WATERwheel is published quarterly by the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual. Annual subscription, \$35. Address inquiries to the WATER office. Additional copies of this issue can be ordered for \$5 each. Complimentary copies are available on request for conferences, seminars, classes or discussion groups. Include street address and daytime telephone number of the person ordering materials. Send inquiries and comments to:

Editors

WATERwheel

8035 13th Street

Silver Spring, MD 20910-4803 USA

Phone 301-589-2509; Fax 301-589-3150

E-mail: water@hers.com

Internet: <http://www.hers.com/water>

No need to give **WATERwheel** away, cut it up, copy it or forego sharing. If you know someone with whom you'd particularly like to share this issue, send us her or his name and address and we'll mail a complimentary copy direct. Better yet, send us a list of friends and relatives you'd like to acquaint with WATER, and we'll introduce ourselves.

For anyone who would like to receive **WATERwheel** on tape, audio transcription of the desired issue(s) can be arranged. Contact WATER, 301-589-2509. Cassettes will be made by Volunteers for the Visually Handicapped at \$10 per tape.

Enough Already...

(Continued from page 1)

Times article on alleged presidential sexual misconduct. Of course Mr. Steinfelds focused his attention on why religious leaders did or did not condemn the sexual matters, finding most wanting in judgment. But I would ask, why are religious leaders not setting a helpful example by passing over the sexual issues as such and looking at the relationship between consent and power which, regardless of the guilt or innocence of President Clinton, needs to be discussed. Our epidemic of clergy sexual abuse and the recent spate of teachers and students carrying on might all be better constrained with educational offerings. None are forthcoming. Why? Because even the media has boxed religious leaders into the sexual corner, inviting them like trained circus animals to respond on cue to the most microscopic concerns when the larger questions of justice go unanswered.

Those of us on the progressive end of things are equally boxed in when, in our best efforts to make change, we keep the same dynamic in motion. I do not mean to blame victims here, or to suggest that we abandon our efforts to bring about sexual justice. But I do mean to caution against the very same problem that mainline churches have when we become the Jane

still and unfortunately, the purview of women in our culture, and kyriarchal control is exercised first and foremost over women. Despite decades of feminist, womanist, mujerista and other progressive women-led theological work, we are still in a situation where sex means women, where pleasure is evil, and where equality is a distant dream. One has only to read most glossy magazines, watch a little MTV, shop in most stores and otherwise live in everyday globalized culture to reach this conclusion. One has only to speak with single women who are raising children on low or no salaries, inquire of inner city teens, or look at the growing number of women and dependent children being infected by HIV/AIDS to realize how much sex is still gender typed.

In the churches, matters of sexuality fall disproportionately to women as if the women's movements had never taken place. With the possible exception of gay men upon whom so much is projected, in virtually every other matter sexual it is women who continue to carry the moral and ethical burden. For example, where are the church programs urging vasectomies? How often have you heard the word "vasectomy" from a pulpit or discussed it in adult education settings? What if every time we heard the A word for abortion we changed the topic and said, "Let's talk about the V word for a bit." I

For example, where are the church programs urging vasectomies?

and Johnny One-Notes on matters sexual. It is hard to avoid, but I think we fall into the trap of a massive distraction from the larger justice agenda when we limit our foci to a single issue. Again, I know that denomination by denomination this has had to be the case or we would have no progress on matters of ordination, covenants and even proper burials for those who love in a same-sex fashion.

I cannot help but wonder what price we have paid when it comes to anti-racism, economic justice, rights for people who live with disabilities, international solidarity and the myriad issues which in the final analysis are deeply interwoven with our sexualities. What colleagues have we offended along the way, what opportunities have we overlooked because we have all been so busy peering microscopically at sexuality that we have missed other forms of suffering around us?

The third reason for the disproportionate emphasis is because sexuality is finally,

predict that suddenly sex would take on global proportions and practical solutions would go up in the smoke of abstractions.

We have allowed the sexual agenda to rule in our churches even in the name of changing things. Frankly, I have had enough already as the expression goes, and I think it is time to look afresh at what we might construct as an ethical agenda for the future that will do justice in the largest sense of the word.

Study Questions

1. What would you include in an ethical agenda for the next century?
2. How does your religious group treat sexuality?
3. What would you teach children about justice?

Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., feminist liberation theologian and ethicist, is co-founder and co-director of WATER.

Feminist Liberation Theologians' Network

Welcome to a new regular feature of **WATERwheel**, news and views of the Feminist Liberation Theologians' Network, a project of WATER convened by Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza and Mary E. Hunt. This project is now up and running after two exciting initial meetings. It is time to raise and hear the public voices of feminist liberation theologians.

The first meeting of the FLTN was in November 1995 in conjunction with the Women's Ordination Conference. More than 100 people gathered to discuss what such a network might do. It seemed obvious that we needed to link USA and Canadian feminist scholars, ministers and activists in ways that would go beyond denomination, tradition, academic affiliation and/or racial/ethnic boundaries. Such a network will interface with other such groupings here and around the world in the hope that we can enlarge our various struggles and successes. Response to this invitation, sent both individually and broadcast through the **Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion** (Vol. 12, No. 1, Spring 1996), was strong; more than 200 are now on the mailing list.

The second meeting was held in November 1997 in conjunction with the American Academy of Religion in San Francisco. Again, more than 100 packed the room to meet one another and hear about the varieties of struggles in which colleagues are engaged. It is heartening to see the number of people who define their work within this rubric, though disheartening to realize how many women still struggle with the forces of kyriarchal repression against their efforts.

It was an occasion for discussion on the framework for our work proposed by Elisabeth. She stressed the "inter-feminist" dimension as well as its interreligious and interdisciplinary nature. She proposed connecting scholars and activists, including public policy and political action, and developing a feminist tradition in theological education both within and beyond the academy. Lively small group conversations ensued, with participants meeting one another and feeding their ideas and conclusions into the mix. In San Francisco, the Network was privileged to count among its participants women from Australia, Mexico, Sweden and Germany, to name just a few countries represented.

Taking account of their suggestions, we are pleased to announce the following plans:

1. A Feminist Liberation Theologians' e-mail list will be started by June; it will offer a way to communicate on issues of interest, exchange information on conferences and resources, alert one another to goings on.

2. A place on WATER's WEB page dedicated to this group's work will be established by June.

3. Another meeting at the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature conference is tentatively scheduled for November 20, 1998, late afternoon, in Orlando, FL (place, exact time, agenda to be announced).

4. **We need your input on** a proposed small working and networking meeting, January 2-5, 1999, on the East Coast of the USA, probably on the beach in Florida. Our aim is to gather a group who wants to discuss issues, strategize, and share our work. There will be presentations and small group discussions. It will be informal with plenty of time for casual conversation over meals, meeting time together, along with a healthy dose of sun and fun. Unlike AAR/SBL and other such "professional" meetings, this would be more a chance to be with one another in a new way, something many say they have not had since graduate school. We chose this date and place because many people are free at this time and need some R&R! What a delightful thought—a few lovely days with colleagues and some good work being done at the same time.

Let us know your thoughts on this and whether you might join us. Please contact water@hers.com or write to us at 8035 13th Street, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Space will be limited. Will you be part of this historic FLTN first? Please RSVP by May 15 to give us an idea of how many rooms to book.

5. We have begun to gather names and addresses of other such networks throughout the world. Please put us in touch with people/groups you know.

This Network is as strong and active as we make it. We look forward to your participation, your ideas and your support. In our next issue, Mary Grey from England describes her work with women colleagues in India.

Grace Notes

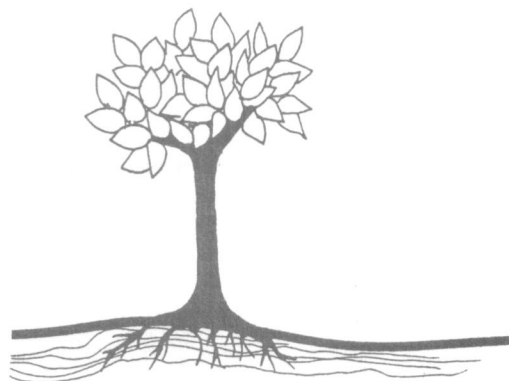
By Grace J. Duerksen

It was Audre Lorde in her essay "Poetry is not a Luxury" (1977) who wrote, "The farthest horizons of our hopes and fears are cobbled by our poems, carved from the rock experiences of our daily lives." WATER has for the past 15 years been this poetry for many women and men alike, and I feel blessed for a time all too short to be part of this daily experience.

I have been fortunate as a student intern to experience all aspects of WATER: the mundane tasks - addressing envelopes, compiling mass mailings, binding booklets, running copies; the more challenging tasks - attempting to update the seriously out of date web page, learning the how's of grant writing, helping office members adjust to Windows '95 and Word '97; the educational aspects - attending workshops and lectures by Mary and Diann, learning the politics of a small non-profit organization, witnessing parenting skills first hand on the days Cecilia comes to the office, reading a minuscule portion of the endless supply of books; and the joys - meeting friends of WATER, tea-time, the birth of James Edward Lapp Stoltzfus.

WATER, the women who work here and all those who make our work possible, have entered my life as a poetic saga, drawing on the past 15 years, becoming part of my daily existence, and continuing into the future as I use gathered knowledge, share meaningful experiences and maintain contacts in the years to come.

Interested? If you would like to intern at WATER, an Alliance that works on feminist issues in religion, call 301-589-2509; FAX 301-589-3150; E-mail water@hers.com or write to WATER, 8035 13th Street, Silver Spring MD 20910. We'll send you info and application.



Healing takes many forms – from swallowing grandma's home remedies to having your scalp massaged and shampooed, from receiving a reconciling embrace to sobbing alone. We find healing through a sympathetic listener, a forgiving hug, a crying spell, a belly laugh, an herbal bath, a quiet time with nature, a moving sermon, a powerful Eucharist, or a deeply meaningful ritual.

Those women and men who are in the mental health professions and healing ministries need to be called by the community to heal. This liturgy is for that purpose. A version of it was used as the closing liturgy for a conference for Parish Nurses at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, MD. Adapt it according to your group's needs.

Preparation

Gather a bowl of water and put it on a table in the center of a circle. Around the bowl, place a stone for each participant.

Call to Gather

We are called to heal.
We are called to pay attention to health,
Wholeness and healing
Within our faith communities.
We are called to recognize that healing
Is the process of integrating the body,
Mind and spirit to create wholeness,
Health and a sense of well being,
Even when curing may not occur.

Let us bless one another for the healing
Work to which we have been called.
Let us call one another to heal.

Circle of Healers

Let us create a circle of healers. Say your name, add the words "I am a healer," then give your right hand to the person on your right. For example, "I am Diann. I am a healer." Then, I give my right hand to the person on my right and she speaks. (Naming)

Song: "Healing River" by F. Hellerman and Fran Minkoff, from Pete Seeger, *I Can See A New Day*, c. 1964.

O healing river, send down your waters
Send down your waters upon this land
O healing river, send down your waters
To wash the blood from off the sand

Reading: A reading from the gospel of Luke (1:46-55), "A Magnificat for Healers," by Diann Neu.

(Three people read the following:)

First: Our souls proclaim
The greatness of God.
We magnify the healing presence
Of the Holy Spirit, Sophia-Wisdom.
Our spirits rejoice in God our Liberator
Who has looked upon us with favor.
The time has come for us
To claim our heritage.
Yes, from this day forward all generations
Will call us blessed.

Second: For great things have been done
Through us
And those who went before us.
Holy is our name.
We have shown mercy and wholeness
From age to age.
We have gathered our courage
And steadfastness
And moved to heal the sick and broken
With tenderness and care.
We have called forth truth
And created a new shape for living
What we believe to be healthy and whole.

Third: Yes, we have been hungry
And have filled each other
With good things.
For we have kept our promises
And journeyed and struggled
In the hope of our dreams...
Touching and healing...
Laughing and crying...
Questioning and loving...

Yes, indeed by our living
And our faithfulness,
By our attention to health and healing,
All generations from this day forth
Will be blessed.

Sung Response: "Blessed Are We" by Colleen Fulmer, from *Cry of Ramah*, c. 1985.

Blessed are we, who believe
That the promise made us by our God
Would be fulfilled, would be fulfilled.

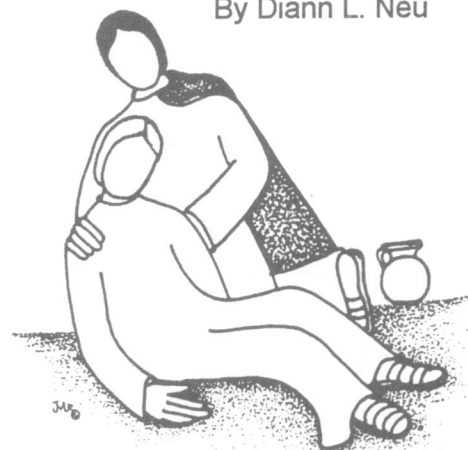
Blessing of Healers

(Three blessers pray:)

First: Filled with the sounds, the power,
The visions, the challenges,
And the commitments
Of the work of healing

Called

By Diann L. Neu



Let us lay hands on one another and
Bless one another for healing ministry.

Touch the shoulders of the person
On either side of you.
Speak aloud your name. (Naming)
You are called to the healing ministry for
_____ (Name your community)

Second: Spirit of Health and Healing,
Time and again throughout history
You call forth your ministers
From the community
And send them to do works of justice:
To heal the sick and broken,
To feed hungry souls,
To give drink to thirsty ones,
To free captives.
Come, Ruah, Healing Spirit,
Regenerative Force,
Bless us, your healers,
To do your works of healing.
Let us respond with these words:
Pour out your Spirit upon us,
Sophia-Wisdom.

ALL: Pour out your Spirit upon us,
Sophia-Wisdom.

Third: We ask you to bless us,
Your health ministers, who,
In the cry of the people and in the word
Of the community,
Have been called to be healers.
We ask you to pour out
Your Spirit upon us,
That we may have the gifts of
Health and healing,
See visions, dream dreams,
Break bread, do justice.
Let us respond with these words:
Pour out your Spirit upon us,
Sophia-Wisdom.

To Heal

**ALL: Pour out your Spirit upon us,
Sophia-Wisdom.**

First: Pour forth your Spirit,
Sophia-Wisdom,
On your people with whom we minister.
Pour forth your Spirit on the Church
That the whole People of God
May benefit from our work.
Pour forth your Spirit on our families
And friends
That they may offer us loving care,
Understanding and support.
Let us respond:

**ALL: Pour out your Spirit upon us,
Sophia-Wisdom.**

Second: When the bread is not enough,
When our hope is dim,
When our energies are frazzled,
Refresh us with Your Spirit.
Let us respond:

**ALL: Pour out your Spirit upon us,
Sophia-Wisdom.**

Water Ritual

In the center of our table is a bowl of water representing a sacred well. Holy wells through the ages have been believed to have healing powers that cured ailments. Water is a healing and regenerative force. It facilitates life. It is spoken of as the source, the healer, the transformer, the spring of ancient wisdom.

Pass the water bowl, the sacred well, around your table. Look into it and visualize the healing powers of the water. Visualize your healing powers. (*Passing the water*)

Blessing with Water

Touch the water with your hands then touch your eyes, saying after me:
Bless my eyes that I may see clearly
The pain of others.

Touch your ears, saying:
Bless my ears that I may listen
To the words and body postures
Of those in pain.

Touch your mouth, saying:
Bless my mouth that I may speak
Words of healing.

Touch your heart, saying:
Bless my heart that I may feel
With compassion.

Touch your hands, saying:
Bless my hands that I may touch
With healing grace.

Touch your feet, saying:
Bless my feet that I may walk along a road
Of health and healing.

Touch your whole body, saying:
Bless my whole body that I may be filled
With healing powers.

Sending Forth

In Celtic mythology, stones have healing qualities. They activate the power of holy wells. Take a stone from around the well to symbolize your healing powers and the healing powers of this community.

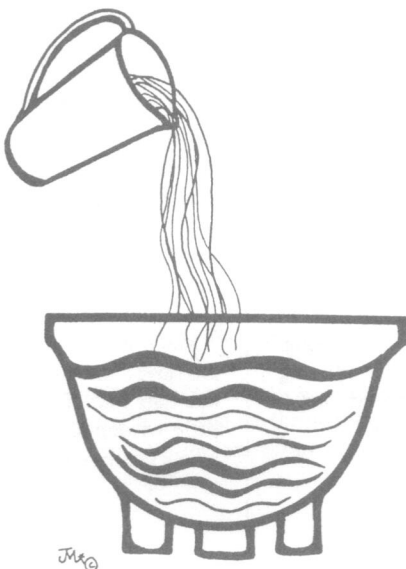
Blessed and filled with healing power, let us exchange these healing stones with one another, remembering that the gift of healing is given by and for the community.

Let us send one another forth, exchanging the stones and saying: "We call you to heal."

Song: "Blessing Song" by Miriam
Therese Winter, from **WomanPrayer,**
WomanSong, c. 1987.

May the blessing of God go before you.
May her grace and peace abound.
May Her Spirit live within you.
May Her love wrap you 'round.
May Her blessing remain with you always.
May you walk on holy ground.

Diann L. Neu, MDiv, STM, MSW, feminist liturgist and psychotherapist, is co-founder and co-director of WATER.



In Memory of Her

From Carol & Joe Scinto, Rockville, MD:

With deep sympathy for **Lila and George Anastas** on the tragic accidental death of their son **Gregg**, a beloved, gentle young man whose memory we, too, cherish.

From Rev. Madeline Jervis, Arlington, VA:

In honor of my new granddaughter, **Helen Grace Leisha Foulke-Hill**, daughter of **Mary Foulke** and **Renee Hill**; born October 2, 1997.

From Eloise & Bob McGaw, Belmont, MA:

In memory of Eloise's mother, **Katherine See**, who died unexpectedly in her sleep December 6, 1997. Her death shocked and devastated **Ed**, her husband of 55 years, now 81 years old, and all of her family and friends. She was a fan of **WATER** and enjoyed feminist rituals - many of which we carried out here in our home with her.

From Tisa Anders, Lakewood, CO:

In honor of three important groups of women in my life:

My Affirmation Group - **Angie Doyle, Trudy Shaw, Cassie M. Daeges, Cathy Kyle Miser** and **Annie Eure**. The friendships, nurture and challenge they have brought to my life are immeasurable.

Former co-workers at the Nebraska Department of Social Services in Omaha - **Malinda Shobe, Deb Dillman, Greta Porath Carlson**, who started their social work careers with me. Fourteen years later friendships remain with these trusted colleagues.

The women of my family - dear, departed grandmothers **Mable Anders** and **Fern Cotton** and living relatives mother **Mary Cotton Anders**, aunts **Edna Cotton, Effie Cotton DeWitt**, sister **Andrea Anders**, sister-in-law **Laura Adamson Anders**, and nieces **Kristina** and **Jessica Anders**. I am proud to be a member of this family!

From WATER:

In loving memory of **Laurel Buck**, brilliant, beautiful, young, who struggled back from total incapacity after a terrible accident. Working hard to regain lost motor and speech skills, she moved on from a brief job training period at **WATER** with the **LEAP** program into paid full employment. Her heart and mind were mighty, but her body too fragile for the heavy burden of her disablement.



Out and About

WATER's Mary Hunt and Diann Neu have been accused of being ubiquitous. It could come from the many meetings, conferences and lectures we attend and offer. These are chances to meet all of you and to learn what is happening around the Alliance.

Diann celebrated a liturgy, "Praise the Spirituality of Catholic Women: A Women-Church Eucharist," for hundreds at the fall Call to Action meeting in Detroit. She also led their prayer services: "Come Pray with Us" and "Sabbath: A Celebration of Time." She conducted a retreat for the Dignity women of Boston.

In Gelnhausen, Germany, at a conference for European women, Diann spoke on "The Meaning of Feminist Liturgy in the Process of Therapy." In Luzern, Switzerland, at Romero House she was a featured speaker on feminist liturgy with colleagues who have translated some of her work.

Closer to home, at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring MD, she led parish nurses in a liturgy entitled "Sent Forth to Heal." At Catholic University School of Social Work she lectured on "The Feminist Spiritual Side of Social Work Practice." She worked with NETWORK staff to design the liturgy for their 25th Anniversary, "People-Power: Politics for the 21st Century." At the 23rd Annual Feminist Psychology Conference in Baltimore MD she responded to a panel of young women: "Girls Speak Out." At Passages, she and Margaret Mann offered a workshop, "Honor and Celebrate Living," for lesbians surviving life-threatening and chronic illness, their partners and caregivers. She's even into local television, doing shows on spirituality and empowerment: "On the Go with American Association of University Women" and "God-talk."

Mary kept busy with "Good Sex: Women's Religious Wisdom on Sexuality," a project sponsored by the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health and Ethics. She offered a workshop on feminist ethics in Gelnhausen, Germany.

Mary joined a number of colleagues in Berkeley at the inauguration of Cheryl Kirk Duggan as the new director of the Center for Women and Religion. At the University of San Diego she lectured on feminist ethics and at Loyola University Chicago she was invited to consider "Gender Diversity Programs in Catholic Higher Education." While in Chicago she spoke at the gathering of WOW, Women of the Word, on their theme: "Resistance: Always a Mixed Blessing."

Hunt gave the Susan Draper White Lectures at United Theological Seminary in the Twin Cities: "Enough Already: Beyond Distractions to Justice" and "Feminist Theology in a Globalized Economy." In Minneapolis, she joined the Re-Imagining Community for a Faith Lab on "Re-Imagining Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual and Transgendered Theology." She preached at Hyattsville Mennonite Church on prayer and lectured for the Twenty Something Group in DC on contradictions raised by holidays.

Mary and Diann joined a number of the other previous Isaac Hecker Award winners at the Paulist Community Center in Boston, MA, for a celebrative day of discussion and strategizing. Diann spoke on "Therapy of Justice" and designed the opening liturgy, "Spirituality and Social Justice: Sustaining the Journey." Mary joined a panel on "Transforming Social Institutions."

FYI-WATER Spring Programs

To let you know what WATER is doing locally (we're not always on the run), here is a compendium of programs at the Silver Spring office for April and May.

Feminist Spirituality Group - Tuesdays 5:30-7 pm; April 14, 21, 28 and May 5, 12, 19, 26. Facilitator: Diann L. Neu, STM, MDiv, MSW, Licensed Psychotherapist. Participating women will address themes on which the group chooses to focus. Possible subjects include integrating spirituality/sexuality, relationships, inheriting a spiritual legacy, relating to religious traditions, images of God/Goddess/Sophia, prayer. Groups are limited to 8 women who will commit to attend all six meetings.

Feminist Liturgy Community - Thursdays, 5:30-7 pm; April 16, 30 and May 14, 21. Liturgist: Diann L. Neu. This community will meet for inclusive rituals from a feminist perspective. All are welcome and must commit to being present for all four liturgies so that a community spirit can develop. Liturgy themes will be decided by those gathered. Possibilities are transitioning, healing, life cycle celebrations, seasonal ceremonies.

What's a Religious Feminist to Do? - Saturday, May 9, 10 am-3 pm. Professor: Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D. We will spend this Saturday asking this question in light of: backlash in many religious groups; globalization of resources; access to technology; racism. We will try to answer it with: new **resources** for religious feminists; concrete **suggestions** for working globally from your local setting; **demystification** of some technology; **anti-racism education**. Come and get new ideas, encouragement and strategies for you and your community.

Community Services - Call WATER if you or someone you know needs:

- * Feminist psychotherapy, spiritual direction and supervision for individuals, couples and groups
- * Consultation for liturgy planning and life cycle ceremonies
- * Internships and Visiting Scholar opportunities
- * Resource Center with books, tapes, periodicals to borrow
- * Preaching, writing, lectures and workshops on feminist issues in religion

Kitchen Tested

By Carol Murdock Scinto, Brew Master

That was not just ANY herbal brew WATER dispensed to loyal readers with its winter mailing. Our artful blend of sage, thyme and mint was arrived at only after painstaking research, meticulous testing and many thoughtful tea-time sips by connoisseurs in the office. Too much sage left a bitter taste; too little thyme lacked character; heavy emphasis on mint soothed all sensibilities.

Make what you will of the metaphors, but if you'd like to duplicate the flavor with your own herbs, try these proportions: Six parts mint, one-half part thyme, and one-eighth part sage. Our conclusion: a little wisdom goes a long way (and a dollop of honey takes the edge off its sharp tongue).

Asedillo, Rebecca C. **WOMEN OF FAITH: BIBLE STUDIES FOR WOMEN'S GROUPS.** Manila: Institute of Religion and Culture, Philippines, 1996 (92 pages, \$6).

A useful resource by a politically savvy colleague, this set of Bible studies can be used effectively by a variety of groups.

Boucher, Sandy. **OPENING THE LOTUS: A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO BUDDHISM.** Boston: Beacon Press, 1997 (224 pages, \$18).

A wonderful read. Informative, smart, well written. You want to meditate.

Chipenda, Eva de Carvalho. **THE VISITOR: AN AFRICAN WOMAN'S STORY OF TRAVEL AND DISCOVERY.** Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996 (96 pages, \$8.95).

A woman looks at her life as a global citizen as well as an African. She has a lot to teach.

Cole, Susan, Marian Ronan, Hal Taussig, Eds. **WISDOM'S FEAST: SOPHIA IN STUDY AND CELEBRATION.** Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1996 (240 pages, \$14.95).

This new edition will introduce many people to the basics of Sophia.

Hadley, Janet. **ABORTION: BETWEEN FREEDOM AND NECESSITY.** Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996 (256 pages, \$27.95).

Globalization does not stop at the doctor's office, hence a globalized view of abortion is necessary to understand how justice can reign.

Isasi-Diaz, Ada Maria. **MUJERISTA THEOLOGY.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996 (210 pages, \$16).

Ada speaks from a community, her words tempered by many women's experiences. She articulates the first systematic approach in mujerista theology.

Jordan, June V., Ed. **WOMEN'S GROWTH IN DIVERSITY: MORE WRITINGS FROM THE STONE CENTER.** New York: Guilford, 1997 (328 pages, \$18.95).

From those who brought us **WOMEN'S GROWTH IN CONNECTION**, this good sequel keeps deepening the analysis.

Karaban, Roslyn A. and Deni Mack, Eds. **EXTRAORDINARY PREACHING: TWENTY HOMILIES BY ROMAN CATHOLIC WOMEN.** San Jose, CA:

Resources

Resource Publications, 1996 (96 pages, \$13.95).

So much for the ban on Catholic women preaching. Some people might actually go back to church.

Maggio, Rosalie. **THE NEW BEACON BOOK OF QUOTATIONS BY WOMEN.** Boston: Beacon Press, 1996 (844 pages, \$35).

Move **Bartlett's** over on your shelf and make room for this handy reference.

Maitland, Sara. **ANGEL AND ME.** Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1997 (160 pages, \$12.95).

Imagination helps when trying to reform patriarchal theology. This collection of fanciful writings is a good exercise.

Mananzan, Mary John, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elsa Tamez, J. Shannon Clarkson, Mary C. Grey and Letty M. Russell, Eds. **WOMEN RESISTING VIOLENCE: SPIRITUALITY FOR LIFE.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996 (184 pages, \$16).

The Women's Commission of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians met in 1994 to bring its considerable resources to bear on the theme of violence. This volume is a report of its work, a challenge to the field, a resource for doing justice.

Mairs, Nancy. **WAIST-HIGH IN THE WORLD.** Boston: Beacon Press, 1996 (212 pages, \$20).

Navigating the world in a wheelchair, Nancy Mairs adds another volume of her personal chronicles to a growing canon of sensitive, sometimes surprising writing.

Marshall, Joretta L. **COUNSELING LESBIAN PARTNERS (COUNSELING AND PASTORAL THEOLOGY).** Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press (162 pages, \$18).

Although all lesbians are not in partnerships, this book is a useful, common sense guide for the counselors of those who are.

Mernissi, Fatima. **WOMEN'S REBELLION AND ISLAMIC MEMORY.** Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996 (131 pages, \$17.50).

Islamic women's situation is changing on the gender front due to the work of this author and other courageous colleagues. Powerful insights.

Neuger, Christie Cozad and James N. Poling. **THE CARE OF MEN.** Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1997 (254 pages, \$18.95).

Pastoral care for men from socially differentiated starting points is welcome. Treat your pastor to this for the holidays.

Osterman, Mary Jo. **CLAIMING THE PROMISE: AN ECUMENICAL WELCOMING BIBLE STUDY RESOURCE ON HOMOSEXUALITY.** Reconciling Congregation Program (3801 N. Keeler Ave., Chicago, IL 60641), 1997. (\$5.95 Study Book, 48 pages; \$9.95 Leader's Guide, 60 pages).

Seven adult study sessions for church groups that want a clear, well prepared way to go at the controversial matters of homosexuality.

Pugh, Deborah and Jeanie Tietjen. **I HAVE ARRIVED BEFORE MY WORDS: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS OF HOMELESS WOMEN.** Alexandria, VA: Charles River Press, 1997 (208 pages, \$14).

In the tradition of Sapphire's **PUSH**, this volume of five women's writings proves that the arts can be an effective motor for personal and social change.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford, ed. **WOMEN HEALING EARTH: THIRD WORLD WOMEN ON ECOLOGY, FEMINISM AND RELIGION.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996 (186 pages, \$17).

Ecofeminist work in religion in Asia, Africa and Latin America proves the global reach of these concerns, the diversity of the approaches and the urgent need for social change.

Schussler Fiorenza, Elisabeth. **THE POWER OF NAMING: A CONCILIIUM READER IN FEMINIST LIBERATION THEOLOGY.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996 (373 pages, \$20).

This collection makes an ideal text for classes, study groups and all who want a solid grounding in contemporary feminist liberation approaches. Elisabeth's introduction frames the collection with clarity.

Senjen, Rye and Jane Guthrey. **THE INTERNET FOR WOMEN.** North Melbourne, Australia: Spinifex Press, 1996 (285 pages, \$24.95).

(<http://www.publishaust.net.au/~spinifex>): A great way to get on the web without fear. The author and illustrator demystify the jargon, tell it like it is. No magic here, just more to learn and enjoy.

Um Jardim Compartido

The third Shared Garden will take place in Recife, Brazil, this July 7-17. Ivone Gebara and her team will welcome women for another two-week session sure to be as dynamic and informative, as educational and enjoyable as the first two. How could it not be in Brazil?

The theme for this workshop is "Beyond Violence: Women, Solidarity, Forces for Change." The faculty will include WATER and Con-spirando staff working with the Brazilian team. Participants will come from a variety of countries with some limits on how many can enroll from each part of the world to ensure that the fruits of the workshop will be shared widely.



Dynamics will include discussion, liturgies, lectures, bodywork, analysis and search for strategies as we continue creating a network of women striving for justice on behalf of every human community and the planet. The formation of "active spiritualities" is a major goal.

Costs include a \$50 non-refundable registration fee (due on acceptance) and \$375 for tuition, room and board. Transportation costs are extra. Lest cost be a barrier to participation, the team is committed to helping women who wish to attend to raise their money. Contact WATER for brochure and application information. Deadline: May 1 1998.



Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Silver Spring, MD
Permit No. 1701

Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual
8035 13th Street, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4803 USA

Address Service Requested

Inside

Editorial, 1
Enough Already: Distractions to Justice, 1
Feminist Liberation Theologians' Network, 3
Grace Notes, 3
Liturgy: Called to Heal, 4
In Memory of Her, 5
Out and About, 6
FYI-WATER Spring Programs, 6
Kitchen Tested, 6
Resources, 7
Um Jardim Compartido, 8

Complimentary
To Share With A Friend