

# Anna Howard Shaw Center Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 1

Winter 1998

## CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS: THE ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER



## Margaret Suber Wiborg Receives Pioneer Woman Award

What a pleasure to learn about the early history of the Shaw Center on the afternoon of the Re-Calling Event. Steve Pentak, archivist in the School of Theology library, reminded us all that on the same Thursday of October 1977, Odette Lockwood-Stewart introduced the community to Anna Howard Shaw by quoting her in a sermon.

Lynn Rhodes, the only woman on faculty at the time, explained by letter that "the center was started in Odette's basement apartment on Bay State Road. I can't remember all who were there, but it was only five or six of us. . . . We decided to develop a budget, and each of us was going to contribute a small amount (probably \$5 or so). Nelle Slatter told us that women always try to do things on a shoestring, and she made us revise the budget. . . . I do remember that as we pledged our small contributions, we thought it was a historical moment."

Ruth Smith, a doctoral student in social ethics beginning in 1976, wrote that in her first two years at Boston University she was the ombudsperson for women's concerns at the School, "a new position created until something more definite could be established. Things regarding women at that time were both vague and intense. Women constituted a strong presence, but the school couldn't figure out how to respond institutionally." She continued, "Women did know how the institution could respond and persistently made

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### From the Director. . . *Margaret Suber Wiborg*

For those of us who were able to participate, the Recalling Event provided the opportunity to reflect on the twenty years of Shaw Center activity and prior years involved in establishing the center. As I listened to the hopes and dreams that preceded my arrival, I noted carefully the Center's path, measuring our faithfulness to the hopes and dreams of those who have come before.

I recall the energy of the women who hired me and the incredible group of women who welcomed me and who participated in many of the "firsts" . . . the first retreat, the first Women and the Word, the first semester teaching the Women in Ministry course. I remember how excited I was to realize I could take courses here that had not

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The evening program of the Re-Calling with Margaret event was a "Celebration of Margaret Wiborg's Ministry Among Us." The story began with family reminiscences by her brother Bob Suber; her husband, the Reverend Richard Wiborg; and her younger son David. The Reverend Jane Middleton, Betty Clark, and Betty Truitt saluted her work in the local church. Her contributions to the United Methodist Church at the district and annual conference levels, the jurisdictional and general conferences, and with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry were chronicled by the Reverends Susan J. Morrison, Jerome K. DelPino, and Lynn Scott.

Lynn Scott reminded the group of the story of the bent-over woman. According to a sermon by Mary Lou Sleevey, her bent-over condition is only half the story. Her shape can be compared to a question mark and Sleevey identifies it with the shape of sexism in the world. The story continues when Jesus invites the bent-over woman to stand straight and be an exclamation point. When the world and institutions are bent-over by sexism, we are invited

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## *Holding onto the Holy*

*Stories from the Fall Women's Retreat*



"Holding onto the Holy" seemed a rather introspective and deep subject for a retreat that took place only the first weekend of the semester. After all, most of us probably weren't aware that we had lost the holy, much less that we needed to dedicate a weekend to holding onto it. We soon discovered, however, that we had much to share. After a relaxing afternoon of talking and exploring our surroundings at Harrington Retreat Center, we settled down for the now institutionalized dinner of spaghetti and salad. After dinner Margaret Wiborg led us in a time of sharing where we explored what we had left behind when we came to seminary this semester, as well as what we had brought along. During these sacred moments, first-year and upper-class women came to know each other more deeply and intimately as we shared our laughter and tears. We shared stories about lives forever altered by significant loss, by marriage, and by new relationships. We discovered that the holy is always with us; the holy is always a

part of our journey. With the cosmic irony characteristic of all Shaw Center retreats, this time was periodically interrupted by defective smoke detectors which we fanned back to silence, only to have them go off again five minutes later.

We awoke to a beautiful morning, sans hot water, and spent the morning hours in a walking meditation. As we strode through the grounds of the retreat center, we were mindful of the feeling of our feet touching the ground, the pain in our joints (some of us more than others), and the sun on our faces. The time alone was spent with the intention of becoming more aware of our surroundings and our bodies. When we came back together, crayons and paper were waiting, to the delight of many of the retreaters. We spent the next hour or so decorating our own mandalas, our own sacred circles of meaning. Our final activity of the morning was to name those who had come before us, those whose lives had profoundly affected our own, those who had affirmed

and inspired our journeys. We named School of Theology alumnae and women of history whose names we all knew, and we introduced one another to women who were particular to each of our own stories. Hands were grasped in a circle as Margaret encouraged us to look at the hand of the person to our left. We imagined it as a newborn hand, grasping onto a disproportionately large finger, and we imagined it wrinkled after a lifetime of hard work. With these hands we lifted up those who have come before us in prayer, and lowered our hands in blessing of one another.

So it turned out that we did have a lot to hold on to after all. Certainly we had not lost sight of the holy, but we needed gentle reminders that it is indeed all around. This realization is what gives us strength for the journey and rest for our souls.

*Mary Beth Hall is a third-year Master of Divinity student from Nashville, Tennessee.*

## *Striving to Live Faithfully*

### *A Message from the Anna Howard Shaw Center Advisory Board*

The Anna Howard Shaw Center Advisory Board (did you even know there WAS an Advisory Board?) met on October 2-3, 1998. Nineteen members were present, including three student representatives. The board works hard when they meet, yet enjoys one another's company as well.

The purpose of this meeting was continued work on racism and white privilege as they relate to the board, the center, and its programming. This was the third time the board has focused on racism, each time dealing more intentionally with who we are and who we want to be as a board, and as a women's center at the Boston University School of Theology.

In this October event, we grounded ourselves in scripture, recounted some of the racist past of the United States, and named the structure of our board and our programs that are not inclusive and which support the continuation of a racist organization. The board then divided into small groups to talk about what we needed to understand, confess, and act upon to make the Anna Howard Shaw Center an anti-racist organization. Five members of the board are continuing to meet to write a statement of confession for the board and the center, using the input from these small groups. As a board, we are reexamining the roots of our faith and asking ourselves who we are called to be and

what we are called to do as individuals, as a women's center in the Boston University School of Theology, and as a board.

A statement of confession will be printed in the next newsletter. This confessional statement will also be distributed more widely, to the faculty and administration of the Boston University School of Theology, the United Methodist publication in the New England Annual Conference, and other denominational publications in the greater Boston area.

We ask for your prayers and for the divine grace needed for this task.

*Mary Todd is the chairperson of the Anna Howard Shaw Center Advisory Board.*

## Director's Report

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been offered in my seminary experience in the early sixties—Goddesses and Women in the World of Ancient Israel, Women in Mission, Psychology of Women, and Women's Spirituality. I also remember a time when one was current on all the latest women's scholarship as the volumes trickled off the press one by one. What an education!

Along with the coursework, I also was educated by women's stories. One might say that the formal study provided the framework for better understanding the stories I heard from students and colleagues. My understanding of the need for inclusive language came not from theory but from story after story of women being left out or perceived as "not as worthy." Phyllis Trible's *Texts of Terror* provided data on women's status in the Bible, and the 1888 General Conference of the Methodist Church stand that denied seating to the first five women elected delegates defeated the argument that 'laymen' really included women as well.

Stories of eating disorders, incest, sexual abuse, battering, clergy sexual abuse, racism, and incidences of homo-

phobia filled my office and my ears. My education and my preparedness for this position came from the community and engendered an understanding of the call for justice in a visceral way. Courage to continue and opportunities to celebrate, fascinating research papers and incredible creativity in story, song, and liturgy and workshop have been gifts of the women who have participated in the Center.

Listening to women's voices has been the *modus operandi* of the Center. Students wanted more opportunity to interact with clergywomen, clergywomen would come to hear women preach, thus the birth of Women and the Word. Seeking to answer some of the most important theological questions for women led to Reimaging Redemption. Seeking to understand why clergywomen leave local church ministry led to the Clergywomen Retention Study.

As we move ahead toward the quarter-century mark, may we continue to have the ears to hear and the faith and courage to act, as we address the questions that enable women and men in the years ahead.



Margaret Wiborg shares conversation with Faith Richardson and Jeanne Audrey Powers, previous Pioneer Woman Award recipients, at the Re-Calling with Margaret event.

## CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS

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the case for hiring women faculty and for more systematic attention to feminist scholarship and to diverse models of ministry." Deciding on a room to house the center was one of many political issues addressed in these early years.

Nelle Slater, professor of Christian ministry and education at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, also joined the Re-Calling event. She recalled that the Anna Howard Shaw Center offered women the security of belonging and a sense of self-respect; as well as an opportunity for asserting and claiming, relating, naming, and recognizing. Those women who dared participate in conversations often found themselves paying a price. Peg Dohohue Turner, a Roman Catholic laywoman, recalled the center as a haven in tumultuous times and recalled her pleasurable shock at seeing women in ministry.

The afternoon segments bore titles relating to women's experience: Daring to Conceive, Birthing, Learning to Walk, Starting to Run, and Coming of Age. Some other early participants in the Shaw Center were Nancy Richardson, Earl Kent Brown, Clarissa Atkinson, Delores Williams, Jim Fraiser, Joe Williamson, Elizabeth Bettenhausen, Paul Deats, Susan Thistlethwaite, and Linda Clark, and students Betty Schraeder and Shirley Hoover.

A letter from Kathryn Johnson, one of the work-study students who enabled the Shaw Center to thrive when it was without a director, recalled a number of events held at the center. "Perhaps the most significant event we coordinated was a celebration of the ministry of Bishop Marjorie Matthews – the first and I believe at the time the only – United Methodist woman bishop. I recall a well-attended chapel service at which she preached, a luncheon in her honor, and opportunities to converse with her in the Shaw Center itself."

She mentioned other events including an Inclusive Language workshop led by

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## Margaret Wiborg Receives Pioneer Woman Award

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to become the exclamation point. Margaret and the Anna Howard Shaw Center embody the exclamation point, says Scott, as they seek "to give life the shape of justice."

Margaret's ministry with faculty and staff at the School of Theology was highlighted in a letter from Dean Robert Neville and by remarks from her colleagues, Dr. Linda Clark and Shirley Budden. The dean mentioned Margaret's ability to raise her own budget for the Shaw Center. He recalled that when he came to the School ten years ago she was "holding the Shaw Center steady in a storm of violent emotions about the places and voices of women, and also men, in theological education and the life of the church. [She] kept the Center always sensitive to the needs of women, . . . made a place for new women's voices, . . . and as new issues emerged, . . . [she] found ways to lift the issues up. . . . [She has] made the Shaw Center a major research institution on women's issues in ministry." Dr. Clark spoke of the Center continually calling "the school of the prophets" to task for a weakening or fuzzy commitment to social justice. Ms. Budden talked about the value of Margaret's friendship, support, and her ability in raising important issues.

Expressions of the appreciation for Margaret's ministry among students began with the first Anna Howard Shaw Scholar, the Reverend Dr. June Goudey, who thanked Margaret for recognizing her abilities and encouraging her. The Reverend Patricia Thompson, a student member of the committee that hired Margaret, recalled that experience. Mary Lou Greenwood Boice, associate dean of admissions and student services at Candler School of Theology made a humorous presentation of Margaret's role as mentor using visual aids marked WWMD (What would Margaret do). On a more serious note,

Dean Imani-Sheila Newsome and the Reverends Pam Estes, Elizabeth Collier, and Julie Todd Margaret's recalled Margaret's openness to learning about racism, urging students to discover who they were and to be true to themselves, guiding students on the path to healing, and encouraging students to challenge sexism and other forms of injustice.

The Pioneer Woman Award was presented by the Reverend Jeanne Audrey Powers, the third award recipient. She spoke of the "fire in the belly" that never says "no" when some injustice needs to be addressed and her commitment to women in the church. She also presented the Center with posters from South Africa. Margaret was given a packet of letters from people who could not attend, a calligraphed certificate for the award, and an original quilted wall hanging to commemorate the occasion.

Musical interludes were provided by Linda Clark, Melissa Emerson, and Lynd Matt.

After a brief thank you from Margaret, recent graduate and advisory board member Nancy Morrison sent us out with a challenge for the future to maintain a Shaw Center that is constantly evolving to address to future needs.

## CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS

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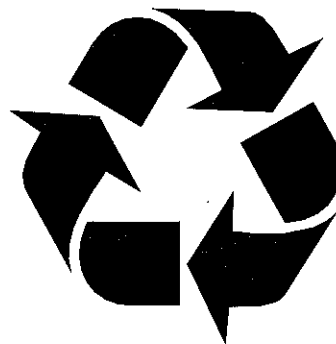
Jeanne Audrey Powers and the dismissal of Nancy Richardson. "For many of us, the learning that went on in the Shaw Center during the months following Nancy's dismissal was as significant as the learning that was taking place in the classroom," she explains. "In retrospect, it is interesting to note that two of the students who were very active during those years were myself and Mark Bowman. Mark is now the director of the Reconciling Congregation Program within the United Methodist Church and I am now director of the Methodist Federation for Social Action. Our time at Boston University provided us, I believe, with abundant opportunity to reflect on what it means to seek justice, and mercy, and to walk humbly with God."

The afternoon continued with stories of the hiring of a full-time director and the programs that ensued, the beginning of the newsletter, women's retreats, Women and the Word, the Oral History Project, and other events. We recalled beginning the endowment, enabling scholarships for women, and installing the Anna Howard Shaw window. Two Shaw Scholars were present. June Goudey recalled Re-Imaging Redemption. Beth Collier commented on the Clergywomen's Retention study.

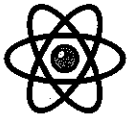
Through the recalling of these and other events, we began to realize the importance of the center to a broad constituency. At every point in its history, the Shaw Center has challenged and nurtured women, men, professors, staff, students, clergy, and laity, as it has sought to be both prophetic and faithful.

*Any faculty, staff, administrators, and students who would like to share recollections of the Anna Howard Shaw Center are invited to contact us. We would like to publish a Shaw Center history before our twenty-fifth anniversary.*

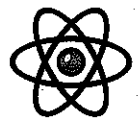
PLEASE



RECYCLE



*The Shaw Center welcomes  
Dr. Jensine Andresen  
to the School of Theology!*



Professor Jensine Andresen joined the faculty of Boston University School of Theology this fall as an assistant professor of theology, teaching Theology, Theology and Social Ethics, and Religion and Science. Her academic background is colorful and impressive: a degree in civil engineering from Princeton University, an M.A. in anthropology with a focus on Chinese culture from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism from Harvard University.

Indubitably, Dr. Andresen is a vibrant woman fascinated by and determined to engage in life's most difficult intellectual questions. She undertakes a multidisciplinary approach to theology, integrating it with public policy, economics, politics, and biomedical ethics. During the 1999 spring semester, Professor Andresen will teach a course on Biomedical Ethics listed under the rubric of "Pluralism and Practical Theology" with an emphasis on human cloning. In this class, she will address such issues as how to hear plural religious voices relating to genetic engineering and public policy.

In the area of social ethics, Dr. Andresen is particularly interested in liberation theology in a post-Marxist world. She asks, "What is the meaning of liberation theology in a world disillusioned with Marxism? Where can liberation theology go? Does it have to die the death that Marxism did, or can it be reconceived based on a more radical and cutting edge understanding of economic theory?" She proposes the possibility that virtue ethics linked with new economic theory may revitalize the liberation theology movement.

In pursuit of this possibility, she is working on a project that looks to technology to help the poor. She contends that technologies such as the Internet or e-mail, provides people in poor com-

munities with greater access to resources for growth and change. How does this have the potential to revive the liberation theology movement and make access to resources more equal? Dr. Andresen believes that the real problem is in the distribution of resources. She explains, "If you could

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***"What is the meaning of liberation theology in a world disillusioned with Marxism? Where can liberation theology go? Does it have to die the death that Marxism did, or can it be reconceived based on a more radical and cutting edge understanding of economic theory?"***

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somehow utilize a market-based economic system with a mechanism to equalize access to resources, you could go a long way toward helping very poor communities." Patently, Jensine Andresen is passionate about confronting issues of real social concern.

As a female professor, Dr. Andresen admits frustration and has struggled

with typical gender issues of sexual harassment and condescending jokes throughout her years as a student at Princeton and into her professional career. The sad news is that she does not see a vast improvement of this attitude over the past fifteen years. Women with initiative are still often seen as aggressive. The best thing women faculty members can do, she believes, is to mentor women students, providing support and emotional encouragement. She believes that pedagogy in the classroom is important as well. She strives to create a more nurturing classroom environment, encouraging students' ideas while suggesting other avenues of consideration, as opposed to a more combative, argumentative pedagogy that can sometimes result in silencing women.

When asked for images of powerful women, Dr. Andresen named Yeshe Tsogyel. She was an eighth century Buddhist teacher. Through her strong religious calling and dedication to the religious life, Tsogyel was known for her contributions to both male and female disciples. Dr. Andresen relays a story in which Tsogyel is jumped by seven bandits in the woods, eventually winds up teaching the bandits about the nature of human community and love. Dr. Andresen cites this story as particularly inspirational.

Dr. Andresen brings a wealth of experience and perspective as the newest faculty woman at the School of Theology. During her first semester at BUSTH, Dr. Andresen is serving as an advisor to some first-year Master of Divinity students, as well as teaching courses in liberation theology and cognitive science and religion. We welcome her to this community.

*Sara Purdom is a first-year Master of Theological Studies student at the School of Theology. She is from Arkansas.*

## Focus on New Students: Mi Jung Park

When Mi Jung Park was in high school, in Korea, she read the seven major newspapers and began to compare their reporting. She noticed radical differences in each each: If there had been a demonstration, one newspaper would write that the students had been violent and had beaten the police; yet another newspaper would report that the police had in fact beaten the students. She also began to notice that her parents and her school never talked about such discrepancies and what they meant. It was then that Mi Jung realized that she could no longer believe or trust what had been written. She saw the biases and knew that she must take a stand on the side of the poor and oppressed. Interestingly, it was during high school that Mi Jung decided to study theology and become ordained.

It wasn't until Mi Jung began her studies at university that she first learned about liberation theology. She was naturally interested and devoted her academic life to it, becoming a Christian studies major. After graduation she knew that she wanted to continue her studies.

Mi Jung Park has dedicated herself to helping those who are oppressed. Her work revolves around women — women who have just come from North Korea and the so-called Comfort Women — the women in Japan, Southeast Asia, and the Philippines who were taken against their will during the war and used as slaves by the Japanese army. She believes that the church can and should be a community that helps women overcome the social injustices that bind them.

While at the university, Mi Jung became involved with the Women's Committee of the Korean Methodist Youth Fellowship. That committee began to participate in demonstrations in her country. Every Wednesday for the past five years, women have protested against the violence and negligence of the Japanese government toward "Comfort Women." "The prob-

lem is that Japan signed a peace treaty in 1945, acknowledging their wrongdoing and promising to compensate the 'Comfort Women.' But they didn't." Now they say that the "Comfort Women" are not a government problem and refuse to apologize.

"It is a sin what they did to these women," she explains. "Their human rights were violated. Women were violated for men. This truth was hidden and the evidence destroyed. We need to find the 'Comfort Women' and discover the truth."

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*"I think that everyone should be equal but if someone is poorer and someone is richer, I cannot stand in the middle. I need to stand on the side of the poor to understand all of the prejudices and biases on both sides."*

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Mi Jung plans to become ordained in the Korean Methodist Church and dedicate her ministry to social justice. Being a woman minister in Korea does present some challenges. Mi Jung explains that it is difficult and uncommon for women to be ministers. Ministry, like other professional fields, such as law and medicine, is male dominated. "Many women are teachers or work in businesses, but hold lower positions than men. And when women get married they often stop working. They are also the first to be fired."

She knows women pastors in Korea and knows it is possible for women to

become ministers. But it is difficult for them to marry someone who is not clergy. She explains that women pastors usually co-pastor with their minister husbands. "I cannot imagine the model of the wife as the pastor and the husband in another field. I have seen many couples where husband and wife are both pastors together. In the church I go to now, St. John's UMC, the pastor is a woman, but her husband is not [a pastor]. I want to know more about how that works."

At this point in her life, Mi Jung is focusing on becoming ordained and returning to Korea to work. She wants to work in a religious community focused on social justice and she believes that this type of community will allow her to experiment with the model of a woman minister whose husband is not working with her.

She also wishes to focus on Korean reunification, and she believes that the church can be instrumental in this process. She spoke of the influence of churches in bringing about the reunification of East and West Germany. The German churches were able to communicate with each other and relate with one another despite their political differences. Mi Jung sees the same thing happening in her country. "In North Korea, although religion is not officially allowed, the government won't shut down the churches because they want to show the West that they allow religion. South Korean pastors are allowed to go to the North and some North Korean pastors have come to South Korea."

Her interests in reunification extends to work with recent immigrants from North Korea. These new immigrants face many problems, and there are already religious organizations established to help families adjust financially, culturally, socially, and emotionally. The South Korean government assists families at the beginning, but it is hard for immigrants to find work and

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## Faculty and Staff Notes



**Carrie Doehring** published "Enlivening Models of Pastoral Care: Relating Theory to the Complex Life Experiences Depicted in Fiction." *Pastoral Psychology* (1997) 46:19-33. Dr. Doehring also gave a lecture on "Diversity, Inclusivity, and Hospitality" at the Northeast Regional Conference of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, October 30-31, 1998. She has written a chapter entitled "A Method of Feminist Pastoral Theology" in the forthcoming book *Feminist and Womanist Pastoral Theology: Implications for Care, Faith, and Reflection*, edited by Bonnie Miller-McLemore and Brita Gill-Austern (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999).

**Imani-Sheila Newsome-McLaughlin** was a contributor of two articles on

Fanny Jackson Coppin and the Institute for Colored Youth in the *Historical Dictionary of Women's Education in the United States*. The Institute for Colored Youth was an influential school for African-Americans (now known as Cheyney State College) in Philadelphia. Coppin, born a slave, was the Institute's principal for 27 years (1875-1902). She was the school's only female leader. (Eisenmann, Linda, ed. *Historical Dictionary of Women's Education in the United States*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998).

**Dana Robert** gave the General Secretary's Lecture in Missions before the full staff of the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church in New York City on Oc-

tober 7, 1998. The lecture was entitled "History Lessons for Tomorrow's Mission": Reflections on American Methodism in Mission." Dr. Robert also presented the opening talk at the "African Christianity: Encounter and Outreach" conference at the University of South Africa, October 12, 1998. She will deliver a lecture entitled "Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since Mid Century" at the American Historical Association/American Society of Church History meeting in Washington, D.C., in January.

**Marnette Saz** will travel to Cuba in January 1999 with the Center on Global Education. She will be studying NGOs, including women's groups for support, economic development, and health issues.

## Mark Your Calendar! Upcoming Events

### February 26-28

"Singing the Center of the Web" will be led by Carolyn McDade at Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Bangor, Pa. For more information, call (610) 588-1793.

### March 5-7

"The Gates of the Feminine Soul: Maiden, Mother, Crone" will be led by Sue Monk Kidd and Terry Helwig at Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Bangor, Pa. For more information, call (610) 588-1793.

### March 18-19

The sixteenth annual Women and the Word entitled "God's House Has Many Rooms — What Are You Building?" will be held at Boston University.

Leadership includes liturgical theologian Lorraine Brugh, social ethicist Traci West, and storyteller Valerie Tutson. For more information, please contact the Shaw Center or visit our website at <http://www.bu.edu/sth/shaw>.

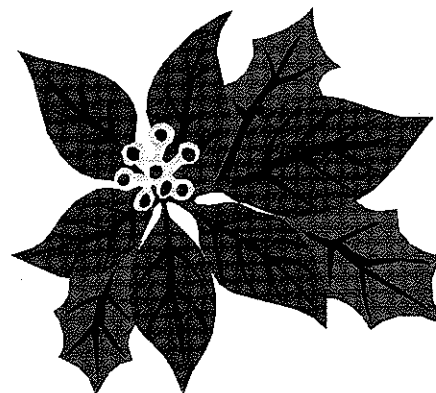
### April 17

"Expressions of the Spirit — A Festival of Creativity," a day-long festival integrating the arts and spirituality, will be held at St. Thomas Seminary in Hartford, Conn. For more information, contact the Foundation for Religion and the Arts, 305 Townsend Avenue, New Haven, Conn.

### April 27-30, 2000

"From Many Streams A New River," the fourth national meeting of UCC

women, will be held in Charlotte, NC. For more information, contact CCW at (216) 736-2150.



## Looking For What Is Not . . .

### A litany for Gerda and Alice today and Rebecca and Katie tomorrow.

How do we find  
what is not written there?  
Where are WE?

Readin'...darlin',  
Readin' into the text.

What text?  
Our herstory is not there.

Even in part...maybe?

Yes, in bits and pieces  
much like our struggles  
but my body, my soul,  
my existence is not disjuncted.  
I am one!

Do you mean to rewrite his story  
to suit and fit *you*?

Well, why not?  
but then...no.  
I mean to say  
wake his story up!  
our kind has always been here.

What you mean girl, *our kind*?

I mean woman kind.  
We've been here  
right here...yet over looked.

Well, doesn't that feminist jive  
handle that?  
No, because I'm poor too.

Oh, then look to Marxism  
it must take you to task.

No, only in part  
I'm also a woman  
one who is sick and tired of being  
"sick and tired"  
You know  
I'm a woman of Color.

Well what about those...ah...  
those womanist...or whatever  
*they* call themselves.

See!!! Stop the madness my sister!!!  
That's just what I mean,  
discounting even *our own*  
empowering definitions...

It is the "W" in womanism  
that stands for,  
arms up, arms open

Women, as a whole not in part  
not just Black, White  
not just Brown, Yellow  
nor red or nor beige,  
but for all women  
for all our differences  
and all our intersections.

It is the space  
WE are real in  
none of us are  
singular, alone  
one dimensional  
we are unmovable there.

Cut me in half? No.  
I take pleasure in being a woman.

Peel my, beautiful  
honey baked  
herstoric skin away?  
No.  
I am beautiful  
and never in need of a tan.

You could even attempt  
a good brain washing,  
you know, make me think  
its all my imagination.  
No!  
My soul can not be moved  
"WE can not be moved"  
A rainbow of women  
curved and straight

What is not written?  
What is not said?  
What is not recorded?  
What is not felt?  
What is not understood?  
What does not exist?  
The question?  
For in all those *Notes*  
*WE ARE.*

*Sakena Young-Scaggs is a second-year Master of Divinity student from Arizona. She also serves on the Anna Howard Shaw Center Advisory Board.*

### Mi Jung Park

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the government aid soon runs out. Men who were doctors in North Korea often must work as janitors in South Korea.

But no one has focused on the plight of immigrant women, and Mi Jung wants to change that. Although it is hard for men to find work, it is even more difficult for women. And these women have no friends or support system. Mi Jung dreams that her ministry will target the needs of these women.

Mi Jung chose to come to the United States to study because she believes that there are many more re-

sources here than in Korea. Although she could get essentially the same degree at a Korean seminary, it would be more limited. Later she plans to study Korean theology, but for now she wants to focus on traditional Western theology. "I know that the experiences I have here will greatly influence my life." It is clear that Mi Jung, in return, will greatly influence the lives of many women as she works within the church to build a better world for women.

*Rebecca Thomforde is a first-year Master of Divinity student at the School of Theology and a member of the Shaw Center Advisory Board.*



## Focus on New Students: Tiffany Steinwert

When Tiffany Steinwert and I settled down with our tea in the Shaw Center to do this interview a few weeks ago, we both had Thanksgiving break on our minds. I was looking forward to turkey with stuffing and a long nap on the couch. Tiffany was looking forward to being arrested. She was planning to participate in a peaceful protest to shut down the School for the Americas, a training school for Latin American dictators in Ft. Benning, Georgia. Part of the protest would involve walking over the property line and on to the School's grounds—a federal offense. Tiffany is a passionate woman. In addition to being passionate about social justice in Latin America, Tiffany is a radical Christian feminist with a deep concern for women's lives. In our conversation, I asked Tiffany about her work in Latin America, her feminism, and her reasons for coming to Boston University.

**Gail:** I understand you learned about the School for the Americas while you were in Latin America. Tell me about the two years you spent in Nicaragua.

**Tiffany:** I had decided in high school that I was going to become a missionary to Latin America. I knew nothing about it. It came out of nowhere but I had to do it. So I took a Spanish class in college and visited Mexico.

When I went to Nicaragua, my primary job was teaching English in a small town called San Rafael del Sur. I really consider that my community. I love the people there so much. On my second day I was already teaching teaching English to primary and secondary students. At the time I saw that my ministry there was enabling people to speak English so they could get jobs. I was giving them a skill. But I now think that my ministry there is the ministry of presence—one of just being there. If I taught English or not, they knew someone from the north really deeply cared about them and was there to struggle with them. It was a ministry

of accompaniment.

It was never a hardship. When I went around to parishes in the U.S., people asked me: How did you cope? Wasn't it awful? People asked me what I missed. I couldn't think of anything. Diet Coke? I missed nothing. I had a bed. I had a family. I learned more than I gave.

**G:** Tiffany, you and I have been talking a lot this semester about what it means to be a feminist. I'm wondering about how you came to identify yourself as one. Tell me about your feminist awakening.

**T:** My awakening came as a result of difficult personal experiences and looking afterwards to theory for the reasons behind them. Mary Daly calls these "earthquake phenomenon," when the blinders come off and suddenly, you are so overwhelmed by everything you finally see that you experience this kind of insanity of being so angry, so upset.

This came when I was in college. I had been anorexic for many years and it hit the height when I was a freshman. I was down to 115 pounds and I am six feet tall. How did I come to do this? What was going on in my head? I remembered that when I started dieting, I had read in *Cosmopolitan* that this model was six feet tall and 135 pounds and so I said to myself, that's how much I need to weigh. Now I was not naïve enough to think that *Cosmo* caused my eating disorder, but I realized that things I was hearing from our culture were connected to my need to be thin—or why I felt it was OK to express the chaos or lack of control I was feeling through making my body look differently.

So I began to look into feminism and eating disorders. I spent the next three years reading everything on eating disorders, women and the body—from a feminist perspective. At the same time I found out that three of my good friends had been raped. Through my experiences with friends and my

reading, I became even more thirsty for theory.

**G:** So what brings you to Boston University School of Theology?

**T:** I love educating people. My sense of social justice is very evangelical. I want to go out to "convert" people, to educate. That is where my passion lies, my power, and my vocation. But I feel there is no way I can do social justice without being faith-based. Change doesn't happen immediately, only incrementally. Unless you have faith and you believe what you are doing is for God, you are going to burn out. You can't have social justice without faith and you can't have faith without social action. They are intertwined. So I go to my faith-center and I work out of there. And here I want to get as much education as I can.

**G:** I understand you live in an intentional community with three other women. How is that?

**T:** It is wonderful. We have a show bookcase on top of the stairs when you first walk into our house. We decided that we would put our most scandalous book titles on it so that when you walk in you know where we stand on every issue. So each one of us has a shelf and we have our feminist and liberation theology, and Nancy (Morrison) has her white privilege stuff.

There is so much energy there. Mary Daly talks about something called "gynergy." That is the energy women give to one another. And out of that energy you can spin, which is to create; to weave; to go beyond. Yeah, in our house there is a lot of spinning going on.

*Gail Gregoire is a first-year Master of Divinity student at the School of Theology. She is from Hingham, Mass. and works in the Shaw Center.*

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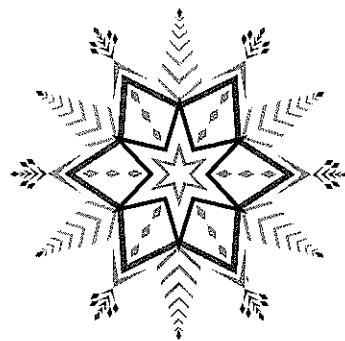
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 research, thank you for your  
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Dear Friends,

October 29th was a great celebration marking the first twenty years of the Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University School of Theology. You have been an important part of that first twenty years through your participation, your ideas and suggestions, and your moral and monetary support. In the next twenty years, we intend to continue our energetic work in support of all women in ministry.

Currently some of our future plans include:

- continuation of our successful preaching event — Women and the Word  
In its fifteenth year, this conference will explore ways to become a more welcoming multicultural church, as we consider “God’s House Has Many Rooms —What Are You Building?”
- continued discussion of the Clergywomen’s Retention Study and the development of strategies to address its major findings.
- work on anti-racism and white privilege as we consider and remedy the ways in which we have not been inclusive and just in our ministries.

These are all important ministries that can further the work of Christ in our time and in our places of faithfulness.

We intend to “Step Out on the Promise” of the past twenty years as we seek God’s will for our work in the next twenty years. Your contribution to the Shaw Center is important in implementing that intention. I invite you to support the work of the Shaw Center with your prayers, your participation, and your financial gifts. If possible, could you strive to increase your contributions in all these categories by 20 percent, in recognition of where we have been and where we are heading? Come and join our song as we attempt to “live tomorrow today.”

Thank you for your support on behalf of women in ministry.

- Yes! I want to support women in ministry!**
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The Shaw Center would like to welcome the newest member of the Anna Howard Shaw Center staff, Gail Gregoire. Originally from Hingham, Mass., Gail brings excellent administrative and conference planning experience to the Shaw Center. In the coming semester, Gail will be working primarily on Women and the Word. Welcome, Gail!



*Shaw Center Advisory Board member Elizabeth Lurie, shares a laugh with Marcel Young-Scaggs and his mother, Sakena Young-Scaggs.*

**Anna Howard Shaw  
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Wiborg, and everyone else who  
hangs out at the Shaw Center!*

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