FALL

NEWSLETTER

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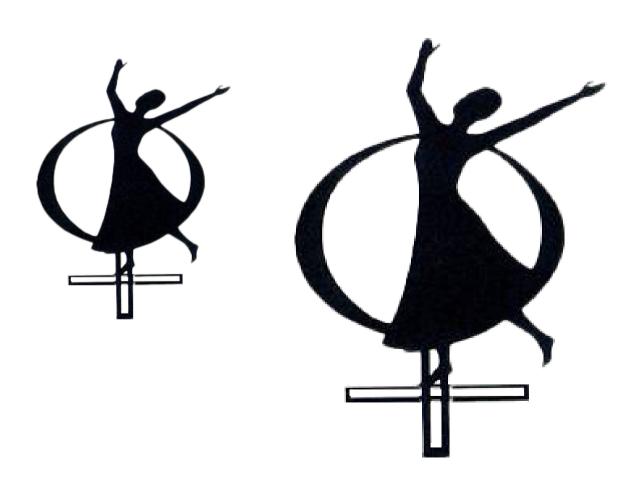
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Boston University School of Theology

ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER

Volume 40 Issue 1 Fall 2022

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



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MULTICULTURAL EXPO 2022

After the long struggle with the COVID pandemic, Anna Howard Shaw Center is back with full energy and passion. By conducting vibrant research projects, providing multicultural programs, and supporting collaborative events, we intentionally focus on creating a space that supports every person and celebrates every culture. Our Multicultural Expo is one of the best multicultural events we have cherished since 2017. This event's purpose is to learn about various cultures and celebrate them together. We want to learn about our cultural legacy and communal identities as we share various kinds of food, music, and dance together. This year's Multicultural Expo infused a heightened anticipation from students, faculty, and staff especially many first-year students who participated by sharing their cultures with us in joy and pride.

The program, which marked the 6th Annual Multicultural Expo, began with a welcome address from Dr. Choi Hee An, the Director of the Anna Howard Shaw center. Many student associations and diverse cultures were represented; there were foods from Nigeria, India, Thai, Mexico, etc. Students appeared in their cultural apparel, which splashed vibrant colors to the event. The theme of our presentations this year was to introduce the cultures and traditions of women in leadership positions in various cultures.





Our first presenter was Alexis Monroe. As she shared her hair experience as an African American woman in relation to one of the most important African American identity issues, she introduced healing through Hair-itage. Tracing the history and uniqueness of Black hair, she says Black hairstyles such as locs, braids, and cornrows date back to as early as 3000 BC and existed in different cultures. Locs, for example, date back to Egypt (Egyptian mummy hairstyles). She spoke on the discrimination Black people have suffered for centuries because of their hair and how this has caused many Black people not to love and care for their hair.

Furthermore, she says that the journey toward Black people healing is through embracing our hair. For her, "embracing my hair is tapping into ancient technologies." This journey and struggle led to the CROWN Act (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair), which prohibits discrimination again hairstyles and hair texture. Her presentation also highlighted how hair is a way of building community, "getting hair done is a time for storytelling, networking, and vulnerability." Also, Hairstyle is art, creativity, and freedom for Black people.



MULTICULTURAL EXPO 2022

Felix Jibirn, the second speaker, talked about the Igala royalties of Kogi State in Nigeria. He centered his presentation on the first ruler of the Igala people, the first Àtá, the title given to the ruler of the kingdom, Ebulejonu, a woman. The following kings (34 till present) performed a crucial ritual where the Kings pierced their ears and wore earrings to honor her legacy. This tradition still carries on today.

Chike Nwodo talked about the Igbo people of Nigeria. He emphasized the uniqueness of the already established social-political structure of the Igbo people even before the British colonists arrived. They had a structured republican system of administration; they historically did not have a monarchy system. Although now they have the Igwe (ruler) of what used to be called the warrant chiefs of the colonial period. In the Igbo system, the women have a group organization (Umuada Igbo Association) that advocates for women's rights. Like the right to vote and promoting women's affairs, they engage in the affairs of the community/society.





Philip Kirui talked about the Kenyan Culture – Maasai. Kirui explained the history and daily life of his people. He said that the Maasai people are a "tribe of nomads and warriors who steadfastly refuse the temptations of civilization and have been living their ancestor's way of life to this day." They are beautifully dressed, often wearing bright red attires and bead decorations on their ears and heads, and they coexist with wildlives. Among the many he shared, one exciting thing about these people is the Amudu, a famous Maasai rite that involved young men jumping to the highest they could while performing their national dance.

Daniel Sawoeto presented on the Ashanti culture of Ghana. He spoke to us about a piece of clothing called the Batakari. Batakari signifies peace in the Ashanti culture. It is a war shirt, also used for dancing, produced in the northern part of the country (Iya culture). One figure who symbolized the Batakari in the Ashanti culture was a lady called 'Yaa Asantewaa.' Growing up, his parents told him about her story. She is a very beloved figure of the Ashanti people of Ghana. In 1900 she led the people to war (War of the Golden Stool) against the British empire. She symbolizes courage and power for the Ghanaian people, and she used the power of women to resist colonial oppression.





WOMEN IN THE WORLD 2022

Furthermore, Sandra **Barrios** presented video representing Latin - America. She spoke about the Latinx and Hispanic cultures. Barrios says, "Hispanic and Latinx refer to people from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. A population that is considered the largest minority in the United States. Hispanic refers to the Spanish ancestry of this population, and Latinx refers to Latin America." She said there were numerous debates on how best to refer to this group. As a young woman from Mexico, she prefers to be called 'Mexican or Latina' but cannot speak for the larger community. She ended the presentation by giving accolades to influential people from her community, like Frida Kahlo, Gabriel García Márquez, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, etc. She reminded us of the importance of naming and naming correctly, especially those who have come before us.



Yewon Park spoke about the trend of K-pop female idols in 2022 and introduced how young Korean women in MZ generation have challenged the norm of heterosexual love and empowered Women/LGBTQIA community through their music. She engaged the students and staff in actively listening to the music of different K-pop girl groups in Korea and listing out the unique and creative ways K-pop music is radically resisting oppressive heteronormative norms in South Korea.



Finally, Diego Salazar Galvis got everyone dancing to the tunes of the famous 'Macarena' song. All participants danced with great joy and released their stresses. Nataly Romero, one of the staff of the Shaw Center, performed a Peruvian act of dispersing candy. She had students leaping across the room to catch the candy. We felt like we were in a concert receiving souvenirs! What a fun way to end our day!

As we shared our differences in respect, we felt closer to each other. As we gained bits of knowledge of women leaders in these various cultures, we felt closer to our mothers, foremothers, and our own generation of all people. Through this Multicultural Expo, we experienced theirs and our presence and power in coexistence. Now we know that the more we celebrate our different cultures with respect, the more we feel confident and stronger together. So, let us celebrate more of who we are and how we are.





WOMEN IN THE WORLD 2022

























WOMEN CHANGING THE WORLD - MARY ELIZABETH MOORE

The mantra of "changing the world" can be arrogant, as if you and I know how the world needs to be changed. It can also be naïve, as if we know how to do it. Yet women have, through the ages, contributed mightily to changes toward justice and compassion in their particular times and places. What can we expect from women and gender–nonconforming leaders in the present moment? I will explore three critical qualities: passion, vision, and determination.

I remember when I was hired long ago to lead youth ministry in a congregation. On my first night, a parent stopped me as I departed the church: "I don't think a woman can do this job; a woman just doesn't have what it takes." I suggested that he wait and see, adding that I hoped he would stay involved. He did, and he became a great supporter of the youth and of me. This encounter was one of ten thousand belittlements and dismissals in my life, but I knew something the man did not. I had a passion for young people. I loved to be with them in all things fun and serious and to encourage them in the challenges of living. In that experience and in many that were far more severe, I discovered something greater than diminution – an inner passion that defied the sexist forces that sought to silence me.

Sadly, young women and gender-nonconforming persons still tell similar tales and worse. Sexist forces are real, appearing in ever new forms; yet, I also see passion in these same young leaders, a passion that is forward looking, and willing to take risks and "take on" the biases and structures that would ignore or demean them and their projects. I hope their passions will continue to propel them toward visions of possibility and determination in action.

Women of the past are vital teachers. The second wave feminist movement in the U.S. often took an essentializing approach to women and men, womanhood and manhood (sometimes for strategic reasons), but that approach increasingly faded with the vigorous critiques and constructions of new generations of women, diverse in race, ethnicity, nationality, and concerns. We inherit a legacy of women who changed the world in many ways, including voting rights, economic and abortion rights, perspectives on sexuality and gender, and the incredible diversity of women's experiences and concerns. We also have a legacy of women who have seen into the depths of human and ecological despair and have carved bold visions from the hard stone of the status quo; these are women who have been determined to change the world.

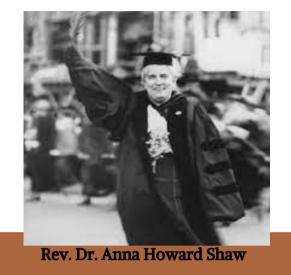
Women Who Changed the World

And then came the women and others with them, with their dreams for change their anger at domination, persecution, and destruction, designed to protect a well-established status quo, an unjust distribution of justice, and goals set by those in power.



WOMEN CHANGING THE WORLD - MARY ELIZABETH MOORE

And then came the women with the courage of Harriet Tubman, faith of Sojourner Truth, wisdom of Eleanor Roosevelt, compassion of Rosa Parks, fearlessness of Yu Gwan-sun, passion of Sylvia Rivera, vision of Wangari Maathai, determination of Ellen Ochoa, advocacy of Anna Howard Shaw, women who came to sow seeds of transformation, to turn history, to enact compassionate justice.



And then came the women!

The women called out in this poem have been passionate change-makers. Harriet Tubman was a daring leader in the underground railroad, and Sojourner Truth, a tireless abolitionist and fighter for voting rights, prison reform, and land ownership for African Americans and women. Both had escaped slavery, and both had an undying passion for freedom. Years later, Rosa Parks followed Sojourner Truth as a freedom fighter and bus protestor, creating a political crisis by sitting in the "off-limits" white section of a segregated bus. Eleanor Roosevelt and Wangari Maathai worked in and around political systems to enact dramatic changes in their countries' policies and practices. Roosevelt was a powerful figure in the United States and United Nations, advocating civil rights for African Americans, Asians, and refugees and helping shape global commitments to human rights, as in her major role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Maathai was a similarly bold leader in Kenya, the founder of the Green Belt Movement and the inspiration for planting 30 million trees in Kenya and 11 billion across the world. Yu Gwan-sun was a teenage leader in Korea's struggle for independence from colonial Japan, participating in the March First Independence Movement and spreading the movement into villages of Korea, even continuing her protests from prison, where she died of injuries from torture at 17. Sylvia Rivera, a trans woman (and drag queen), was an outspoken activist for transgender rights and gay liberation, often conflicting with more harmonizing leaders, but reflecting tensions that still exist in the movement. Ellen Ochoa, an astronaut and engineer, made her mark in the world of scientific exploration and was Director of NASA's Johnson Space Center. Our own Anna Howard Shaw made multiple marks as pastor, physician, and voting rights activist.

These are all women who helped change the world. They were driven by distinctive passions and visions, determined to reshape the human community, and in some cases the entire ecological community. They were determined in their unique ways to foster justice and flourishing. Their challenges were daunting, as are ours, but the work continues and always will. And here come the women!



LOS AUTORRETRATOS DE FRIDA KAHLO

I remember the first time I learned about the work of Frida Kahlo. I was in my 8th grade Spanish class, and we were tasked with translating a short biographical paragraph about Frida from Spanish to English. The short biography was filled with many vague facts: Frida was a Mexican painter who liked to include natural elements in her paintings; she was part of the surrealist movement; she was famous for her autorretratos (self-portraits).

As enlightening as all this information was to a 14-year-old me, it is now clear to me how superficial these facts about Frida truly are. Frida's legacy is not rooted in her being a female Mexican surrealist who painted many self-portraits. Frida's legacy is her profound portrayal of her everyday experiences through her artwork.

A bus accident would severely injure her and cause chronic health issues for the rest of her life. Frida's disability is represented time and time again in her self-portraits.

Her health issues would lead to issues with carrying her four pregnancies to term. Frida's multiple miscarriages are repeatedly referenced in her artwork.

Frida's Mexican heritage and preferred Tehuana fashion are famously present in her art.

Her bisexuality and various sexual relations are represented in her art.

The pain, confusion, and humiliation resulting from her tumultuous marriage to Mexican muralist Diego Rivera is placed front and center in many of her paintings.

Frida's tense relationship with her mother and the confusing grief she felt after her mother's death is represented in her art.

Her difficulty and distaste for the language and culture of the United States (where she resided off and on with her husband) are represented in her art.

What is profound about her art reflecting her everyday experiences is that her art reflects the everyday experiences of so many women. It is not just Frida Kahlo; it is the queer woman, the woman of color, the immigrant woman, the mujerista, the disabled woman, the lovesick woman, the indigenous woman, the multi-ethnic woman, la chingada, la Llorona, la Malinche. The subject matter of Frida's art is emblematic of the realities of women—concerns with our bodies, our marriages, our communities, and our identity as women. If you stare into one of Frida Kahlo's autorretratos, you will probably see yourself staring back.

However, her prolific art merely scratches the surface of Frida's relevance. In the decades since her death, Frida Kahlo has become a symbol of feminism and Mexicanidad on a global scale. Her likeness is repeatedly printed on mass-produced products and her art is housed in collections across the globe. There are countless biographies written and movies made about (or featuring) Frida Kahlo. Frida was a radical and bold political advocate. She was a feminist. She was and is an icon. Frida Kahlo may not be exactly what comes to mind when we think of women in leadership. But Frida's unapologetic and resilient use of her experiences to shape her life and work serves as inspiration for female leaders today who wish to embody their struggles and identity fully. We do not have to separate our own experiences from our education, our vocation, or our leadership. We must let our unique experiences paint our work, just as Frida did.



Natalie Readnour, She/her MDIV, STH





WOMANIST ATHLETES: BLACK WOMEN LEADERS IN SPORTS

The first time I experienced sexism in athletics, I was 11 at a mixgendered basketball camp. I didn't know the term sexism, but I immediately knew it wasn't right. During a drill, a male basketball coach and camp counselor insisted that a male camper should be better than me— a girl. He emphasized that *this* boy should be better than *all* girls. I knew that this wasn't true. I knew girls and women are great basketball players, and many were better than boys. I learned this from women leaders in my community— my Godmother, my female middle school basketball coach, and WNBA players. That same summer that I went to basketball camp would be the same summer that the WNBA launched in 1997. These women would forever impact me, which led to a career in sports medicine as an athletic trainer.



Candace Parker, WNBA Player & Sports
Activist

An athletic trainer is a healthcare professional specializing in the prevention, evaluation, referral process, and rehabilitation of athletic injuries. As an athletic trainer, I had the opportunity to work at the Division 1 level and travel with college teams all around the country as they competed against different universities. As a working professional, I would continue to experience sexism, along with racism, but this didn't stop me from being a leader. As a leader in college athletics, I could not only navigate student-athletes' physical recovery process, but I also had opportunities to share my faith with others. I would continue this by working with sports ministries, and I even built a playground in Haiti (2018) and Mexico (2019). These experiences led me to the School of Theology. Since, I have been on a mission to read and reflect on Black women, sports, and theology. I've thought about it even more because of the COVID-19 pandemic and how it impacted sports globally. I witnessed women and Black women advocating for themselves and others—for higher pay, equal rights, and religious freedom.

They spoke up about mass incarceration, better education, mental health, and accessibility of sports for marginalized communities. Many of these women are Christian and Muslim. Their exemplary leadership inspires me. They are courageous and continue to seek better for their communities. My studies at STH, particularly in feminist and womanist theologies and—the inspiration of these women—have led me to define Womanist Athlete. It's a term that I believe best describes these Black women athletes, coaches, and sports leaders. Below is my second attempt at defining Womanist Athlete:





WOMANIST ATHLETES: BLACK WOMEN LEADERS IN SPORTS

A Womanist Athlete is an athlete or sports leader who identifies as a Black woman (cisgender or transgender). They participate in various sports, and physical activities (recreationally, college, amateur, or professional levels), and they exemplify and embody unconditional love to all—on and off the playing field—and to the Earth on which sports are played. Their spiritual practices, cultural traditions, or religion, empowers them to advocate for marginalized people, regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, or physical or mental capabilities. Their actions can lead to the liberation and the dismantling of social constructs, prejudices, and stereotypes of normative definitions of the word "athlete," so all may fully participate in sports and physical activity with full joy and experience accessibility to wholistic healing for their mind, body, and spirit.

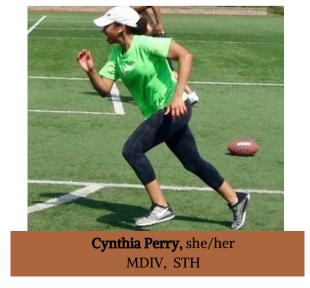
It is my goal to live out this definition to better myself, my community, and the world. Womanist athletes are all around us. Respect them, honor them, love them, affirm them, believe them, and care for them. Take on their burden and give them rest. Below is my prayer for Womanist Athletes:

God of Womanist Athletes-

May you protect and heal the minds, bodies, and spirits of Black women from the turmoil, trauma, and tragedies of this world— especially in sports. May you continue to give them the courage to face those who persecute them and are in opposition just by their simple act of playing or participating in physical activity. May their advocacy work lead to restorative and transformative justice within their communities. God—grant them peace, joy, hope, and love, and let their athletic passions and gifts inspire the next generation of Womanist Athletes...

Dedicated to Asia Womack. A 21-year-old Black woman shot and murdered after playing basketball against a male opponent and winning the game.







Linda (My Mom): In the context of a patriarchal family that thrived on sports, competition, and dinner table debate, I discovered a second home with my family in a Southern Baptist church. I developed a deep love for the Bible and at the age of 12 began a personal faith journey of professing and embracing Jesus Christ as Emmanuel, God with us. When Kasey was around 12 years old she asked me if I would be disappointed in her if she didn't believe everything in the Bible was true. I told her I definitely would not be disappointed, instead I was proud that she understood the importance of her faith and her beliefs being determined by her understanding and relationship with God. Faith cannot be forced.



Kasey Kelly, she/her and They/Them MDIV/MSW

I never imagined God would call me to be a pastor, nor did my parents, my two brothers, or my college accounting friends, and ultimately neither did the Southern Baptist denomination. The first female preacher I heard was timid and terrible. It was me! I never had a female pastor role model, but I was blessed with many female leader role models in the church and beyond.

Kasey: I grew up in the United Methodist Church because my mom was the pastor. I identify as queer. As you can imagine, that does not go well for the United Methodist Church during this difficult time, but I pray that there will be a way. I am not sure if I am called to be a pastor. My different beliefs about the Bible enrich my conversations with my mom.

I worked at a Presbyterian church for a year. I realized that I wanted to do something more than what a pastor can do in helping people beyond the church, and I also wanted to explore theology. That is when I chose to do a dual degree in social work. I would not have thought of being innovative and having the perseverance to complete a four years degree program if it were not for knowing my mom's path.



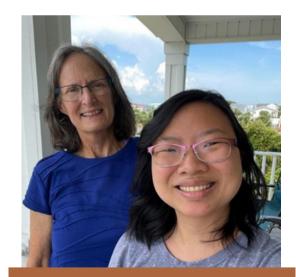


Linda: The most influential role model was my mother, Ethel Marie Kelly, known to her grandchildren as Mama Rie or Rie Rie was an active and faithful volunteer and leader in her church. She was known for her quiet yet persistent way of prioritizing people's needs, especially children and the most vulnerable, over programs and profits. As a volunteer member of the church DayCare board, she helped guide the program back to a more transparent and healthier child and family-focused foundation during a difficult time. During her empty-nest years, she received the NC Governor's Volunteer of the Year award for her countless hours as an administrative and outreach volunteer for the Cleveland County hospice in the early years of the hospice movement. I am blessed to be challenged to lead with love and understanding by my mother and my daughter. Nelson Mandela says, "A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination." My daughter is bright, beautiful, creative, courageous, and compassionate. She does not have my DNA, but she certainly has a good head, a good heart, and a desire to learn and love as she leads. She is a formidable force for good, just like her grandmother, Rie.

Kasey: Obviously, my mom loves to talk about me. I struggle to understand my strengths and challenges. I often think I do not belong in any leadership role. An instructor said to me, "You are a leader." My mom said that she could tell that I received some characteristics from Rie, such as hospitality and care. The truth is, in some ways, my passion and courage are from my mom, who strongly followed her calling, no matter how odd it was to her loved ones. My mom and Rie's leadership characteristics are present in my career.



Ethel Marie and Kasey (Rie and Me)

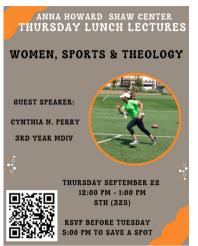


Linda and Kasey (Mom and Me)



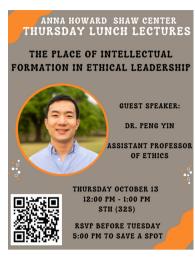


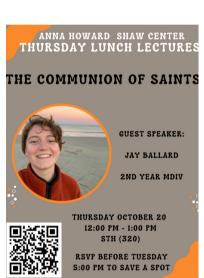
THURSDAY LECTURE SERIES





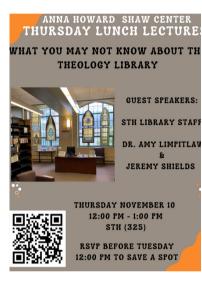


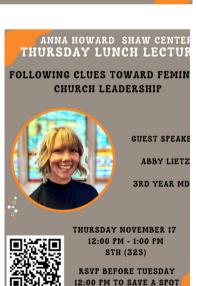




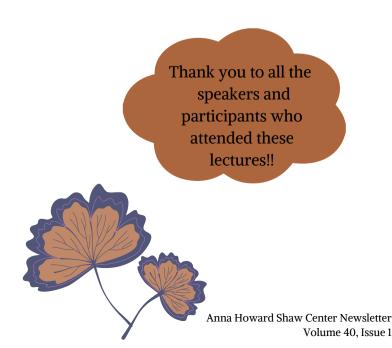














THURSDAY LECTURE SERIES























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