



BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Anna Howard Shaw Center

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Issue 1
Fall 2005

Weekly series draws students

What is it that students want from the Anna Howard Shaw Center?

This was just one of the many topics covered during the Fall 2005 luncheon series at the Anna Howard Shaw Center.

Topics covered ranged from what it's like to serve in a church, to Dr. Jennifer Knust's book; leaders ranged from pastors to yoga instructor to journalism professor.

Rev. Barbara Herber and Rev. Judith Kohatsu shared their experiences serving in churches by introducing themselves and

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Future speakers in series Spring 2006

- Jan. 26: Eriko Sase
- Feb. 2: Rev. Aida Irizarry-Fernandez
- Feb. 9: Rev. Laurel Scott
- Feb. 16: Gina Cogan
- Feb. 23: Rev. Sakena Young-Scaggs
- March 2: Student-led inclusive language discussion
- March 15-16: Women in the World conference
- March 23: Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker
- March 30: Rev. Imani-Sheila Newsome Camara
- April 6: Dr. Kathe Darr
- April 13: Student-led inclusive language discussion
- April 20: Dr. Shelly Rambo

Discussions begin at noon

From the director:

Examining immigrant church women

The Anna Howard Shaw Center has provided different research programs over the past 28 years along with many educational programs. Clergywomen Retention Studies and Women's Oral History programs are some of the successful projects that we have produced. This year, we decided to start a new research project, "Women in the Immigrant Churches."

In the twentieth century, nine million immigrants entered the United States. However, in the

past ten years, an additional ten million immigrants have arrived, the largest wave in the country's history. Immigrants have contributed to the history of the United States, helping to build both the American society and the American economy. Immigrants have arrived in this country at different times, coming from various countries, speaking many languages, and bringing with them their unique cultures. They have created incredible diversity in church ministry, expressing different

styles of worship, congregational lives, and theological languages within Christianity. Churches have been the main source of stability and support as these immigrants settle into the United States and acclimate themselves to new lives. These immigrant congregations empower ethnic people to struggle and survive together. Just as we are seeing a dramatic change in the new immigrant population, we are seeing a simi-

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New faculty member

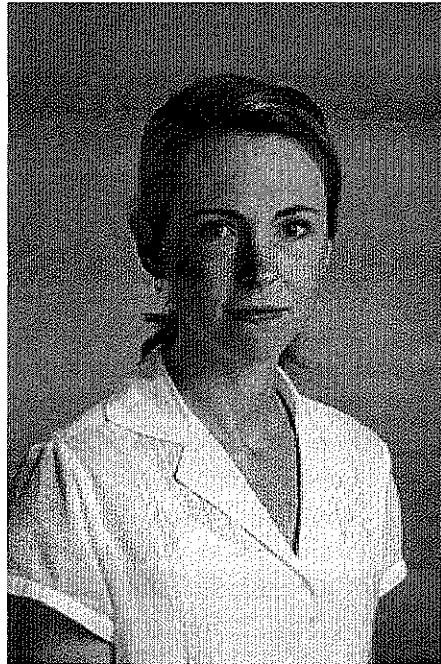
Dr. Jennifer Knust

New to the Boston University School of Theology staff this year is Dr. Jennifer Knust, Assistant Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins.

Knust's first book, *Abandoned to Lust: Sexual Slander and Ancient Christianity*, was released in November 2005.

"In my book, I argue that from its inception the Jesus movement was informed by a destructive tendency to define purity and 'the good' in gendered sexual terms. The brothers and sisters in Christ, Paul argued, must not display 'the passion of lust' like the Gentiles do, but avoid *porneia*, enslaving their "members" to Christ instead of to desire. Similarly, the author of the Gospel of Matthew suggested that the Pharisees were 'whitewashed tombs,' beautiful on the outside but filthy within, John of Patmos described Rome as a whore who fornicates with the kings of the earth, Justin Martyr claimed that the emperor and his heirs surrender to 'irrational passions,' Tatian asserted that the Greeks are utterly depraved.

"These are just a few examples. Again and again, the followers of Jesus diagnosed the problem of the world as sexual in character: rejecting the Christian God, outsiders are abandoned to their lusts; they engage in fornication, incest, homoerotic sex and adultery. The only possible cure to this 'problem' was joining the Jesus movement: through baptism



and incorporation into Christ's body, household or *genos* the followers of Jesus gain the ability to control their desires, their bodies and 'their' women, or so many early Christian authors argued. These authors had staked their claim to a privileged religious, cultural and moral identity on an assertion about the sexual restraint available 'in Christ' while defining the Other as dissolute and depraved."

"By observing that sexualized invective was both widespread and stereotypical, I do not intend to imply that early Christian sexualized invective had no meaning. Indeed, I would argue exactly the opposite: because the terms of the argument were familiar, the followers of Jesus found in them a superb resource for declaring their own social, political and religious superiority. 'Everyone else' failed

at a sexual morality they only pretended to support, various Christian others averred, an argument that required some shared understanding of the content of the 'morality' which everyone was supposedly seeking. At the same time, arguments grounded in assertions about Christian sexual self-control were designed, in part, to subvert the repressive, inherently exploitative mechanisms of imperial rule."

Knust is working on her second book, which deals with the story of Jesus and the adulteress in John 7:56-8:11. Knust is examining the many different forms of the story that appear in early antiquity and is arguing that the story was not excluded because of the depiction of the adulteress, but included because of the popularity of the story.

Looking at liturgy from the fifth century, Knust noticed the Patristic authors put anti-Jewish meaning where Jews were not part of the context: a sort of arguing that women were bad but Jews were worse. The attempt of the scribes to "clarify" what they thought the text said suggests Gospel books were viewed as living texts that were edited to reflect the communities and the scribes viewpoints.

"What concerns me at this moment of history would be justice and how to live a just life," said Knust.

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Anna Howard Shaw scholar

Rev. Laurel E. Scott

The new Anna Howard Shaw Center scholar is not a new face at the Boston University School of Theology or the center.

The Rev. Laurel E. Scott began her association with STH and the center in Fall 1999, working as the newsletter editor for three years and continuing to contribute following her graduation with a master's in divinity.

Scott is an ordained minister serving the Old West Methodist Church in Boston.

As the center's scholar, Scott is working on the "Women in the Immigrant Churches" research project. Scott is especially qualified for the project as she came to the United States from Barbados. Scott came to the United States to study communications at Brooklyn College, City University of New York.

The project will focus on three different populations, looking at how women make adjustments and how they use spiritual-

ity to adjust and thrive in new environments.

Scott will be focusing on Haitian and Ghanaian churches in Roslindale, returning to her home church in New York City to find Methodist churches. The decision was made to concentrate on one denomination to avoid polity.

Scott is a strong advocate for mentoring, citing how former center director Margaret Wiborg really helped her as a mentor.

Scott feels called to worker justice ministries focusing on immigrant rights and early childhood faith formation.

Her interest in early childhood started in 1999 while taking the class Church and Theology in Contemporary Society with Claire Wolfteich and Peter Berger. As part of the class, students had to write a prospectus to say what they were interested in, as Scott started she had five areas of interest and prayed about which one to choose. The proposal was submit-

ted one week before the shootings at Columbine.

Scott had to ask "Why is this happening now?," "How has the world changed to get to this point?," and "What's the church's role?"

Scott felt the church had been letting go of teaching and could see an inverse relation between church involvement in education and a decline in morality.

Scott proposes that it is in the church's interest to offer alternatives to public education. When the church released that responsibility and gave consent to public education, education lost the moral component and authority that churches had when churches ran schools.

"As we move forward, Church has to regain some of the ground that it has lost so that society will regard morality and character education as one of the building blocks for children: for all humanity."

Anna Howard Shaw work study

Lisa Jo Bezner

Lisa Jo Bezner, a first-year MDiv student, comes to the Boston University School of Theology after 14 years working in daily newspapers.

Bezner worked most recently as a copy editor/page designer at the *Beatrice* (Neb.) *Daily Sun*. Prior to that she

worked at the *Santa Fe New Mexican* and *Desert Dispatch* in Barstow, Calif.

Bezner earned her bachelor's in creative writing from the College of Santa Fe in 2001.

Bezner was born in Duncan, Okla., and lived in Arizona, New York, Kansas, South Korea, Cali-

fornia, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Nebraska.

Bezner finds it difficult to write about herself in the third person and has a odd sense of humor. She misses her cat, Osiris, who has taken up residence in Missouri. She also likes to knit, sew, read and watch "Homicide."

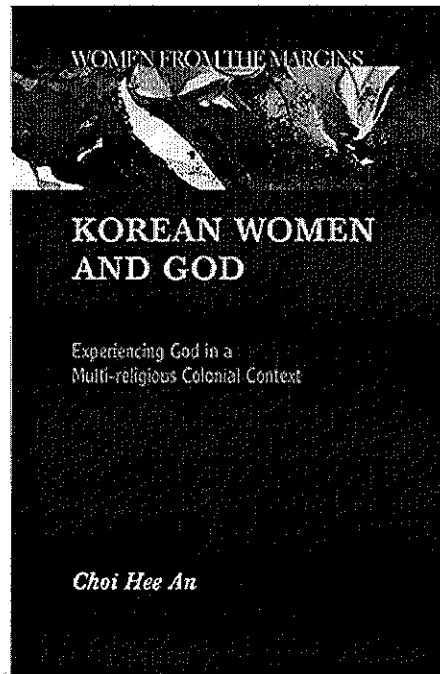
Book review

Korean Women and God

Choi Hee An, Director of the Anna Howard Shaw Center and a faculty member of the Boston University School of Theology wrote *Korean Women and God: Experiencing God in a Multi-religious Colonial Context*. In Korea, 25 percent of the population is Christians of which 70 percent are women (p.44). Choi analyzes Korean Christian women's complex and ambivalent understanding of God with the relations to multi-religious and multi-dimensional (hierarchical and patriarchal) society.

Choi's examination is divided into four parts. First, Choi provides historical background of Korean multi-religious society by reviewing Shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism. After its entry to Korea in 1784, Christian churches struggled to be accepted for over a century. It was gradually absorbed into the multi-religions in Korea and became "Koreanized Christianity," which operates within the parameters of hierarchical and patriarchal traditions that put Korean Christian women in tension between freedom and oppression (pp.43-44).

Second, Choi examines Korean women's voices of their social roles (daughters, mothers, wives, and daughters-in-law) by using multi-dimensional analysis and illustrates that "their understanding of God can damage, embrace, or re-create their self-images" (p.2). Choi also sheds light on Korean women's roles in the context of Korea's national development and international



relations. By closely examining the history and socio-political context of Korean women's sexuality, including Korean comfort women (sexual slaves to the Japanese military government during Japanese colonization of Korea in 1910-1945) and *yanggonju* (Korean women prostitutes for the U.S. military after Korean War in 1950-53), she illustrates that the process of colonialism led and manipulated Korean women as victims of this painful history (p.159).

Third, by taking this analysis into account, Choi defines Korean Christian women's wounds and sufferings as *han*. *Han* is a fundamental feeling of defeat, resignation, the tenacity of life, unresolved resentments, or grudges (Suh Nam Dong, "Toward a Theology of *Han*," in *Minjung Theology - People as the Subjects of History*, ed. The Commission on

Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981, 58). She critically reviews *minjung* theologians' approaches to *han* in its few discussions of women's freedom and equality (p.98). By focusing on women's *han*, she suggests new understandings of God (as family, liberator, and friend) to empower women to transform their *han* (pp.130-131).

Lastly, Choi demonstrates pastoral care and counseling on home/funeral/hospital visits with peer support as keys to empower Korean Christian women to turn the negative images of God and self into the positive ones (pp.156-160). They transform "their illogical and incredible faith in God" to "their own spiritual transforming power" and "undo their *han* and find meaning in their lives for themselves as well as for God and others" (pp.159-160).

Two major significances of the book shall be cited. First, Choi focuses on those who consider themselves as sinned. This is the issue in which Andrew Sung Park indicates to be "largely overlooked" in the church (*The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993, 10). As an Asian woman theologian, Choi dexterously illustrates and uncovers the Korean Christian women's paradoxical and

School of Theology faculty news

Nancy Ammerman

Attended the meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, an international interdisciplinary group of scholars of which she is the 2005 president. Her presidential address, titled "Becoming a Community of Scholars: Practicing the Study of Religion," included contributions from a diverse group of four younger scholars and focused on the importance of listening to diverse voices.

Hee An Choi

Book: *Korean Women and God: Experiencing God in a Multi-religious Colonial Context*, Orbis Books, 2005.

Katheryn (Kathe) Darr

Back in the classroom after a spring sabbatical spent on proverbs research and the beginnings of her new book, *Prophets, Proverbs and Performance: Ancient Israelite Wisdom in Action*. She continues to serve as Chair of the AHSC Board of Advisors, as Chair of Area A (Biblical and Historical Studies), and as the STH representative to the University Faculty Council. In the spring, Kathe plans to offer a course on Ezekiel.

Jennifer Knust

Abandoned to Lust: Sexual Slavery and Ancient Christianity (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005) is now available.

Dana Robert

Publications: "Widows and Service," in World Vision's "Faith in Action" Study Bible, ed. Terry Muck (Zondervan, 2005); "The Great Commission in an Age of Globalization," in Stephen Gunter and Elaine Robinson, eds., *Considering the Great Commission: Evangelism and Mission in the Wesleyan Spirit* (Abingdon, 2005); "What Happened to the Christian Home? The Missing Component of Mission Theory?" *Missiology* (July 2005). Recent and forthcoming lectures: Edward George and Olivia Hotchkiss Day Lecture. Yale Divinity School. July 8, 2005. New Haven, CT. The topics of this lecture was "St. Patrick and Bernard Mizeki: Missionary Saints and the Creation of Christian Communities." Nov. 12, 2005, at the Pruitt Symposium on World Christianity at Baylor University: "World Christianity as a Woman's Movement."

Karen Westerfield Tucker

"Music for Christian Funerals:

Theological and Pastoral Reflections." *Liturgy* 21 (2006) 55-62. "North America." *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen Westerfield Tucker, 586-632. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Editor with Geoffrey Wainwright. *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006

Claire Wolfteich

Co-Director of the new Center for Practical Theology at Boston University School of Theology, looks forward to involving women pastoral leaders and STH alumni in the center's work. Dr. Wolfteich published an article in the journal *Spiritus* titled "Devotion and the Struggle for Justice in the Farm Worker Movement: Practical Theological Approaches to Teaching and Research." She also published an essay and two entries ("Spirituality and Work", "Spirituality and Public Life") in *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*. In addition, Dr. Wolfteich was recently elected to the Executive Committee of the International Academy of Practical Theology.

WOMEN IN THE WORLD 2006

PASSION AND VOCATION

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S ISSUES IN MINISTRY

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, March 15 and Thursday, March 16!

Guest speakers: Dr. Jennifer Knust, Dr. Shelley Rambo and Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker

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letting students ask questions ranging from "How much will the church consider my spouse's job?" and "What's it like to be a single woman in a church?" to "How hard is it to do a funeral?"

Pastor Kristen White addressed the issues she has dealt with in serving a multicultural as it comes together and the process of ordination.

The largest crowd gathered for Knust's book, *Abandoned to Lust: Sexual Slander and Early Christianity*, with 25 people packed into the center.

Susan Amick provided a meditation session just as the semester started to get stressful.

Wrapping up the series was Michael J. Fuhlhage, assistant professor of journalism at the University of Missouri, who spoke on the language of inclusion as it applies to the social justice context.

Among the things students said they wanted from the center was to continue outreach to global Christianity, to provide

"Thank you to all
who create this
peaceful place. It has
been a blessing
on this stressful
week."

Katherine Adams
First-year student

opportunities to discuss inclusive language; how to minister across sexual boundaries and to help ministry students to appreciate each other as women in the spirit of collaboration and not competition.

But best of all, was a note left during midterms that expressed one first-year student's thoughts about the center:

"Thank you to all who create this peaceful place. It has been a blessing on this stressful week.

"Peace, Katherine Adams"

KNUST

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Knust comes to BU from College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, where she was an assistant professor from Fall 2000 to Spring 2005.

For the 2005-06 years, Knust is teaching New Testament Greek and leading a Pastoral and Spiritual Formation group. Knust taught Gender and Family in Earliest Christianity in the Fall and will be teaching Varieties of Early Christianity in the Spring.

Knust earned her doctorate and master's of philosophy in religion at Columbia University in New York; a master's of divinity from Union Theological Seminary; and her bachelor's in psychology from the University of Illinois in Urbana.

Knust is an ordained American Baptist (USA) pastor.

Knust was born in Burbank, Calif., and moved every 2-3 years because her father worked for Allstate. Knust has lived in California, Oregon, Washington, Illinois, New Jersey and Connecticut.

REVIEW *continued from page 4*

swaying perception of God and self in relation to their recognition of sin. The step-by-step analysis and suggested pastoral practice targeted those who were previously little studied would be affluent source for ministers, theologians, theological students who deal with Korean Christian women.

Second, Choi's examination presents a clear answer of who undoes *han*. Korean wording *han puri* or han-undoing is vague in

who or what undoes it. Her analysis reveals that it is the woman who holds *han*, who undoes it through spiritual empowerment by God and a self-assurance of forgiveness. She states: "As women embrace God to rediscover themselves, they find a God who heals their wounded hearts ... With this God women can transform not only their own selves, but also their culture and society" (p.95).

Choi's resourceful and in-

sightful book ought to be read by church members, students and professionals of various disciplines, e.g. Religious Studies, Gender Studies, Cultural Anthropology, of not only Korean but also other societies' women who are physically and psychologically wounded in their personal, social, cultural and political relationships.

Review by Eriko Sase,

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lar dramatic change in our church. However, we still know little about their religious styles and cultures. Studies have examined member ethnicity, theological orientation, organizational structures, location within the city, social class and so forth, but very few studies explore women in the immigrant churches, even though they are the active members in their congregations.

Last year, we provided a year-long education program, "A Mosaic of Voices: A Multicultural Biblical Study Program," exploring multicultural approaches to biblical and theological scholarship. By extension, we realize that, if we intend to prepare people for multicultural ministries, we ought to learn different ministerial contexts and develop the broad views that the United States faces in the twenty-first century. With this critical awareness of our situation in ministry, we seek to understand different views of theological and socio-

cultural understandings of ministry and want to lead this inquiry. Therefore, we decided to study the role of immigrant women in the church and the ways that the church helped and hindered women as they settled in the U.S. Considering the importance of women's leadership in immigrant churches, we begin our project with an analysis of women's roles in local immigrant churches where women's participation has been actively shown. We try to understand immigrant women's economic/political/ social situations in their previous contexts and the current contexts. And then we want to learn their spiritual and cultural situations in immigrant churches.

This study will explore both the helpful and hurtful experiences of women's struggles within the church and provide information about different church functions in relation to their ethnic identity in the United States. It will also show how the church

impacts women's faith and confidence in different ethnic groups. In our close relationship with the Boston University School of Theology and the United Methodist Church, we will look at various congregations in different traditions and prepare to meet the needs of current and future ministry. Our short-term goal is to learn the needs of immigrant women in the local church and to provide resources that help these women recognize their own strength and leadership within their congregations. Our ultimate goal is to advocate their struggle and strengthen their voice not only to God but also to this society.

The Shaw Center is devoted to providing great research and educational programs for people who are in the ministry. We believe this project will help many future ministers, current ministers and churches understand the importance of multicultural ministry and prepare them to develop a new vision of ministry.

DONORS *continued from page 7*

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