



water wheel

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

Beijing: Before, If and After

by Mary E. Hunt

Editorial

The implosion of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City added a punctuation mark to the bombing in which scores were killed and millions lost their innocence. It is simply not clear what kind of punctuation mark it is.

Surely there is a large question mark about terrorism and the right-wing militia simmering under the surface. There is a period at the end of the lives of children who were senselessly snuffed out of existence; what ideology of any stripe is worth one little life? There is a comma for the rescue workers who risked their necks, but who now pause and divide their lives between before the bombing and after. They are different people for having scrambled through the rubble to so little avail.

Maybe it is the exclamation point that really belongs in this picture, our collective breath having been taken away by the heinous crime one(s) of our own species could concoct. Or perhaps a colon is best, with a list of things we will do differently now that the bombing has fractured our calm. The semi-colon might even work better, suggesting that there is a connection between Oklahoma City and so many other places where the limits of civilized disagreement have been transgressed.

Somehow none of these seems adequate. Maybe our grammatical structures do not admit such atrocities, and maybe it is better that way.

Women around the world are talking about Beijing, though at this writing the UN meeting and the Non-Governmental Organizations conference scheduled there for this fall are still on thin ice. I am sure that many of us still cannot find it on a map, but at least we know something significant is going on called "Beijing," and that we had better pay attention. I offer the following outline of what Beijing means in lay terms for the non-specialist, with attention to what it means to women interested in religion, with the hope that even more women will participate in the process that is underway.

Current controversy over the site of the NGO meeting has put the whole enterprise in peril, but my observation is that even if the meeting never happens, Beijing has accomplished its purpose. Women are more connected, inspired and active than ever before, and the whole world knows it.

Beijing is the site of the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, currently scheduled for September 4-15, 1995. The world's governments will send delegations to discuss a proposed Ac-

tion Plan in the best diplomatic style. Many sticky wickets remain to be worked out as some delegates try to turn back a tide of feminist work far from earlier conferences too big to be contained.

surface--will converge on Beijing to share ideas and experiences as well as to influence the Platform for Action at the governmental meeting. Their goal is to lift up women's "visions and strategy for the world in the 21st century."

The Chinese government announced short months before the event is scheduled to begin that the stadium intended to be the site of the NGO Forum is structurally unsound. China offered an alternative place. Huairou, an hour's drive from Beijing with the promise of a four star hotel and other amenities. At this writing, the hotel is still a large hole in the ground, and China is offering tents for the gathering and more modest accommodations for guests. Women are necessarily outraged by such cavalier treatment, and many have rejected any site that is not accessible to people with disabilities, wired for proper sight and sound, including international fax and phone connections, all of which can bring the meeting home to most of us who will not attend. Time will tell, but just the fact of such networking is an accomplishment that cannot be undone.

Beijing is the latest in a two-decade series of

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global gatherings sponsored by the UN. In 1974, the UN Population Conference in Bucharest made issues of family planning part of the global conversation. In 1975, the first World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City, called for the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985).

As is customary, the Non-Governmental Organizations, or NGO's in UN parlance, will hold a Forum on Women scheduled for August 30 to September 8. This is the gathering that most women who say they are going to Beijing will attend. It is planned as a giant networking, educational and cultural fest--40,000 people are expected but numbers could go higher--as well as to be the lobbying arm for the UN meeting. Women from every field imaginable--science, religion, the arts, economics, just to skim the

Mid-way through the decade, in 1980, another Conference on Women was held in Copenhagen where strong support was voiced for the elimination of all forms of discrimination. A third Conference on Women was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1985 wherein the so-called Forward Looking Strategies were adopted as an antidote to the serious situation faced by the world's

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beijing '95

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WATER is a feminist educational center, a network of justice-seeking people that began in 1983 as a 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 a 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:

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Beijing... (continued from page 1)

women in a time of economic slow-down.

The Rio Environmental Summit (1991) and the Vienna Human Rights meeting (1993) left no doubt about women's political clout around the world and women's priorities on health, education, environmental safety, anti-violence and disarmament.

The most recent in this series was Cairo in 1994 (note how, curiously, these meetings are popularly referred to by their location, not their topic) when the UN sponsored a conference on Women, Population and Development. Although many important matters were agreed upon with regard to global population policies, that meeting was best known for the clash between the Vatican (and a few Muslim countries which eventually abandoned the papal ship) and the rest of the world on abortion. Happily, Catholics for a Free Choice and the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health and Ethics were at hand with theological and theological expertise to help turn the tide. In the end, the Vatican was marginalized as a committee of one, but not without some ugly wrangling.

Religious feminists have followed the progress of and/or participated in these gatherings. In fact, feminists in religion found creative ways to gather women together--rituals, ceremonies, art and music, discussions across faith lines and within faith groups--which were eventually incorporated into some conference formats. For example, the Karibu Center at the Nairobi meet-



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 Decadence (continued)

can be window dressing, a distraction from the local/national work at hand. But in fact, this time, thanks to tireless organizing, electronic media including e-mail lists and faxes, women around the world are voicing more input than ever before both for the governments' meeting and for the Forum. Women expect to be taken seriously. It seems that the very notion of so many well prepared women with a sense of entitlement to participate in global decision mak-

*Women want to participate
 despite phenomenal economic odds;
 with support from one another, they do.*

ing was a popular gathering spot, sponsored jointly by Church Women United, the World Council of Churches Women's Desk and the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations. A similar effort is planned for Beijing, but this time with even more advance networking. Other women will be on hand to provide relaxation techniques, massage and meditation, all concrete signals that women want to create a different world.

Some Christian feminists "borrowed" the notion of a decade by urging the World Council of Churches to declare what is now the Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women 1988-1998. The "Re-imagining" Conference, about which so much ink has been spilled, was a North American celebration of the Decade. It is a good example of the backlash which attends women's projects that succeed, as we are finding out with Beijing.

On the face of it, such international meetings

ing has the Chinese, among other governments, wary.

The Preparatory Conference at the UN headquarters in New York earlier this spring opened with reports from the various regions of the world. Every region acknowledged that **thousands** more women than expected had attended the regional meetings. Indeed, attempted registrations for Beijing have exceeded expectations. Such global gatherings are virtually the only way to bring together thousands of women whose various concerns--health care, education, reproductive options, AIDS, anti-violence work--can be aired in informal as well as formal settings. Women want to participate despite phenomenal economic odds, with support from one another, they do.

Gertrude Mongella of Tanzania, the secretary general of the UN Beijing meeting, labors with a small staff and a low budget for what has be-

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--Beijing. In a meeting with Mrs. Mongella, three representatives of the Women-Church Convergence, myself included, discussed the agenda. We agreed that religious discussions, both within denominational groups and among peoples of many faiths, can be a rich dimension of the meeting, not necessarily a disruptive one. Convergence people stressed the importance of dealing with the concerns of Tibetan women who are systematically marginalized.

The Vatican began its antics early by attempting to block the participation of Catholics for a Free Choice and its sister organizations in Latin America from being accredited as NGO's because, according to the Vatican, they are not Catholic. Other groups were blocked, including several Tibetan women's groups and some lesbian organizations. CFFC eventually won its seat, but no one expects it was the Vatican's last salvo.

What will mark Beijing as a success for religious feminists is the degree to which values and deeply held beliefs can be translated into "Action for Equality, Development and Peace." This challenge has been taken up by many women in the preparatory meetings where common work on human rights and economic empowerment have left denominational differences to smoulder elsewhere. I predict that if Beijing happens, and I presume it will, we will see common cause made by a range of religious feminists across many lines. I expect, too, that many people who have written off religion as a tool of patriarchy/kyriarchy will be surprised by the work of some of our colleagues who are tireless promoters of women's well being.

The real work of Beijing only begins when the conference ends. Then it is up to each country to implement the Action Plan and the recommendation of the NGO's. More important, however, is the extent to which the networking and alliance building that will take place in Beijing encompass the world's women, from the most powerful to those just getting started. Then Beijing will be synonymous with empowerment, a far cry from its current press.

Study Questions

1. What are you and your colleagues doing with reference to the Beijing conference?
2. What issues under discussion are of greatest importance to you?
3. As religious feminists, how can we make a difference in the international arena?

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

A Good Man

by Mary E. Hunt

John C. Bennett, eminent Christian ethicist, former president of Union Theological Seminary, recipient of endless honorary doctoral degrees, co-founder of *Christianity and Crisis* with Reinhold Niebuhr, died this spring at the age of 92. Few men of his generation and training—ordained minister, international church worker, seminary professor—could be called feminist. But John, long married to feminist theological pioneer Anne McGrew Bennett, was proof that men, like women, can change and grow and deepen in every dimension.

I met John through Anne when we were neighbors in Berkeley. After John's retirement she became the better known of the two for her tireless justice work, her writing and her insistence on social change. It was clear that she had always been a driving force, but that John had to adjust to her public activism. Adjust he did until I think it is safe to say that no one championed Anne's work more than John.

He was a great friend of Nelle Morton's as well. They lived across the street from one another at Pilgrim Place, the wonderful retirement community for church professionals in Claremont, CA. Nelle, Anne and John discussed and argued the finer points of feminist theology, always pushing the next issue, ever ahead of the curve ethically, thoroughly informed, with the latest book digested before most of us knew it had been published. When Anne was in declining health and losing her eyesight, John walked on his cane every day to her room in the infirmary where he read to her. Once when I visited

he was half way through Beverly Wildung Harrison's *Our Right to Choose*, and they were discussing it point for point.

When Anne died in 1986, John and I and Clare Fischer collaborated on editing her writings. Through the work, we became good friends, and John's feminism only expanded. He supported WATER by making sure that the royalties for Anne's book came this way, and moreso by praising and encouraging me at every turn, enjoying my writing and cheering me on, especially in battles Catholic. He was an ecumenical person without equal, but he just shook his head at kyriarchal Catholicism's recalcitrance.

He was a legendary correspondent and a voracious reader. Of the many letters he wrote me, a longhand one dated May 29, 1993 is among the most cherished: "Did I ever tell you my experience in regard to the gay-lesbian issue?" He proceeded to detail the changing scene at Union, then at Pacific School of Religion in the 1960's and 70's, reflecting on how the changes came about in polity and attitudes.

He concluded by saying: "People change as they come to know persons such as yourself and Loey [The Rev. Lois M. Powell, United Church of Christ minister and longtime friend of John's] and countless others as their experience grows. In my experience 1971 was the beginning of a newly recognized reality. Love, John."

His full life was made up of a series of such generosityes. I consider it a grace to have known and loved him.



The World Through Women's Eyes:

By Diann L. Neu

Women around the world are preparing for Beijing '95. This event, like International Women's Day celebrated every year on March 8, provides a time to be consciously in solidarity with women of every nation and culture.

This liturgy models one you and your group may want to celebrate as you prepare for Beijing by creating a circle of solidarity at home and/or planning to be part of a delegation at the UN meeting in China. Use this ritual for next March 8 also.

Preparation

In the center of a circle of chairs put a globe, a candle, pitcher of water and a bowl, wind chimes, and other objects or symbols of international women. Gather three international breads and three drinks.

Invitation to Gather

Welcome to this celebration in preparation for Beijing '95 (or of International Women's Day). Knowing that women around the world, across different time zones, are gathering to visualize and build a world where women are doers and active shapers of our own destinies gives us strength and hope. Tonight, let's look at the world through women's eyes.

Name the Circle

What comes to your mind and heart as you learn about plans for Beijing '95 (or this International Women's Day)? Let's cast our circle by saying our names and sharing how we would like to be in solidarity with women around the world. (Sharing)

Introduction of the Liturgy

(Identify your group: e.g. As SAS, a local women's spiritual community located in the international, politically oriented city of Washington DC.) we are a glimpse of the world. In preparation for Beijing '95 (or March 8, International Women's Day), we bring our international sisters to us.

Women around the world struggle to survive. The situation for women in general is worse than ever, even though it is materially better for some. We all survive in new ways because we struggle. Tonight's emphasis is both solidarity and survival which we will celebrate, as women love to do the world over, by singing together as a form of prayer the songs of women's cultures that name our own solidarity.

Solidarity with women sets the tone for our prayer. How have we come this far? Why do we have strength to go on? The answer is simply because we keep each other going.

Music is one way, often passed over, that keeps us carrying on. Tonight we will sing our way to solidarity. Song is one of those inclusive activities. Everyone is invited to sing. Some, of course, are more gifted than others, but that does not matter as each voice is necessary to make the chorus work.

(For March 8, use this paragraph.) We will focus on one struggle. (Name one that is timely for this calendar year, e.g. rape in war, the unspeakable situation of women in war-torn countries.) Every year there is a particular situation which calls our attention, this year it is ... (name the focus).

Let us take a moment of quiet to center ourselves. (Pause.) Let our singing begin.

Song: "Come Sing a Song with Me,"

by Carolyn McDade, c.

Come, sing a song with me (3X)
that I might know your mind.

(Chorus) And I'll bring you hope
When hope is hard to find.
And I'll bring a song of love
And a rose in the wintertime.

Come dream a dream with me (3x)
that I might know your mind. (Chorus.)

Come walk in rain with me (3x)
that I might know your mind. (Chorus.)

Litany of Solidarity

As (identify your group), we are the world. Take a few moments to bring to this room specific women who make us this globe. We'll pass the globe around. When you receive it, name the woman and tell us a piece of her story as you locate her on the globe. Let's assume among us that we do cover this globe, country by country, though women have no country. Begin with, "I am part of a world which includes..."

Focus Beijing (use this if the liturgy focuses on Beijing)

These words are from the NGO Forum on Women, Beijing '95.

Visualize a world where all conflicts--domestic violence, gun fights on the streets and civil wars--are solved through negotiation. Where women and families feel safe in their homes, on the street and in their communities.

Visualize a society where clean water, food and housing are priorities for each citizen in every village, town and city. Where women can get credit and access to other resources they need

to be fully economically productive.

Visualize nations where girls are educated and valued as much as boys, and all people are free to develop their full potential. Where men, too, are responsible for their fertility and sexuality, and family planning is transformed into comprehensive reproductive health care. Where women's knowledge and experience are integrated into everyday decisions. And legislation is passed through parliaments with a critical mass of women representatives.

Visualize the globe where the massive amounts of money spent on guns and weapons are used instead to end poverty, preserve health and well-being and create sustainable human development.

That is the kind of world women organizing for Beijing want to build. Look at the world through women's eyes.

Bless the Elements

(Four women, representing north, east, south and west, bless the earth, air, water and sun.)

North: In solidarity with women around the world,

East: we bless the four elements.

South: As the world needs earth, air, water and sun,

West: so the world needs women.

North: We unite with you, Sisters of the North, and share our hearth. (She lights a candle.)

East: We unite with you, Sisters of the East, and share our music. (She plays the chimes.)

South: We unite with you, Sisters of the South, and share our wells. (She pours water into the bowl.)

West: We unite with you, Sisters of the West, and share our earth. (She places the globe on the altar.)

Sing Together

Songs of struggle give us as women of the U.S. a sense that we are all a part of one another. It is amazing to note that so much of the music which is meaningful to us, what we might call feminist religious music, is not about God or God/ess or Sophia, but about struggle. This tells us something about ultimate meaning and value. Let's sing together a medley of songs as our liturgy of the word.

Songs: (Use a sample of your group's favorites such as the following:)

"Weaving A Revolution," by Marsie Silvestro.
On the Other Side.

"O, Freedom," Spiritual.

A Liturgy of Song and Empowerment

"Woman to Woman," by Carolyn McDade,
Sister Carry On.

"Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around,"
Spiritual.

"The Rest of Our Lives," by Carolyn McDade,
The Best of Struggles.

Reflection

Songs reflect the culture of a people. What does it mean to be an international woman? What ideas, feelings, thoughts did the singing raise for you? What visions and strategies for the 21st century did they evoke in you? Let us share with one another our reflections. (*Sharing*)

Bless Bread

(*One woman holds injera and prays:*)

Blessed are You, Womb of the Universe, for giving us this injera of our sisters in Africa. From the land of the Nile in Egypt to the land of apartheid in South Africa, women struggle with famines and wars and unite to work the fields.

Women of Africa, we bless this bread in solidarity with you.

(*Another woman holds tortillas and prays:*)

Blessed are You, Pacha Mama, for giving us these tortillas of our sisters in Central and South America. From the highlands of Guatemala to the rim of Antarctica, women struggle against

U.S. domination of their lands and unite in demanding of their governments the reappearance of their disappeared loved ones.

Women of Central and South America, we bless this bread in solidarity with you.

(*Another woman holds rye bread and prays:*)

Blessed are You, Earth Mother, for giving us this rye bread of our sisters in Eastern Europe. From the land of the former Berlin Wall to the highlands of the new Russia, women struggle to keep their reproductive rights in this new time.

Women of Eastern Europe, we bless this bread in solidarity with you.

Bless Drinks

(*One woman holds a goblet of red wine and prays:*)

Blessed are you, Sun Woman, for giving us this red wine of our sisters in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific. From the outback to the seaside, women struggle to retain their ancient cultures and their dream time.

Women of Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific, we bless this red wine in solidarity with you.

(*Another woman holds a glass of water and prays:*)

Blessed are You, Kuan-Yin, for giving us this water of our sisters in Asia. From the Middle

East to Beijing, from the Islands of Japan to the Philippines, women toil in rice fields and sew in sweat shops.

Women of Asia, we bless this water in solidarity with you.

(*Another woman holds a glass of milk and prays:*)

Blessed are You, Mother Earth, for giving us this milk of our sisters in North America. From the tip of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean, indigenous women struggle against racism and call us to care for the earth.

Women of North America, we bless this milk in solidarity with you.

Eat, Drink and Enjoy

Let us eat and drink in solidarity with women around the world. (*Eating and drinking.*)

Praise Women

Let us praise women of the seven continents for our many works of empowerment:

- . Praise to you, sisters of Asia, for your gracious hospitality.
- . Praise to you, sisters of Africa, for raising your voices in public squares.
- . Praise to you, sisters of Europe, for your leadership in peacekeeping.
- . Praise to you, sisters of North America, for confronting economic inequities.
- . Praise to you, sisters of South America, for struggling that justice may come to your people.
- . Praise to you, sisters in Antarctica, for your scientific research.
- . Praise to you, sisters of Australia, for preserving dream time.

Song: "A River of Birds," source unknown, as performed by Libana on *A Circle is Cast*.

There's a river of birds in migration,
a nation of women with wings.

Song: "Sister, Carry On," by Carolyn McDade,
Sister, Carry On, c 1992

Sister, carry on, (2x)
It may be rocky and it may be rough,
but sister, carry on.

Greeting of Peace

Let us share peace with one another as a symbol of our wish for women, men and children everywhere. (*Sharing hugs and embraces*)

Diann L. Neu, M.Div, MSW, is co-director of WATER.



beijing '95

About this Logo of the NGO Forum on Women:

The logo depicts eight women dancing. Each has her own energy and dynamism. Each is tied to the others through a common center. Thus, they all together generate more energy and power than each could generate singly. The logo celebrates women as risk-takers, doers and active shapers of their own destinies.

WATER in Europe

European women are involved with many innovative projects with which WATER collaborates. The Anna Paulsen Haus in Gelnhausen (near Frankfurt), Germany, is a women's studies center sponsored by the Protestant churches in Germany. The center holds conferences as well as provides a place for women to study and write. Gelnhausen was the site of witch burnings in the 17th century, a tradition not lost on the intrepid women who brought this 20th century dream into being with church funds. Protestors were far outnumbered by supporters and the center is flourishing.

Dr. Herta Leistner organized a December, 1994, weekend program with Mary Hunt and Diann Neu, "Re-imagining Advent." The event brought several dozen women together to reflect on the symbols, celebrations and theologies of the season. One innovative exercise found the group creating its own feminist Advent calendar for 1995. Each woman created a page, and the collection is now ready (auf Deutsche) for the new season.

Mary and Diann ventured to the Dutch Grail center, De Tiltenberg outside of Amsterdam, for

Holy Week this spring. The theme was "Tear, in our Eyes, Hope in Our Hands," which a group of 40 women explored in discussion and celebration. The Seder was a highlight for many women who found its rollicking good time a helpful counterpoint to what can be a very pensive season.

The Tilt, as it is known affectionately, is a women's center with a special focus on Zen and interreligious dialogue. The staff is developing an institute to further this work with an emphasis on feminist approaches to religions.

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fax 49-6051-89290

De Tiltenberg
Zilkerduinweg 375
2114 Am Vogelenzang
The Netherlands
fax 31-2520-24896



In Memory of Her

From WATER:

In memory of Mimi Marechal, Belgian Grail member who combined Zen and feminism at De Tiltenberg. May she rest in the peace she taught to so many others.

From Clare Fischer and Mary E. Hunt:

In gratitude for the life of John C. Bennett, Christian ethicist par excellence, husband of feminist theological pioneer Anne McGrew Bennett, and our esteemed and beloved colleague.

From Diann Neu and Mary Hunt:

In memory of Harry J. Kelly, father of Mary Aleuin and nine others, a just and holy man.

From Sue Fulton, Lawrenceville, NJ:

Celebrating three of "those wonderful Kirkridge women" on these landmarks in their lives: Nancy Taylor on her 50th birthday, and Karen Reiniger and Suellen Saunders on their 40th each. Their years add up to a great gift to the world.

From Ann Butchart, Philadelphia, PA:

In memory of two women who meant a lot to me: my late mother, Mary Elizabeth Malican Butchart (1918-1988), Life Master in duplicate bridge, dabbler in housework, critical thinker; and Ruth Seid, author, who died last month at age 81. Under the pen name Jo Sinclair, Ruth wrote *Wasteland* (1946), the first American novel to feature a homosexual character and winner of the 1946 Harper Prize for Best First Novel. Her last work, *Seasons: Death and Transfiguration* (1993), was a memoir of sorts. She is survived by her longtime friend Joan Soffer, her sister Fannie Stein, and her work.

One in a Million

That you are. And here is a wonderfully constructive way to demonstrate the fact.

The Latin American Biblical Seminary (Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano) in San Jose, Costa Rica, and its newly elected president, Dr. Elsa Tamez, invite you to join with 999,999 others in realizing their dream: one million women helping to build a new home for the school, which is about to become a university. You are asked to contribute one dollar in your name (or, if you are a man, in the name of a woman you'd like to honor) for the construction project that will continue and expand the seminary's "innovative, personalized and decentralized model of theological education which responds to the special needs of women and men who have historically been excluded."

It is important to have your name, Dr. Tamez explains, because "as women we want to leave our footprints on this new path of theological

education. We will record the names in a special place at our university's new home."

And it is important to contribute only one dollar per name because "this will allow all women—poor and rich, black and white, indigenous and mestiza—to share equally in building our dream."

WATER applauds this brilliant plan to raise funds, and anticipates much fruitful exchange with Dr. Tamez in her historic role as the first woman to preside over the seminary in its 72-year history.

Send the names of as many women as you choose, and a check in the amount of one dollar for each name, payable to the Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano-One Million Women, to the seminary's US courier address: Dept. SJO 2174, P.O.Box 025216, Miami FL 33102-5216. Be one in a million in name and deed in an exciting new dimension.

E-Mail Alert

When you wish to subscribe to our e-mail list, simply send a message to water-request@his.com with the word *Subscribe* and your name/address. Please do not send your requests to water@his.com because then it will go to 128 people instead of one machine. To repeat, the crucial thing is water-request@his.com.

All other postings to our list can be sent to

water@his.com. Individual messages to Mary Hunt should go to her at mary.hunt@his.com; otherwise, as in the case above, if you post to Mary at water@his.com all 128 get to read your missive. Not!

We continue to get raves for our Friday updates. Feel free to suggest topics you'd like to see treated there. Welcome on-line.

Resources

Adams, Carol J. **WOMAN-BATTERING**. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994 (128 pages, \$9).

Simply the best resource in the field: clear, smart, accessible and thoroughly theological. No minister should be without it.

Adams, Carol J. **NEITHER MAN NOR BEAST: FEMINISM AND THE DEFENSE OF ANIMALS**. New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1994 (271 pages, \$24.95).

Cogent arguments, thoughtful constructions and new ideas make this powerful analysis one to be taken seriously in feminist circles. Animal rights activists will find their work bolstered by feminism.

Aquino, Maria Pilar. **OUR CRY FOR LIFE: FEMINIST THEOLOGY FROM LATIN AMERICA**. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993 (254 pages, \$16.95).

A useful overview of one theologian's perspective on classical theological issues.

Brown, Karen McCarthy. **MAMA LOLA: A VODOU PRIESTESS IN BROOKLYN**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991 (405 pages, \$14).

A brilliant ethnological treatment which models new feminist modes of research—engaged but observant, involved but critical, learned but helpful.

Daly, Lois K. **FEMINIST THEOLOGICAL ETHICS: A READER**. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994 (325 pages, \$24.95).

A wonderful collection for teaching feminist ethics and ethical method. Well chosen examples from a diverse group of scholars. Use it in conjunction with **The Annual, Society of Christian Ethics, 1994** which includes six bibliographic essays on feminist/womanist ethics edited by Barbara Andolsen.

Eighth Day Center for Justice. **CLEANING UP BIASES LANGUAGE**. Chicago: Eighth Day (205 W. Monroe, 60606), 1994 (38 pages, \$5).

A useful resource for those who are just starting down the road to linguistic inclusion and want to walk it with integrity.

Emerson, Dorothy May, editor. **GREAT GODDESS: FACT, WORKING HYPOTHESIS. OR FEMINIST MYTH?** Chicago: Collegium (5701 S. Woodlawn, 60637), 1993 (38 pages, \$5+\$1.50 P+H).

A good introduction to the field with valuable bibliography for the general reader. This booklet is part of a series sponsored by the Feminism section of the Collegium: Association for Lib-

eral Religious Studies, mainly Unitarian Universalist people. Their **FEMINIST THOUGHT ON SEXUAL ETHICS**, edited by Susann Pangerl, is also well worth reading.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler. **JESUS: MIRIAM'S CHILD, SOPHIA'S PROPHET: CRITICAL ISSUES IN FEMINIST CHRISTOLOGY**. New York: Continuum, 1994 (262 pages, \$22.95).

A worthy follow-up to **IN MEMORY OF HER**, this outstanding volume raises the hard questions and provides useful answers.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schussler, editor. **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: A FEMINIST INTRODUCTION**, Vol. 1. New York: Crossroad, 1993 (397 pages, \$29.95); **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: A FEMINIST COMMENTARY**, Vol. 2. New York: Crossroad, 1994 (894 pages, \$49.95).

A landmark in feminist scholarship, a benchmark for scripture studies, an achievement in collaboration and quality, these marvelous books set a new direction in the how as well as the why of feminist scripture study. They set a new pace and style in a field which has heretofore at best had new content. This is an achievement.

Hopkins, Kristine. **SURVIVORS: EXPERIENCES OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE AND HEALING**. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, 1994 (64 pages, \$14.95).

A stunning collection of photographs with compelling text which spells out the horrors of abuse and the possibilities of healing. A sensitive gift for survivors.

Kim, C.W. Maggie, Susan M. St. Ville and Susan M. Simonaitis, editors. **TRANSFIGURATIONS: THEOLOGY AND THE FRENCH FEMINISTS**. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993 (214 pages, \$15).

Edited by very promising new women in the field, this volume is not as technical as the title might portend. It is a welcome introduction to a long overdue conversation.

Lawrence, Kenneth R. **IMAGING THE WORD: AN ARTS AND LECTONARY RESOURCE**, Vol. 1. Cleveland: United Church Press (272 pages, \$29.95).

This lovely volume will turn your coffee table into an altar. The images and texts are rich, inclusive and nothing if not traditional.

Mandell, Gail Porter. **MADELEVA: ONE WOMAN'S LIFE**. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1994 (63 pages, \$4.95).

A well written biography of a remarkable

woman who was a nun, poet, executive and nascent feminist with a deep commitment to women's well being.

Mies, Maria and Vandana Shiva. **ECOFEMINISM**. London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1993 (326 pages, \$19.95).

Dual authorship at its best, these complementary perspectives of an Indian physical scientist and a German social scientist combine to bring feminist scruples to bear on the environment, new reproductive technologies and masculinist thinking.

Nelson, James B. and Sandra P. Longfellow, editors. **SEXUALITY AND THE SACRED: SOURCES FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION**. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994 (406 pages, \$25).

Finally, a text one can trust to include a range of perspectives on a series of controversial issues. A veritable who's who in the field of religion and sexuality, just the thing for study groups and scholars alike.

Puleo, Mev. **THE STRUGGLE IS ONE: VOICES AND VISIONS OF LIBERATION**. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1994 (251 pages, \$18.95).

Stirring photo journalism accompanied by the equally powerful words of Brazilians who are making a difference in church and society. Wonderfully crafted and executed.

Purvis-Smith, Virginia L. **EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN WHO PREACH: BEGINNING A CONVERSATION**. Durham, NC: Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South, 1994 (24 pages, \$5).

An important conversation is underway here, and begs further exploration by those who approach their weekly task seeking new ideas and models.

IN GOOD COMPANY: A WOMEN'S JOURNAL FOR SPIRITUAL REFLECTION. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1995 (344 pages, \$16.95). A generous sized spiral bound journal for 1996. A unique idea well served by the photos and quotes. A lovely gift for friends who are deepening their feminist spirituality.



Internally Speaking

by Cynthia Lapp

As internships go, this has been the best. I know. I worked for an internship program for four years. There are some really horrible internships emptying trash cans and making coffee. I've done neither in my five months at WATER though I have washed dishes and licked stamps. The remarkable things about being at WATER--phone calls and faxes from five continents in one day, answering the phone and having it be the feminist theologian I read in seminary--seem fleeting compared to the broader learnings that I carry with me.

Respect. Here was a chance to see in action respect for all living creatures and people. From the job trainee to the postal carrier to the university professor, all are respected for their contributions to WATER and the world. Hospitality. All are greeted warmly at WATER, many with a hug and a tour of the small office space, highlighting the kitchen behind the wall of mir-



rors and the "sacristy" (the shelves where liturgy tools are kept). I take with me a new respect for others as well as myself. And I see anew what a gift hospitality is.

Rarely have I seen the balance and connection between the big picture (what is happening with women in Brazil, Australia, Holland and across the US and Canada) and the smaller picture (what WATER is doing in the offices on 13th street) so clearly at work. I have been

part of something local: a seder during holy week, monthly liturgies with women from the metro area; I have watched the planning for the national Women's Ordination Conference gathering in November, and I have waved au revoir as Mary and Diann jet off to places around the globe to spread the WATER word. It's rare that one gets to "think globally, act locally" and think locally, act globally.

I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow at WATER. As a local, I will, of course, continue to keep my fingers in things at the office for as long as they'll have me.

Cindy completed her internship in May as part of work toward a Masters in Theological Studies at Wesley Seminary, and is now working part-time in the office while preparing for the birth of her first child.



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