



# Anna Howard Shaw Center

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 20 ♦ NUMBER 1 ♦ FALL/WINTER 2003

## ANNUAL ALL-WOMEN'S RETREAT A SUCCESS

*Maggie King*

S'mores roasting in a fireplace in a cozy cabin situated by a serene lake! It was a chance I could not pass up. I'm so glad that I had the opportunity to go on an overnight trip with other women of the School of Theology community. I am a first-year student in the Master of Theology program. I came from California and, like many of my incoming classmates, I wanted very much to feel welcomed here. My husband urged me to go, but I said, "No, I don't know anyone. I'll feel awkward and out of place." I signed up anyway and I don't regret it.

The first impression I got of the people at the Anna Howard Shaw Center was great. I let them know that I wanted to go on the retreat but that I didn't have any money to pitch in or a car to drive people up—my situation hasn't changed much since. They assured me that I was

going to be taken care of and I was. I rode up with three sweet ladies, and on the way we were able to get to know each other better. Until that point, I had only seen the countryside of the west, and I was amazed at the foliage here on this side of the Mississippi.

That evening we arrived at the cabin and were warmly greeted and found where we were going to sleep. The bunk beds were snug and the room was comfortable. After a minute or two of settling in and exploring, we rejoined the other women downstairs around the fireplace in the lounge. It was there that we were introduced to each other, to the purpose and theme of the retreat (sailing on the breath of God), and to the center sponsoring the retreat (the Anna Howard Shaw Center).

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

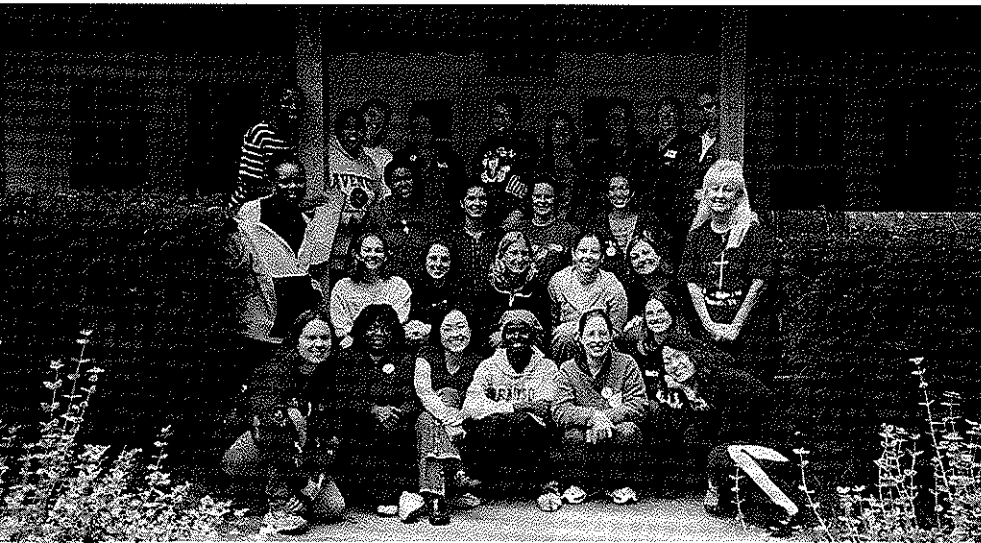
*Hee An Choi, Director*

*Is Feminism Alive?* How are women nowadays? Are they surviving? Are they better? Do they enjoy their lives? Some people say that today's women have better chances and better lives compared to their mothers. They do not have to do housework as their mothers did, and they have equal opportunities for education. They are as successful in their careers as men are, and some even more so. Besides, men are more cooperative about housework than before; they participate in nursing and raising their children and spend more time with them. When someone mentions sexism nowadays, not only men but also some women want to answer that there is not much sexism in their modern world, but just vestigial habits.

How about women in the ministry? Some people say they are free from providing food or washing dishes for church lunches or coffee hours. They lead worship services and even are ordained as elders (Presbyterian), ministers (Protestants

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*This year's record-setting retreat was a wonderful time of rest and fellowship for 29 women from the Boston University School of Theology community.*



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# ANNUAL ALL-WOMEN'S RETREAT A SUCCESS

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Dinner was very good and we all pitched in afterwards to clean up. Then we engaged in various activities including worshipping with song and prayer, sharing our sacred objects, uplifting famous and personally known women in prayer, and small-group reflections on the Holy Spirit.

Everyone who attended the retreat had a favorite activity. My favorite was the small-group reflections. We were able to split off into smaller, more intimate groups and discuss our views and experiences of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The group I was in listened intently while I shared my feelings and thoughts. I no longer felt awkward and out of place. As they shared I was able to look inside the hearts of women whose names I didn't know just a few hours before. Their contribution to the discussion widened my view on the workings and influences of the Holy Spirit. It is remarkable how deeply women can share with other women. After we came together we made s'mores and were free to do as we pleased. I opted to go outside and stargaze before bed.

In the morning I was anxious to get up and see what was for breakfast! We ate our bagels, yogurt, and fruit in silence in order to take in the stillness and peace of the brand new day. Some of the women participated in a silent meditation exercise, while others went outside to take in the fresh air and still others welcomed the opportunity to rest in their warm sleeping bags.

After the initial mode of quietness, we gathered outside on the picnic tables to exercise our creativity. We gathered the perfect sticks for our crafts and began



*The retreat participants created a worship space with sacred objects brought from home.*

*On Saturday morning, the retreat participants exercised their imaginations, creating wind chimes and mobiles to "sail on the breath of God."*



*No retreat would be complete without s'mores cooked over the fire. For some participants, this was a first-time s'mores experience!*



*Our fearless cooks, Becca (left) and Debbie (front) whipped up various batches of stir-fry.*

building wind chimes, crosses, and other things with colored twine and beads. We had a lot of fun seeing who had talent and who was better off working with things other than sticks and string. But no matter what the end result was, we spent valuable time getting to know each other in a different way. Afterwards, I spent some alone time by the calm tree-lined lake reading my Bible. It was very relaxing as I sat there in what seemed to me a postcard setting. It reminded me of how we all need to find some time in our busy schedules to be in solitude and silence for a while even if it's in our bedroom.

When I came back to the cabin, lunch was being served. Shortly after we ate, we headed back to the city. I am glad I went on the retreat and was able to make so many connections with the women of the School of Theology community. I would recommend it to anyone who feels like she needs to make more connections or simply to get away and experience some rest and relaxation. I also want to extend my thanks to the Anna Howard Shaw Center staff and volunteers for making the retreat a memorable one. ♦

## REFLECTIONS ON THE FALL RETREAT

*Susan Feurzeig*

Already, only two weeks into school, I had considered backing out of the All-Women's Retreat I had chosen to attend because I knew that I would not be able to allow time for R & R later on. I was feeling overloaded already. However, as soon as I heard from my potential ride to Worcester, I knew that I would go after all.

I bonded with the women who shared my ride to Worcester, and the YMCA camp outside of town was beautiful—once we found it! Right away, I felt the peace of the countryside surround me, and I was charmed by the retreat center, a snug little cottage with multiple chimneys and dormer windows.

There were 29 of us, and it was wonderful to get the chance to meet many of the women in my class and the classes ahead of us. The activities—shared services, Eucharist, a wonderful meditation led by Hee An, crafts, and ice-breaker exercises—were all fulfilling. What I really



# SCHOOL GAINS THREE WOMEN FACULTY MEMBERS

Rebecca Clark

As many of you have heard, The Reverend Dr. Hee An Choi is the new director of the Anna Howard Shaw Center. Hee An brings tremendous exuberance and experience to the position, and she has been warmly received by the community. In her role as director, Hee An has implemented several new programs and projects for the Shaw Center, including a weekly meditation and plans for a multicultural women's Bible study. In addition to giving her time and energy to the Shaw Center, she also facilitates a Pastoral Spiritual Formation small group of first-year students, helping them with the transitions and challenges of life at the School of Theology. We are very excited to have Hee An as part of our community. More exciting still, Hee An is not the only woman to join the STH faculty this year.

The Boston University School of Theology community has added another tenured faculty woman to the roster. Dr. Nancy Ammerman joined the faculty, bringing the number of full-time tenured women professors to four. Having earned

her Ph.D. from Yale University, Nancy brings her experience to the BU community, where she teaches social science courses for both the School of Theology and the CAS Department of Sociology. She has spent much of the last decade studying American congregations and is currently completing a book describing the common patterns that shape the work of America's diverse communities of faith. *Pillars of Faith: American Congregations and Their Partners, Building Traditions, Building Communities* will be published in 2004 by University of California Press. Prior to her work on congregations, she wrote extensively on conservative religious movements, including *Baptist Battles: Social Change and Religious Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention*, which received the 1992 Distinguished Book Award from the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

In addition to her published work, Nancy has been active in attempting to educate a larger public audience about American religion. In 1993, she served

on the panel of experts convened by the U.S. Departments of Justice and Treasury to make recommendations in light of the government's confrontation with the Branch Davidians at Waco. In 1995, she testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on the same subject, and in 1997, she lectured in Israel under the sponsorship of the U.S. State Department.

The Reverend Marsha Cutting also joins the BU School of Theology faculty, teaching in both the M.Div. program and the doctoral program through the Department of Religion. Her courses this year include Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling, Ethics and Professional Development, and Social Psychology. Marsha earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and her master's degree from Yale Divinity School. She is a doctoral candidate in counseling psychology at State University of New York at Albany, and at the time of publication is ready to defend her dissertation.

Marsha is a Board Certified Chaplain and a clinical member of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA), she has served in both parish ministry and psychiatric hospital chaplaincy. Her current research interests include clergy careers and supervision and religious participation by recipients of mental health services. Marsha has also been involved in research on international adoptions and the working alliance within family therapy. Her publications include "Response to Larry Dossey," in *Scientific and Pastoral Perspectives on Intercessory Prayer* (Larry VandeCreek, ed.).

Marsha reports finding the students in the School of Theology "creative, thoughtful, and committed." In her free time, she enjoys sailing, playing the guitar, and photography. ♦

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## REFLECTIONS ON THE FALL RETREAT

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gained from the retreat was the chance to stop all my doings, let go of my concerns, and appreciate the gift of life and time. Our leaders collected all of our watches and invited us to experience time as *Kairos* (the time of opportunity) rather than *Chronos* (linear time).

Stopping for a while in such good company allowed me to appreciate the miracle of my being here in divinity

school, a dream I have nursed, first subconsciously and then consciously, for so many years. Now, plunged even more deeply into the intense school schedule we first-years must endure, I can still pull away from my anxiety over academics, take a breath, and remember to be thankful for the opportunity to live and learn in community with others who share my values. ♦



# MEET THE SHAW CENTER STAFF

*Karen M. Alley*

Karen Alley (left in photo, working hard on a macramé bracelet) returns to the Shaw Center for a second year. Her main responsibility this year is coordinating Women and the Word 2004—a huge responsibility, as this will be the twentieth-anniversary celebration. Karen is an M.Div. student and a candidate for ordination in The United Methodist Church. She originally hails from Montana and is very active in the UMC, having twice served as a delegate to the General Conference. Karen is an Aries, enjoys long walks on the beach, and owns an extensive shoe collection, which she has promised to share with her co-workers.

*Rebecca J. Clark*

Now serving her third and final year as Shaw Center Newsletter Editor, Rebecca Clark (right, being distracted by the photographer) looks forward to graduation this May. Becca is an M.Div. student and a candidate for Elder's orders in The United Methodist Church. Her largest accomplishment this past year was the unit of Clinical Pastoral Education she did this summer at Saint Elizabeth's Medical Center in Brighton, Mass. Having survived that very challenging program, Becca is happy to spend some time with her husband, Benjamin. After graduation, she hopes to be appointed as a local pastor in the Troy Annual Conference.



*Both Karen Alley and Rebecca Clark return to the Shaw Center staff this year, contributing their creative skills and talents.*

Aside from her stunning good looks and rapier wit, Becca is famous because she had the chicken pox three times. ♦

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Continued from page 1*

in general), bishops (Methodists), and presidents of regions (UCC or DOC). Some female ministers say that they do not face any sexism in their parishes anymore and are treated as equals with their male colleagues, exercising equal authorities and powers.

Is this true? Is it true that women do not face sexism anymore? Is it true that women live in the same world that men live with the same power?

After the first and second waves of the feminist movement, after the success of the women's suffrage movement, after the approval of women's ordination, and after the passage of laws regarding women's equal opportunities in schools and workplaces, the urgency of feminism diminished and the popularity of women's movements waned. Fighting against sexism has become a piece of old news or unpleasant news because it is believed that women have achieved what they have

been seeking and it is too much luxury if they ask for more. Even though the media defines women's reality in its own terms and alleges that we have reached our goals, even though we are misled by economic growth that is possessed by and used by less than 10% of the population, and even though we are deceived by the laws of equal human rights and opportunities that are not easily exercised in reality, it is conjectured that sexism does not exist in women's lives. These forces collude to depict discrimination against women as a delusional mirage. Moreover, this collusive process is, intentionally and unintentionally, aided and abetted by the combination between the confusing influences of postmodernism on the women's movement and the abusive androcentric logic and ethics of capitalism. Women have dealt with thousands of subtle distortions of inequality in women's lives as well as the lives of all people who are oppressed and marginalized.

The hidden pressure on feminist identity causes acrimonious confusion

in women's centers and raises a cynical inquiry about the meaning of their existence. After the victory over ostentatious and outrageous sexist discriminations such as barriers to women's ordinations and suffrage, many women's centers are seeking their identity and their reason for existence in this postmodern era. However, they have had another renaissance by realizing that women's struggles have emerged not only from working against sexism but also from struggling against racism, classism, colonialism, militarism, homophobia, and other "isms." The fundamental agenda for women's centers has shifted from focusing on sexism alone to holding sexism and other discriminations seriously and equally. They now try to listen to *all* women's voices in many different living praxes.

The Anna Howard Shaw Center is going to have its twentieth anniversary next year. We need to carefully evaluate our past twenty years and prepare for our

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

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next twenty years. We as a research center have provided tools and methods for women to analyze the debilitating effects of sexism on women's power and to help them find their own power from their own voices. We have shared our wisdom with women so that they do not underestimate the difficulty of their reality and do not overlook the power of patriarchy. We have tried to lift up all the voices that we have heard and to listen to them meticulously as much as we can. From this experience, we have learned not only the distorted power of sexism but also

the dynamics of other powerful discriminations.

Now we stand at the point where we look back and see what we have done and envision what we can do. Many women have given their prayers, time, energy, and support for this center. We should not squander their countless efforts; we must not waste their love for women. We want to honor our past, celebrate our present, and envision our future. We are preparing another twenty years of a joyful journey with inherited valuable wisdom, galvanizing passionate spirits, new powerful hope and prophecy. Come! Come and celebrate with us. We can bring God's kin-dom within us together! ♦

## THE STORY OF THE LINEN STOLE

*Larisa Waya*

Linen has always fascinated me as a unique and exciting medium to design with. When I started creating clergy vestments with linen, this material connected me to the story of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Linen played an important role in the lives of the Israelites. They used it in the production of the finest cloth and as wrapping material in Jewish burial rituals. From Matthew 27:59 we learn that linen was used in the burial of Jesus: "Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb...." (NIV). The story continues as we read Matthew 28:1: "After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb." The women saw an angel: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay." (Matthew 28:5, 6). At

the tomb only the strips of linen were found lying there and the burial cloth (John 20:6, 7).

When I work with linen to create clergy vestments, I think of them as the strips of linen which the women found at the tomb of Jesus. As the women hurried away from the tomb filled with joy to pass the good news of the resurrection, so women clergy and the women of the School of Theology are eager to bring to the world the same good news. As the women found only the strips of linen cloth left after the burial of Jesus as the sign of the resurrection, so do we pick the strips of linen and create a stole which signifies that we are followers and disciples of Jesus Christ, the crucified, the resurrected.

In designing the linen stole for the Anna Howard Shaw Center, I kept in mind two purposes: to reflect the identity of the center and to raise funds to meet the financial needs of the center.

## NEW FACES AT THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Each fall, the Shaw Center looks forward to the influx of new students at the School of Theology. We extend a welcome to all new students, and to the new women in particular. Here's a look at one of the many new faces in our community.

Megan Hornbeek is a first-year student in the M.T.S. program, hailing from Oklahoma. She graduated from Oklahoma City University this past May with a B.A. in religion, and has brought to BU her love of learning. Megan says that her goal in life is to surround herself with wonderful women and men whose lives and stories allow her to grow and change. She herself has been encouraged by the strong women who surrounded her in her youth—women who inspired

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The double-sided (reversible) stole is made with two kinds of linen: white linen and natural unbleached linen (grayish color). On the white side toward the ends, there are two AHSC logos facing each other, as if dancing in the circle. The cut-through embroidered vine leaves symbolize constant spiritual growth. Each end of the stole is cut in the shape of three boxes symbolizing the Trinity. The neckline of the stole ends with a V-shape on the back and has cut-through embroidery. We also offer a matching handbag and a purse with the AHSC logo.

To view the items, please go to the AHSC website, [www.bu.edu/sth](http://www.bu.edu/sth), or e-mail [awaya@bu.edu](mailto:awaya@bu.edu).

To purchase the items, contact Larisa Waya at [awaya@bu.edu](mailto:awaya@bu.edu).

Thirty percent of the purchase goes to the AHSC. ♦



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Kristin White  
Margaret S. Wiborg  
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Lai Fan Wong

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## NEWS FROM THE STH WOMEN

Nancy Ammerman and her husband, Jack, joined the Boston University School of Theology family this fall, just one part of a very busy time for Nancy! On October 3 she served as a respondent to Martin Marty's lecture at the BU School of Public Health, and on October 14 she delivered the Loring Sabin Ensign Lecture as part of the annual Fall Convocation at Yale Divinity School. November 6-8 she convened a consultation on "Exploring Everyday Intersections of Sacred and Secular" at Boston University's Institute for the Study of Economic Culture. This event is a gathering of national and international guests who share their research on the differing histories of modern societies and of sectors within those societies. The aim is to examine both the types of religious consciousness and action

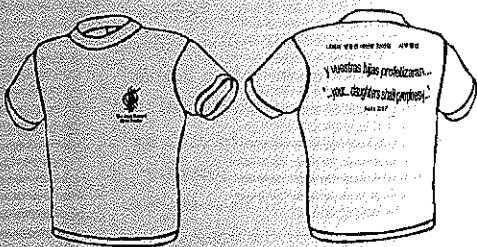
within societies and the specific secular competitors and constraints that are present. Dr. Ammerman's article "Religious Identities and Religious Institutions" was recently published in *Handbook of Sociology of Religion* (Michele Dillon, ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 207-24).

Carole Bohn has stepped down as director of the Danielsen Institute after 14 years and returned to full-time at the School of Theology. She will be teaching two courses in the spring: Social Identity and Oppression, and Relational and Ethical Issues for Ministry. In Carole's place, Nancy Devor has become the new director of the Danielsen Institute. Nancy, who has been adjunct faculty for the last several years, will not be teaching this year as she assumes her new duties. ♦



## Prophesy Daughters!

Now you can proudly wear your connection with the Anna Howard Shaw Center and all the ideals for which Anna stood, on your sleeve! Purchase an Anna Howard Shaw Center short-sleeved t-shirt (\$10) or long-sleeved t-shirt (\$15). The t-shirts are white with teal writing. If you wish to receive your items by mail, please add \$4 to the total. The front of the shirts carry the Shaw Center logo on the left, near the heart, and on the back is written, in English, Spanish, and Korean, the verse from Acts 2:17 "Your daughters shall prophesy."



## ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail me the following items:	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
T-Shirts (\$10) L only			
T-Shirts (Long sleeve) (\$15) XL only			
Shipping/Handling (\$4)			
Total Amount of Order			
Amount Enclosed			

Detach and mail this form with your check payable to the Anna Howard Shaw Center to:

The Anna Howard Shaw Center  
Boston University School of Theology  
745 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215

## NEW FACES AT THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

*Continued from page 5*

her to look and travel beyond the borders of the Bible belt. Megan is very happy in Boston and in the School of Theology. She especially appreciates the supportive and diverse community and the city at her doorstep, beckoning her to come explore. When she isn't studying, Megan likes to spend time with friends, family, and loved ones. She works in the Brookline Library and adores her position working with children as a nanny. She also loves to give of her time and learning in service to her community. Looking ahead, Megan says that she would like to teach, possibly combining her knowledge of Hebrew Bible and women's studies. She is also open to the idea of working in a women's center or a nonprofit organization. ♦

## I'M MOVING!

If you would like the Shaw Center to update your personal information, change or correct an address, or add/remove an address, please complete and return this form.

New/Correct Address     Add this Address     Remove this Address

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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The Anna Howard Shaw Center  
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## Here's how you can help carry on Anna's work...

The Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University School of Theology seeks to support women in ministry through the center's research, education, support, and advocacy. If you would like to learn more about the Anna Howard Shaw Center, please fill out this form and return it to the address below. Thank you for supporting women in ministry!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_

(work) \_\_\_\_\_

I have attended a Shaw Center event.  Yes  No

Please send me information about the Anna Howard Shaw Center.

Please add me to the Shaw Center mailing list.

To help underwrite the Shaw Center's operating costs, I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please make check or money order payable to the Anna Howard Shaw Center.)

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### ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER NEWSLETTER

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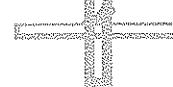
## Save the Date!

March 24-25, 2004

Anna Howard Shaw Center

Boston University  
School of Theology  
745 Commonwealth Ave.  
Boston, MA 02215

*Women and the  
Word 2004:  
Celebrating the Past,  
Honoring the Present,  
Envisioning the Future*



Twenty years ago, we began Women and the Word. On this, our twentieth anniversary, we invite you to join us as we hear from the past voices of Women and the Word. Join us as we celebrate the barriers and obstacles we have overcome. Join us as we look toward and hope for the future.

If you are unable to attend, but would like to make a special contribution to this twentieth-anniversary event, please contact our office.

For more information,  
call or e-mail the  
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E-mail: [shawctr@bu.edu](mailto:shawctr@bu.edu)



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