



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

Summer Forum 2008— Moving Forward Together

Mary E. Hunt

The 2008 Summer Forum was a remarkable experience of collaboration, connections, commitment, and creativity. Thirty-five feminist scholars spent a week at the Cathedral College (of the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, DC) in study, discussion, strategizing, and play. The results were plentiful: a new configuration of women in the field of religion knowing one another and collaborating; new energy, resources, and confidence for individuals who found more fully their places in the field; new common projects being worked on across the world; and a renewed sense of how important it is to build on the solid foundation of feminist work in religion.

Feminist Studies in Religion, Inc., and the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) had a dream to bring together women from a wide variety of

students and junior faculty as our first group. Take heart, the rest of you, we hope to offer more such opportunities.

The women arrived from around the world—Botswana, India, several Asian countries via U.S. study programs, Belgium, Finland, Spain—as well as from across the U.S. The barriers to global exchange put up by the U.S. visa policies prohibited some women from attending; those who triumphed in the visa struggle came with cautionary tales of inhospitality that further contextualized our location in Washington, DC.

The resource faculty—Kwok Pui-lan, Judith Plaskow, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Deborah Whitehead, Mary E. Hunt—brought their respective expertise. It was shared informally as colleagues at the table rather than through formal lectures, a no less rigorous but decidedly more collaborative approach.

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backgrounds—across generations, continents, religions, and disciplines—to think afresh about feminist scholarship and activism. We developed a pilot program focused on "Feminist Theologies: Heritage and Future," gathered faculty resource women from the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion's* Editorial Board, and asked funders to collaborate. Then we issued an invitation and waited.

To our surprise, more than 90 applications arrived from women around the world eager to be part of this experiment. Our numbers were kept small due to space restrictions and our desire to make this a working conference—an experience of living the "radical democratic space of possibility" that Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, quoting bell hooks, spoke about in opening remarks. With regret, we could only accept thirty women, deciding on advanced doctoral

The working dynamic was for small groups to focus on each day's theme—History and Heritage; Institutional Context/Structural Analysis; Resources for the Work; Strategies for Transformation; Planning for the Future—and then bring to the plenary sessions their questions and insights. It was a method that worked well in getting the "big picture" on the table, as well as for moving groups toward ongoing projects that will enhance the field. For example, one group will work together to compile a comprehensive list of resources for women studying religion—dissertation fellowships, post-doctoral study options, and more. Another group will organize the exchange of feminist books with women's groups and libraries. Yet another will continue to develop the Forum's Wiki Web site for information exchange among participants.

Afternoon discussion groups were focused

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Thanks to Megan and Anna!

WATER extends a huge thank you to Megan Sullivan, WATER Intern Summer 2008, and Anna Roeschley, WATER Associate 2007-2009. Because of them—their energy, creativity, commitment, and fun—we have had a terrific summer at WATER. A word from them follows.



Megan and Anna

Support WATER's Intern, Visiting Associate, and Visiting Scholar Program

As a current Associate and an Intern at WATER, we extend our heartfelt thanks to you for your generosity and support.

You make a difference for us and we ask that you continue to support a lifeline for women in religion: WATER's *Intern, Visiting Associate, and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza Visiting Scholar Program*.

This program has been an asset to the feminist religious community since WATER's founding. It provides visitors with connections to people, ideas, and resources. Likewise, WATER is enriched by the perspectives, scholarship, and support of those who join us.

We invite you to help us create a space where women can learn and grow through the vital connections that WATER has to offer.

Please send a donation today—a check in the enclosed envelope, or a donation to WATER through PayPal. (Go to www.hers.com/water. Click the "Donate" tab, then click the yellow "donate" button.)

You help the WATER web continue to grow to bring about social and religious change. We all need it!

Editorial

The 2008 Summer Forum, co-sponsored by Feminist Studies in Religion, Inc., and WATER, felt like a new moment in the history of feminist work in religion. As is evident in these pages, many people learned a lot, not least we at WATER. Our major lesson was the need for buildings to be accessible to all who wish to use them. We learned by our mistake.

When we looked at the beautiful Cathedral College at the Washington National Cathedral, a Gothic boarding school style place, we realized it was ideal in every way but one. It would house and feed our group in a simple and pleasant way. It is centrally located with good parking. It contains plenty of break out space and niches for groups and conversations. Staff members are welcoming and helpful. Then we noticed the steps—lots of them everywhere—with nary a ramp to be found. Still, we booked in because it was the best place we could find, afford, and wanted to support, leaving aside the fact that someone might be excluded.

Indeed, one of our participants uses a wheelchair. The space presented more challenges than anyone should have to face. With some advance planning and cooperation all around, she was able to come with an attendant who, by nothing short of providence, was an accessibility consultant. So these women, Julia Watts Belser and Deborah Greenstein, not only managed the mountains, but also provided Cathedral College with a thorough evaluation and plan for making this wonderful place even more so. Kudos to them.

Not every such situation has a happy ending. Nor do most people have the grace and wisdom of our colleagues. But one thing is sure: WATER is committed to using accessible spaces. Moreover, we hope to join conversations about the moral as well as legal issues of accessibility especially since most religious organizations are exempt from compliance. We made a mistake, but we can and will learn and teach from it.



...creating a proper space and intellectual center
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and envision its future.

Summer Forum 2008...

(Continued from page 1)

on issues that affect all women's lives whether it be Globalization, Health Care, Immigration/Migration, Fundamentalism, or Economics. Again the dynamic was to let the results of the discussions shape the plenary which resulted in some very lively back-and-forth on tough issues. By week's end the overlap among the issues was clear and the gestalt of the global problems women face was obvious.

Participants generated caucus topics that drew interested colleagues for yet more focused conversations. For example, Surekha Nelavala chaired "Feminism and Family or Feminism Vs. Family," while Julia Watts Belser discussed her work on *Goddess: Within and Beyond Institutional Religious and Academic Settings*. Keri Day Harrison and Rosemary Carbine led a discussion on "Feminisms and Political Imagination." Kwok Pui-lan offered a popular session on "Writing When English is a Second or Third Language." Jeannine Viau and Anna Roeschley focused on "Queering Feminist Theology."

One evening was dedicated to presentations about FSR, Inc., and WATER, so as to share what we have learned about creating organizations. Pamela Johnson of Augsburg Fortress Press was kind enough to join us to provide a comprehensive demystification of the publishing process, including how to move a dissertation into print. A third night featured an open forum when, in the spirit of a democratic and participatory process, more than fifty local colleagues joined the conversation. Resource faculty made short presentations on "Feminist Studies in Religion and Structures of Power" with Mari Castellanos of the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries leading off the responses. We were especially happy to have a number of seminary students with us that evening. We were glad to model for new colleagues how the field of feminist studies in religion is taking shape and how our work can be useful in the public arena.

Countless conversations took place over shared meals. New friendships took shape over walks and on sightseeing excursions. Intergenerational appreciation grew as younger colleagues heard the often hard experiences that had formed their foremothers and as more seasoned

colleagues came to see, sadly, how some of the same sexist, racist, heterosexist, and colonial dynamics still plague their sisters. There was a good deal of discussion on the best ways forward—when to use "feminism" and not, how to negotiate the shifting shoals of graduate education, what to expect in a first job, how to be a woman of color in the academy, what it means to do activist scholarship, how to juggle the demands of a career and a family, where to study whiteness, and how to make our spaces accessible on all levels.

New dreams emerged. We need many such programs to gather many more women (and one day, perhaps, men) who long to create such spaces where they can engage in their work. We need to share the abundant resources of wealthy countries with colleagues in countries that have at best a handful of feminist books in their libraries. We need to bring feminist approaches to the graduate programs and religious institutions to which we all returned.

The last night of the Summer Forum featured a talent show and dance. We should have suspected that creativity went well beyond the theological! We were treated to the beauty of Finnish and Indian colleagues singing a song in Swedish. Two Indian women instructed the assembled on the many ways to wear a sari. A Jewish and a Muslim woman who were roommates sang their differences and their commonalities. A reading from "Vagina Monologues," poetry and music from around the world, a skit on how to dress for an interview, all entertained while they educated. Then we turned up the speakers and danced—young hip women and older hip women as well!

As a pilot, this program more than accomplished its goals of creating a proper space and intellectual center for feminist work in religion to chart its history and envision its future. This event was a start, not a perfect model. It was a foray into what such spaces can be like. FSR, Inc., and WATER hope to create more because we learned that by providing such opportunities for international, interreligious, interdisciplinary, interracial, and intergenerational collaboration, women will move forward together.

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

Join WATER in Congratulating Dr. Mary E. Hunt!

2008 Rabbi Martin Katzenstein Award Winner Harvard Divinity School

Excerpts from Mary's acceptance speech:

I am especially honored to join feminist colleagues, including the late Letty Russell who received this award in 1998, and my longtime friend, medical ethicist Ruth Bryant Purtilo, who was the recipient in 1991. My deep thanks to the Awards Committee for this honor.

Professor Anne Braude, in her 2005 Convocation Address celebrating "A Short Half-Century: Fifty Years of Women at Harvard Divinity School (HDS)," cited the singular importance of the early 1970s at HDS. It was a time, she wrote, when "the deanship of Krister Stendahl, the presence of a talented and astute group of women students who founded the Women's Caucus, and... the mission and structure of the School itself," ignited a new era. I was privileged to be at HDS at that time. It is to those "talented and astute" women that I pay homage tonight.

Clearly there is a book to be written about that first substantial cohort of women at HDS who arrived in the early 1970s bringing the fresh ferment of feminism to the Divinity School, whether it was ready or not. This was the crowd that trained professors to use inclusive language, rewarding them with M&M's when they got it right. It was the group that organized a self defense class in the Rockefeller Refectory where one woman famously broke another woman's rib practicing against attackers.

My student colleagues were a group of young, smart, well-educated women eager and intent to take their rightful places in previously all-male institutions and to create new spaces where their talents and commitments could thrive. These HDS women have done so, going on to many forms of leadership and service in universities, denominations, counseling, philanthropy, business, medicine, and social change. They teach at institutions including Boston College, University of Redlands, Macalester College, and many others. They are among the first women to take on important leadership

positions with the Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ, and Unitarians. They preside at McCormick Theological Seminary and oversee grant making in religion at the Ford Foundation. They are a diverse and versatile lot. For example, one started an ice cream store, later became a respected chiropractor, and is now the administrator of a lesbian/gay business organization. Most of them are professionals in the field of religion who are producing knowledge and making change. I applaud them for the many inroads and innovations they continue to make.

I understand my own work at WATER to be a small, but I hope significant, contribution to creating new intellectual and cultural space. WATER's growing network of colleagues around the world aims to bring feminist insights to religious practice in the service of social change. For twenty-five years we have combined solid scholarship with informed activism, empowering many women and men through lectures, workshops, rituals, counseling, and publications. We have attempted in very concrete ways to live out the hopes and visions of the HDS women of the 1970s.

Successive generations of HDS women continue this legacy through the Religion, Gender, Culture concentration and the Women's Studies in Religion program. They are fortunate to have professors like Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Monica Maher with whom they can deepen the critical analytic connections among racism, colonialism, heterosexism, economic exploitation, and the persistent sexism that we tackled. While concern for Vietnam, civil rights, and women's well-being shaped us, today's HDS students are challenged by Iraq, threats to the environment, and the desperate plight of migrant people, especially women and children. It is with these HDS students and their feminist faculty mentors with whom I cast my lot, confident that they, too, will bring their considerable resources to struggles for justice.



Ruth Purtilo presented the award to Mary.



(l. to r.) Dean William Graham, HDS; Karen Tse, First Decade Award winner, Founder/CEO of International Bridges to Justice; Mary E. Hunt, Rabbi Martin Katzenstein Award winner, Cofounder/codirector of WATER; Benjamin Payton, Preston N. Williams Black Alumni/ae Award winner, President of Tuskegee University.



(l. to r.), Alumni/ae Council members Diane Miller and Ruth Purtilo with Mary.

The Rabbi Martin Katzenstein Award was established in 1979 by the Harvard Divinity School Alumni/ae Association to honor among its graduates one who exhibits a passionate and helpful interest in the lives of other people, an informed and realistic faithfulness, an embodiment of the idea that love is not so much a way of feeling as a way of acting, and a reliable sense of humor.

Photo Memories from *Feminist Theologies*



(l. to r.): Lai Fan Wong and Rosinah Gabaitse, who traveled from Botswana, break for lunch at Cathedral College.



Forum participants and staff gather for a photo.



(l. to r.): Rosemary Carbine and Susan Abraham enjoy the end-of-forum party!



(l. to r.): Melinda Morton and Kwok Pui-lan practice drumming.



Pamela Johnson of Augsburg Fortress Press presented information on publishing feminist theological books and gave tips on turning a dissertation into a book.



One of the working groups stops for a group shot. (Back row, l. to r.): Surekha Nelavala, Judith Plaskow, Devorah Greenstein, Christine Pae; (Front row, l. to r.): Stephanie May, Julia Watts Belser, Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar.



May Elawar smiles as Kwok Pui-lan makes a joke at the group session.



Keri Day Harrison ponders as her afternoon focus group discusses feminist issues in economics.



(l. to r.): Ulrike Metternich and Stephanie May are deep in conversation.



A working group discusses pressing issues in feminist theologies. (l. to r.): Louise Doire, Wil Gafney, Deborah Whitehead.

Summer Forum 2008

Heritage and Future



(l. to r.): WATER staff Anna Roeschley and Megan Sullivan put down their cameras to join the end-of-forum festivities.



The group celebrates a "web" of connections in an afternoon ritual. (l. to r.): Aysha Hidayatullah, Deborah Glanzberg-Krainin, Diann Neu, Rosinah Gabaitse, Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar.



Participants engage in a plenary discussion.



(l. to r.): Malena Björkgren from Finland and Rosa Cursach Salas from Spain chat over coffee before a morning plenary.



Colleagues pause together after an evening presentation. (Back row, l. to r.): Susan Abraham, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Rosa Cursach Salas, Rosemary Carbine, Lisa Stephenson; (Front row, l. to r.): Deborah Whitehead, Kwok Pui-lan.



Past and current WATER interns at the Open Session Reception of the Forum. (l. to r.): Sophie Kanter, 2006; Megan Sullivan, 2008; Anna Roeschley 2007-9; Cindy Lapp, 1995; Julie Bir, 2007.



An Open Session of the Forum was held for the public. The Forum's resource faculty spoke and Mari Castellanos, of the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, responded. (l. to r.): Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Judith Plaskow, Kwok Pui-lan, Deborah Whitehead, Mari Castellanos, listening to Mary Hunt, who chaired.

Reflections on a WATER Summer

Megan Sullivan, Summer Intern 2008

I am fortunate enough to call myself a WATER Intern Summer 2008! I am a soon-to-be junior at Tufts University (Boston, MA) where I am majoring in Religion and minoring in Drama. I am at WATER for six weeks before my upcoming semester studying at the University of Ghana.

I was introduced to WATER through my major advisor, Professor Peggy Hutaff, who is a long-time friend and supporter of WATER. Knowing of my interest in feminist theologies and non-profits, she thought WATER would be a perfect fit. And girl, was she right!

It is hardly possible to describe the amount I am learning and absorbing here at WATER. It's as if I'm getting a year's worth of experience and knowledge in just one

summer. My work with WATER has put me in contact with so many people in the religious and feminist communities and helped me forge relationships and make connections that will continue in years to come.

I jumped in with both feet when I arrived in June, helping to prepare for our Summer Forum, cosponsored with Feminist Studies in Religion, Inc. It was truly surreal to realize that I was eating lunch or discussing the weather with some of the most influential and intelligent feminist theologians in the field. Witnessing the discussions and conversations that took place during that week was so enriching and eye-opening. Here I am, in the early phases of learning about feminist theologies, and I am already dancing the "YMCA" with Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza! Six months ago I never would have even thought it possible!

Days at the office are now filled with computer tutorials and troubleshooting as we update WATER's technology base. I'm happy to lend whatever skills I may (or may not) possess in that department to help WATER continue to thrive and grow.

It has been an immense pleasure getting to know everyone in the WATER community during my time here. Even as I begin my adventure in Ghana, the WATER network is not far away. Mary and Diann have put me in contact with several supporters and theologians who are active in women's work there, which will surely enrich my experience while studying. Working with WATER has not only given me a solid support system but may have finally given me a solid answer to the constant question, "What are you going to do with a degree in *Religion*?"

Surekha Nelavala, Summer Forum Participant

who completed her doctorate at Drew University with a dissertation on Dalit theology.

The 2008 Summer Forum "Feminist Theologies: Heritage and Future" was a resourceful, energetic, and stimulating event where we as participants experienced boundary crossing at many levels. The forum was rich in its essence as different heritages, traditions, and experiences were brought to the table through the participation of seniors and juniors, from south and north, east and west, transcending boundaries. The forum ensured all participants could find and choose their comfortable spaces to share, express, and challenge, thus creating opportunities for the multiple voices to be heard. We paid enormous attention to structures of power in terms of margins and centers. We became aware of multiple centers and multiple margins in all contexts.

For some of us, this event was a dream come true. For others it was seeing and tasting the fruits of their seedlings. In our journey together, undoubtedly, we have grown as a community that is unique in its character of trust and warmth. The event was an experience in itself for all the participants, one that is unique because it generated such positive energy in the community. We are thankful for the thoughtful organizers who initiated such a ground breaking effort in feminist heritage building.

Summer Forum Participant Reflections

"I have had a truly life-changing experience at the Forum. I came looking for some clarity and renewed energy in my feminist commitment. I leave here with this and much more. I have been transformed."



"I really appreciate the effort to bring in participants from the other side of the world. It emphasizes sharing and growing together as a community of faith and struggle!"



"The relationships are invaluable, the wealth of knowledge deep, and the passion contagious. I have enjoyed struggling with the community..."



"I don't think there's anything more important for our generation of women to be doing now than talking with younger women... demystifying, encouraging, connecting, launching their own thoughts into the stream."



"I felt the 'space' was set up to be participatory and to give us the possibility to have respectful yet challenging transformative conversations."



"The Forum was an incredible experience—energizing, life-changing, and truly inspiring. I feel stoked and ready to roll!"



"The diversity of women at the conference—religiously, internationally, and the many different ways—richly enhanced my understanding and vision of intellectual and feminist collaboration."



In Memory of Her

From Elise DeGooyer of Seattle, WA: In memory of **Marjorie Gayle**, a woman who 'sat firmly in her chair' and was a loving partner to my friend and mentor Linda Bacci, and in gratitude for **Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza**.

From WATER: In memory of **Virginia Sylvester**, beloved mother of our friend Nancy Sylvester, IHM.

From Virginia Anne Day of Southport, CT: In memory of my mother, **Virginia O'Leary**.

From Terry Donohue of Washington, DC: In honor of **Mary E. Hunt** being awarded the Rabbi Martin Katzenstein Award.

From Srs. Barbara Riley and Fran Lynch, RSM, of Riverside, RI: In memory of **Dorothy Conceison**, a valiant woman, a woman of substance, a dear friend.

Resources

Adelman, Penina. **PRAISE HER WORKS: CONVERSATIONS WITH BIBLICAL WOMEN.** Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2005 (228 pages, \$20.00).

These biblical women, unknown to most, are brought alive from Midrash and explored with contemporary questions for discussion. A wonderful resource for imaginative teaching.

Brubaker, Pamela K., Rebecca Todd Peters, and Laura A. Stivers, Editors. **JUSTICE IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY: STRATEGIES FOR HOME, COMMUNITY, AND WORLD.** London, England: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006 (165 pages, \$19.95).

Here are down-to-earth strategies emerging from ethicists and religion scholars. Issues like food consumption, household labor, and "affluenza" are explored. Questions for discussion and resource listings add to the usefulness of this volume.

Caruso, Lynn L., Editor. **HONORING MOTHERHOOD: PRAYERS, CEREMONIES & BLESSINGS.** Woodstock, VT: SkyLights Paths Publishing, 2008 (250 pages, \$19.99).

Primal love comes in many forms. Motherhood is one that invites celebration of life, grief from loss, and support in disappointment. These prayers help.

Chung, Meehyun, Editor. **BREAKING SILENCE: THEOLOGY FROM ASIAN WOMEN.** Kashmere Gate, Delhi, India: EATWOT, 2006 (171 pages, \$8.00).

Asian women's theology is introduced by the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT). Writers include the editor, Meehyun Chung, of mission 21, Basel, Switzerland; Satoko Yamaguchi, Rose Wu, and others who demonstrate the importance of their various Asian contexts for theology.

Corcoran, Nancy. **SECRETS OF PRAYER: A MULTIFAITH GUIDE TO CREATING PERSONAL PRAYER IN YOUR LIFE.** Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2007 (144 pages, \$16.99).

Nancy Corcoran gives prayer a good name in progressive circles. What might be lifeless and pious is, through her eyes, personal, practical, lively, and enlightening, involving all of the senses. Her spiritual wisdom is distilled for those who seek to practice the many ways of prayer.

Earle, Mary C. **THE DESERT MOTHERS: SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FROM THE WOMEN OF THE WILDERNESS.** Harrisburg, NY: Morehouse Publishing, 2007 (89 pages, \$14.00).

When "humility" is understood as having to do with the earth (humus) and other women are seen as the resource people of choice for things spiritual, there is much to be learned from the desert mothers.

Elison, Marvin M. and Judith Plaskow, Editors. **HETEROSEXISM IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD RELIGION: PROBLEM AND PROSPECT.** Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2007 (232 pages, \$20.00).

Looking at heterosexism instead of homosexuality is a giant step forward in ethical conversation. Scholars from around the world and a variety of religious traditions look critically at the implications of this methodological move in their own communities. It makes for rich and provocative study. Authors in addition to the editors include Ghazala Anwar, Kelly Brown Douglas, Mary E. Hunt, among others.

Floyd-Thomas, Stacey M., Editor. **DEEPER SHADES OF PURPLE: WOMANISM IN RELIGION AND SOCIETY.** New York, NY: New York University Press, 2006 (331 pages, \$24.00).

A must-have collection for readers who want to see womanist theology in all of its rich purple hues. Alice Walker's "womanism" provides a gathering point for twenty years of scholarship, wisdom, and collaboration. **THE WOMANIST READER,** edited by Layl Phillips, New York, NY: Routledge, 2006 (437 pages, \$33.95) includes the work of Delores Williams as well as a classic roundtable discussion from the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (1989). Essays explore womanism in related fields including film, literature and literary criticism, education, psychology, and the like.

Hammer, Jill. **SISTERS AT SINAI: NEW TALES OF BIBLICAL WOMEN.** Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2004 (294 pages, \$16.00).

These old stories bring ancient characters to life with new gusto. The same author has produced **THE JEWISH BOOK OF DAYS: A COMPANION FOR ALL SEASONS:**

Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2006 (440 pages, \$30.00). It reflects her scholarship and commitments in reader-friendly format.

Maher, Mab. **SHEDDING GRACE AND OTHER STORIES.** Cotati, CA: c/o Mab Maher, 11 Pine Tree Circle, Cotati, CA 94931, 2007, (144 pages, \$12+ S&H).

This is lovely writing by a Midwestern word and world lover now in California. Mab shares her insights with style as she moves from her Catholic upbringing and life as a nun to her Buddhist practice and care for Earth.

Nelson, Julie A. **ECONOMICS FOR HUMANS.** Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006 (154 pages, \$16.00).

At a time when the economy is in flux, it is important to be reminded by a feminist economist that "economies are vital, living, human-made, and shaped by our ethical choices..." So no excuses are acceptable about the nameless machine that is the economy because it is an all too human creation. Greed and self-interest have guided where community and sharing need to dwell.

Orevillo-Montenegro, Muriel. **THE JESUS OF ASIAN WOMEN.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006 (270 pages, \$18.00).

Asian Christologies are varied and challenging as this critical analysis shows. It is a very helpful way to see the big picture with extensive bibliography for getting more focused views according to countries and authors.

Silk, Louise. **THE QUILTING PATH: A GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY THROUGH FABRIC, THREAD AND KABBALAH.** Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2006 (175 pages, \$16.99).

From how to, to what it means, this study of quilting rooted in Kabbalah is an invitation to people of many faiths to explore ways of literally piecing together their lives.

Skye, Michelle. **GODDESS ALIVE: INVITING CELTIC & NORSE GODDESSES INTO YOUR LIFE.** Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2007 (280 pages, \$18.95) and **GODDESS AFOOT: PRACTICAL MAGIC WITH CELTIC AND NORSE GODDESSES.** Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn Publications,

2008 (279 pages, \$19.95).

Meet the Goddesses, learn from a Pagan Priestess, and decide for yourself what this complex and many-faceted tradition means. Magic, rituals, prayers, fun are all parts of this work.

Tamez, Elsa. **STRUGGLES FOR POWER IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY.** Maryknoll, NY: ORBIS BOOKS, 2007 (163 pages, \$20.00).

This study of 1 Timothy 2:11-12 on women told to remain silent, written from a Latin American feminist perspective provides plenty of food for thought. Read through the lens of power struggle, this study invites further discussion of how such texts shape or are shaped by contemporary insights into justice for women.

Taylor, McFarland Sarah. **GREEN**

SISTERS: A SPIRITUAL ECOLOGY. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007 (363 pages, \$29.95).

Women in religious communities are leading the way on land use, stewardship of resources, defense of the earth through composting and civil disobedience, permaculture, and more. Read about these women, their commitments and strategies, their food preparation and publishing, their animal companions and cosmic prayer. Viva las hermanas de la tierra!

Vaughan, Genevieve, Editor. **WOMEN AND THE GIFT ECONOMY: A RADI-CALLY DIFFERENT WORLDVIEW IS POSSIBLE.** Toronto, Canada: Inanna Publications and Education, Inc., 2007 (388 pages, \$39.95).

Give yourself a gift—better, also share this book with a friend. Discover from philanthropist and independent scholar Genevieve Vaughan and colleagues how to rethink economics in terms of gifts, not capital. In shaky economic times this view is even more necessary than ever for justice to reign.

Wainwright, Elaine M. **WOMEN HEALING/ HEALING WOMEN: THE GENDERIZATION OF HEALING IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY.** Oakville, CT: The David Brown Book Co., 2006 (262 pages, \$26.95).

Careful, critical analysis on when and how women healed and were healed in early Christianity gives way, in the author's words, to "a transformation of the historical imagination as new questions enabled fresh insights to become visible." Oh for such a creative method to be applied in many other areas as well.



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The Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) is a unique educational center in the Washington, DC, area that focuses on feminist work in religion. Since our founding in 1983, WATER has built a growing network of colleagues around the world who bring feminist insights to religious practice in the service of social change. WATER has a national and international reputation for quality research, publications, conferences, and direct services related to feminist issues in religion. Through workshops, rituals, seminars, retreats, and classes designed to promote women as religious and moral agents, WATER staff help many women, men, and children actualize feminist religious values and bring about social change.

If you would like to subscribe for updates from the office and occasional news from colleagues in the field, send a message to majordomo@hers.com with the words "subscribe water-I" (that's water-hyphen-letter "I", NOT number 1) in the body of the message.

Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D. and Diann L. Neu, D.Min., LGSW, cofounders and codirectors

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The creation of new
space...[is] an open
road to discovery of the
self and of each other.

— Mary Daly,
Beyond God the Father

...

When we create this
woman space where we
can value difference
and complexity,
sisterhood...will emerge.

— bell hooks,
Teaching to Transgress



**Inside This Issue
of WATERwheel**

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