



Anna Howard Shaw Center

NEWSLETTER

Volume 30 • Issue 1 • Fall 2013

Special Edition on “Women and Health”

Dear Friends of the Anna Howard Shaw Center,

By *Pauline Jennett*



I fondly recall my first experiences with the Anna Howard Shaw Center - peeking in and seeing Rev. Daniel Rivera and Rev. Latrelle Easterling in animated conversation about their Pastoral Study Group with Dr. Schlauch, or seeing exhausted students linger on the couch and bemoan their difficult midterm, or rejoice at their latest stellar grade on a paper. I soon realized that this was a refuge and respite for many students, male and female alike, who traveled the third floor hallway in between classes and assignments, or just wanted to stop by and chat with a friend.

I was excited when I saw the Anna Howard Shaw center programming grow under the capable auspices of Dr. Choi. This programming

included Lunch and Learn discussions, targeted programming for student groups, and several wonderful annual Anna Howard Shaw center conferences which I had the privilege of attending. Esteemed speakers from across the U.S. gathered to share insights on topics related to women’s empowerment, including economics, class, and privilege. I gathered important nuggets of knowledge on every occasion.



Dr. Nancy Ammerman speaks at Thursday Lunch Lecture Series

There was also a very personal component to the Anna Howard Shaw Center for me. I recall when I was offered the role of STH alumni officer in my third year as an M.Div. student. I pondered the opportunity

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From the Director

By *Rev. Dr. Choi Hee An*



When I was young, I was raised near market places. I watched many women who worked really hard all day long. They woke at 3:30 am, prepared meals for their family before 4:30 am,

went to church at 5 am, returned for breakfast at 6 am, prepared their children for school before 7 am, and worked until evening or midnight. There were no vacations, no sick days, and no getaways. My mother did that, my grandmothers, my aunts, my mother-in-law, my church women, and all the women I knew.

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Save the Date!

March 26, 2014

Women in the World Conference

9:30am–5:00pm

Anna Howard Shaw Award Banquet

5:30pm–8:00pm

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Need + Opportunity + Grace = A Blessing

By Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque



A fundamental need of the human spirit is to make meaning for and to cope with life. Theology and psychology, as distinctive systems of meaning-making, are among the ways in which humankind has met this need. In recent years, however, in the service of coping with life, an increasing number of men and women have sought mental health care services that draw from *both* theological and psychological frameworks. The study of the collaboration of these two fields has received increased attention over the last several decades.

While some suggest that the space created by the collaboration of theology and psychology might provide fertile ground for therapeutic work, others remain cautious about the phenomenon. Some scholars suggest when the fields of theology and psychology are brought together psychology tends to overshadow theology, and subjugate it to a secondary position in the collaborative relationship. They even question whether theology and psychology might collaborate in such a way that both disciplines retain their epistemological ground and are enhanced by the mutual exchange, and if so, how.

Eighteen years ago these academic questions were *not* at the forefront of my thinking. Instead, I was focused on the needs of a working to middle class, urban church populated largely with the sojourners of the African Diaspora. As a student intern at this particular church I was assigned the task of triaging people in

need of pastoral care and counseling.

The imbalance in what was available to people was staggering. For those with the best insurance plans, the ability to obtain quality counseling was as easy as examining the list of providers. But, for those with minimal or no mental health insurance coverage, the task of finding a counselor or therapist seemed insurmountable. *However*, even for those with the best health care plans, it still proved difficult to find therapists adept at providing care for people of color and willing to integrate faith as a meaning making system.

How was it that in resource rich Boston, in early 2000, there were not more opportunities for people to obtain mental health support that recognized faith as something other than anathema? How did the care of the soul and the cure of the soul become so bifurcated that finding counselors and therapists who would



Modern Church History students animatedly discuss youth ministry during a class break

honor faith as a tool - and see religion as an opportunity for hope - become so hard?

Enter the School of Theology and the Practical Theology Program. Thanks to the support of BU, the Practical Theology Program, and faculty too numerous to mention, The Trinity Church Boston Counseling Center (as it

is now named) was conceived, vetted and founded. At its founding the Center existed to do three things: (1) to offer training



Rev. Karen Peters talks with students about her call to ministry

to veteran therapists whose earlier education had held faith, spirituality and religion as less than positive resources for mental wellness; (2) to provide quality psychotherapy to men and women of faith who desired to use their faith in healthy, productive ways; and (3) to serve those in the Boston area who were economically disenfranchised.

All of this effort was mounted and spent in order to provide men and women with the opportunity to develop their mental health in light of a healthy spirituality. In 2001, when the Center opened its doors, we were unique to the Boston mental health landscape. Now, almost 13 years later the Center continues conducting groundbreaking work. Under the leadership of its Executive Director, Nate Harris (a former intern of the Center), the Trinity Church Boston Counseling Center has expanded its work and focused, as Christ would have us do, on the most vulnerable of our community: our youth.

A fundamental need of

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Theology and Sex Education with Hispanics/Latinos

By Emma Escobar and Jessica Roffe



Three years ago I participated in *Vale Esperar* (“It is worth the wait”), a community-based program that educates and empowers youth to make healthy decisions about sexuality. This program focuses on young mothers and fathers that struggle here in the United States due to early child bearing. Although it focuses on abstinence, youth are also equipped with the knowledge and skills to build a better future in terms of healthy relationships and marriage. *Vale Esperar* gives parents the skills to talk with their youth about sex using core values in the Hispanic/Latino community.

Religion plays an important role in Hispanic/Latino cultures, the majority being Catholic and Protestant; although many are Catholic, Protestant Hispanics/Latinos have more conservative views regarding marriage and family. Statistics show that reli-

gious education is not significantly reducing Hispanic/Latina teen pregnancy, and although Hispanic/Latina women are less likely to have abortions than some other groups, a combination of factors give reason for public health officials to be concerned.

Especially in conservative and evangelical Hispanic/Latino churches, the most common view of women is that they are either holy (saints) or whores. This idea of women as either saints or evil found in churches today derives from values introduced at the time of Mexican colonization. History shows that Spaniards introduced not only negative values towards women and family, but also brought with them a patriarchal religious view towards the body and sexuality of women.

We see these western ideas today in Latin America and really strongly in the United States. Feminist theologian Maria Pilar Aquino addresses patriarchal theology in Latin America, and explains how Europeans imposed “patriarchal

Christianity” on the indigenous people through conquest, took away the indigenous traditions and beliefs, and tried to eliminate females from the public sphere and remove their authority.

As the Hispanic/Latino coordinator of the New England Conference of The United Methodist Church, I visit all the Hispanic/Latino churches in the New England area. My experience is that male pastors



Board Members greet students and staff

often focus on and preach about the need for the separation between body and soul. Although sexuality has been present throughout human history, some Christians and other religious people have tried to separate the soul and the body because they consider the human

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Need + Opportunity + Grace = A Blessing

Cont'd from page 2

the human spirit is to make meaning for and to cope with life. Theology and psychology, as distinctive systems of meaning-making, are among the ways in which humankind can meet this need. When they are seen as partners, neither overshadowing the other;

when they are part of a system that seeks to make well mind and spirit – and when it is done in a place that honors that all are created by God and meant to be well – amazing things can happen. I am so proud to have held this vision in my heart as a student at

Boston University, so proud to have launched it, and even more delighted still that the Center strides forward today with new vision and the same goal: to foster wellness of the whole person, just as God would have it.



Theology and Sex Education with Hispanics/Latinos *Cont'd from page 3*

body *una miseria*: something that is without value and that leads to sin and evil. However since marriage sanctifies a body, pastors urge congregations (and specifically women) to “be holy and separate their soul from the body;” meaning that their bodies are a source of sin and they need to not cause males to sin.

From my experience and my own research, it is important to teach youth how these cultural and social norms came to exist through colonization in Latin America. This way, they can understand that gendered power dynamics have not always been the way they are today. With Eve as a model, women today are still blamed for sin and seen as a tool that the devil uses. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is introduced as the holy woman that is so pure that we receive hope through her when she gives birth to the son of God. Churches and schools also use a non-biblical character to reinforce the idea of women as either saints or sinners. Pérez Álvarez talks about the Malinche, who is known as a traitor be-

cause she helped Hernan Cortez to conquer Mexico. All these icons are used in the church's theology to reinforce the notion of women as either holy or evil, which was not the case within Indigenous communities.

I suggest that any comprehensive sex education curriculum should include a Theology of the Body. This theology will address two things: first, it would make religious leaders aware of whether their own objectives reflect patriarchal val-



*Bishop Susan Hassinger speaks on
“A New New Testament”*

ues, and why they address the responsibility of abstinence only to females and not males. Such a theology would help those in the Latino community to see sex

as something natural and not taboo, and therefore make it easier for parents to initiate such conversations. Since children of engaged parents tend to be less sexually active, a Theology of the Body promotes respect and understanding for everyone. It also addresses why God created us this way, as sexual beings, and how to best express that sexuality.

This theology can be incorporated in sermons to parents, and can be part of the Sunday school youth curriculum. Books or articles can be used in bible studies to encourage a better understanding of this taboo topic in the Hispanic/Latino community. This will help new generations to be born into an environment where talking about sex is not taboo; it will also foster better relationships between parents and youth, and empower youth to be independent and make better decisions about their future. This can change social norms, and have youth carefully consider how they want to fit into the roles and behaviors that society is encouraging.

Women in the World Conference - March 26th, 2014

Leadership: Women and Power Dynamics (9:30am-5:00pm)

Anna Howard Shaw Award Banquet (5:30pm-8:30pm)

Honoring Bishop Susan W. Hassinger, Award Recipient 2014

Featuring: Ms. Monique Nguyern, Ms. Yara Gonzalez-Justiniano, Dr. Nancy Neinhaus, Rev. Tsitsi Moyo, Rev. Dr. HiRho Park, Ms. Shirley Owen Hicks, Dr. Katheryn P. Darr, Latrell Easterling, Bishop Susan W. Hassinger & STH student panelists

BU George Sherman Union, 775 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA

Jenny's Story

By Karen A. Skalla, MSN,
APRN,OCN



The spiritual dimension of care is the fundamental act of "being with" another in need, healing through

facilitating wholeness. I first met Jenny when she was referred to my Spiritual Care Clinic within the cancer center. She had been diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer and given 3-5 years, and was having a hard time coping. As a Nurse Practitioner with CPE



Spending time together on the retreat

training, I did my usual assessment with a twist. I found she had grown up Methodist, but had given up on organized religion after going through marriage with an alcoholic husband, raising her children alone, and needing to give up on some personal dreams in the process. Hardest for her was to give up her dream of becoming a professional athlete and an artist, primarily because she was running out of time. She felt a sense of "connection" using her body in this way that formed a great deal of her spiritual self. She believed in some kind of higher power, which upon mutual agreement we named "the

Universe."

Six years from her diagnosis, Jenny's disease turned ugly. After chemotherapy we decided it was time for her to have a mastectomy to manage her disease - the next loss. We talked about the Universe again, and how she was a part of a Creation that was Loved: even with one breast. She talked of how connected she felt outside in nature, using her body in connection with the earth, and creating art. She shared with me spiritual symbols that were important to her, and how they represented something bigger than herself.

Finally, Jenny's time ran out. We talked about treatment. We talked about her remaining goals, her dreams, and her losses. We talked about life and how beautiful it was. Tearfully, Jenny confessed to me that she was afraid to die. She felt that she was clinging to the side of a tunnel going down. We talked about what might come after - where she would go, what she would feel like. The hardest part was, she didn't know. That week I went to my own Spiritual Director and processed it through- both my own grief, and my worry that she would die afraid (for me, the ultimate failure). Meeting Jenny again the following week, I gently whispered to her, "imagine the tunnel- but this time imagine letting go. Imagine floating down and being caught by hands that love you more than you can imagine." She couldn't answer, but I saw something in her thinking about it. She was still

there. I kissed her and said goodbye.

Spiritual care may evolve over time and can encompass both pastoral care and spiritual counseling. Spiritual counseling is a step forward out of the immediate moment of the situation, and ideally builds on the pastoral care that has already been received; this care can be from



Sharing stories and wisdom over a meal

any combination of chaplain, nurse, physician, or social worker. Spiritual care at the end of life begins by addressing distress with pastoral care- that fundamental act of "being with." Therefore all healthcare providers should receive some degree of training in spiritual care. Transformational processes towards spiritual growth can be both powerful and painful; therefore it is the responsibility of those who care for patients at the end of life to support the experience of that process, and find ways to facilitate spiritual growth. There is much to learn from incorporating elements of pastoral counseling with spirituality and healthcare, and much to gain from training supervisors to support and encourage relationships that will enhance our practice.

From the Director *Cont'd from page 1*

When I came to America and lived with many immigrants, I observed the same pattern of working all day long.

They confess that prayer is their strength. As they breathe, they pray. As they pray, they work. As they work, they breathe. As they work, they build the nation. As they pray, they transform this society. As they breathe, they make us live.

Many unnamed and named women provide for our needs, work hard, and are the ones who let us live. As I read the autobiography of Anna Howard Shaw, I was overwhelmed how much she worked, taught, preached, prayed, and “breathed.” As I looked up to many women leaders, I was

amazed by their zeal, passion, energy, love, care, and work for and with other people. Where did



Students enjoy a casual break in the Shaw Center

their energies come from? I am grateful because I know without their fights, struggles, and tears, I would not be here now.

Now the question is: “what can I - can we - do for our women and with our women?” The Anna

Howard Shaw Center is searching for answers. Many friends and supporters of the Shaw Center work really hard to keep up the legacy of our foremothers and frontier women. We want to follow in their footsteps and share what we have learned. However, we see there are more things that we still need to do together. As daughters of prophets and prophetesses, we need to simultaneously exist as who we were *and* who we are. We have been the voice of women, the oppressed, the marginalized and “the Other.” However, we know we have not been a perfect voice in the world and are determined to keep trying with you. Dear friends, please join us in walking in their footsteps.

Shifting with the Seasons: Moving the Body & Spirit into Winter

By Jessica Roffe

Women students, faculty, staff, and School of Theology friends enjoyed a wonderful Fall retreat honoring the arrival of winter. It proved restful and invigorating all at once, as Dr. Katheryn P. Darr welcomed us warmly into her home for an intentional time of connection and relaxation.



Faculty, staff, students, and board members gather for opening worship at our Fall retreat

It felt wonderful to bundle up and venture out into the bright,

crisp, October air with crunchy leaves underfoot, as Linda Grenfell guided us in becoming keenly attuned to our senses during a nature walk. I expanded my own awareness to focus on the sounds of running water nearby, instead of the cars on the road; observed a red cardinal perched just within my peripheral vision, through deliberately unfocused eyes; and took slow, trusting steps across uneven ground without needing to keep looking down at my feet.

Together we were also treated to an embodied worship, practiced mindfulness meditation, shared meals, laughed, and prayed over each other. I was really touched to hear other women share stories about their vocations, families, and careers; and to set aside time

for reflection on my own first semester and work-life balance. We talked about spiritual practices

“I loved the flow of prayer, meditation, discussion, art, journaling, getting outside, and the food was spectacular.”

— Linda Grenfell

that sustain us, and how they may change as the days grow shorter, and our daily routines are affected by each semester and reliable shift in seasons. It felt restorative to be in community with such wonderful women leaders. Samantha Ball, a lead organizer, adds a special note of thanksgiving: “I’m so grateful that people took time out of the busiest parts of their semester to rekindle this tradition with us.”

Meet the New Staff of the Anna Howard Shaw Center!



YooJin Kim, Second Year M.Div.

YooJin Kim is originally from Seoul, South Korea, and moved to Iowa with her family in 2005. Before coming to the U.S. she was a student at KyungHee University in Korea, majoring in English/American Culture and Literature. In Iowa she received her Associate of Arts degree from De Moines Area Community College, and then transferred to SUNY Stony Brook where she double majored in Psychology and Sociology. She is a student pastor at Good Shepherd United Methodist Church and in the ordination process in the United Methodist Church. She is focusing on pastoral care and counseling with plans to become a pastor/pastoral counselor. YooJin desires to be a person who can give comfort to those who are wounded.

Jessica Roffe, First Year M.Div.

Jessica Roffe is originally from New Jersey where she graduated Ramapo College with a B.A. in Psychology and Social Science, concentrating in Women's and Gender Studies with a minor in Environmental Studies. She is drawn to the exciting intersections of psychology and theology, and plans to bring a feminist and relational perspective to her career as a counselor and educator. Jessica recently spent two years as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, coordinating service-learning and experiential learning partnerships with local colleges and organizations.



Kaci Norman, First Year M.Div.

Kaci Norman hails from Kansas, and just recently moved to Boston. She did her undergraduate work at North Park University in Chicago where she majored in Theological Studies and Psychology. Kaci is pursuing her Masters of Divinity Degree at the School of Theology. She is very interested in working with churches to create more unity between Christian groups, and challenging traditional understandings of power in the Church to foster this unity.

Welcome to our New Board Members!

Rev. Dr. Cristian De La Rosa



The Rev. Dr. Cristian De La Rosa is the Clinical Assistant Professor of Contextual Theology and Practice and Director of Contextual Education and

Community Partnerships at Boston University School of Theology. She received her B A degree from University of the Pacific and her Ph. D. in Theology and Ethics from Chicago Theological Seminary where her dissertation focused on contextual dynamics of power and agency. Her areas of interest include Feminist Theology, cultural theory, Latin American Liberation Theology, and the Hispanic/Latino community and its religious

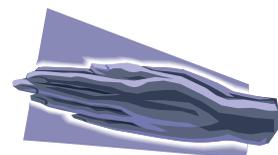
history. Originally from Mexico, Dr. De La Rosa is an ordained elder with the Rio Grande Conference of the United Methodist Church and is invested in ecumenical dialogue thorough scholarship, teaching, and community organizing. She currently serves as administrative Co-convenor for the National Association of UM Latina Clergy Women (ACLAMEN), as a board member for the Massachusetts Council of Churches and as a trustee of Esperanza Academy in Lawrence, MA.



Rev. Karen L. Peters

Rev. Karen L. Peters is a United Methodist Elder and the current pastor of St. Stephen's United

Methodist Church in Marblehead, MA, after serving various churches in Massachusetts. She is known for her interfaith and social justice work such as with UMC Reconciling Ministries, Marblehead Ministerial Association, and Safe Havens, an interfaith initiative on Domestic Violence where she has served as Board Member and Co-Chair of the Board. Pastor Karen is a member of the John Edwards Honor Society at Andover Newton Theological Seminary, where she received her M.Div. in 2000.





Boston University School of Theology
Anna Howard Shaw Center

745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
617-353-3075
<http://www.bu.edu/shaw/>

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The Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University School of Theology seeks to empower women in ministry through research, education, support, and advocacy. If you would like to learn more about the Anna Howard Shaw Center, please check our website at www.bu.edu/shaw/

Dear Friends of the Anna Howard Shaw Center,

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and happened to see one of my favorite STH professors on the couch in the Center. I explained my dilemma, we discussed my options, and it was in that room that I decided to take on the role, which I joyfully inhabited for three years.

The Shaw Center and the memory of Anna Howard Shaw takes on different components and personal revelations for each of us - today we need your help translating those memories into monetary assistance. Would you be willing to donate an amount to the Anna Howard Shaw Center this year to ensure that the laughter, memories, and special moments continue for a lifetime? No matter how small or large the amount, I thank you in advance for your gift.

With warm regards,
Pauline Jennett, STH M.Div., 2005

Please send donations to:
Boston University School of Theology
Anna Howard Shaw Center
745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

Or submit online at
www.bu.edu/shaw/donations/

ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER NEWSLETTER

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MANAGING EDITOR

Choi Hee An

EDITOR

Jessica Roffe

CONTRIBUTORS

Pauline Jennett

Choi Hee An

Zina Jacque

Emma Arely Escobar

Karen A. Skalla

Jessica Roffe

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0609 974050