ISSN 1661-3317

Joy Schroeder, Kristine Henriksen Garroway, Susanne Scholz, Sara Parks, Shively Smith, Carly Daniel-Hughes and Kay Higuera Smith

Recovering Female Interpreters of the Bible.
A Panel Discussion at the SBL Annual Meeting 2019 in San Diego

---

Abstract

Im Jahr 2019 feierte die Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) die offizielle Aufnahme von weiblichen Mitgliedern in diese renommierte, 1880 in den Vereinigten Staaten gegründete wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft, da vor 125 Jahren Anna Ely Rhoads 1894 das erste weibliche Mitglied wurde. Heute bringen Wissenschaftlerinnen verschiedener Ethnien, Rassen und geopolitischer Herkunft ihre Forschungen und professionelle Arbeit in die SBL ein. Während des jährlichen SBL-Treffens erinnerten mehrere weibliche SBL-Mitglieder, deren Forschungen und Lehre sich auf die wissenschaftlichen Gebiete der Archäologie, der Hebräischen Bibel, des frühen Judentums, des Neues Testaments und des frühen Christentums beziehen, an die Geschichte der Frauen in den mit der SBL verbundenen Forschungsgebieten. In ihren Beiträgen bedenken sie die folgenden Fragen: Vor welchen Herausforderungen standen und stehen SBL-Wissenschaftlerinnen? Welche Möglichkeiten hatten und haben sie? Welche wissenschaftlichen Leistungen erbrachten und erbringen sie? Einige der Mitwirkenden reflektieren diese Fragen, indem sie die Geschichten einzelner Wissenschaftlerinnen erzählen, weil sie zum Beispiel selbst von deren Forschungen beeinflusst wurden oder weil diese Wissenschaftlerinnen Pionierarbeit geleistet haben. Manche der Vortragenden referieren über vergessene Biographien oder sie verbinden ihre eigenen Biographien mit den wissenschaftlichen Laufbahnen der Wissenschaftlerinnen, die in den verschiedenen Bereichen der Bibelforschung arbeiteten oder weiterhin arbeiten. Die folgenden Beiträge geben der interessierten Öffentlichkeit die Möglichkeit, die im November 2019 vorgetragenen Präsentationen nun erstmals nachzulesen.

ISSN 1661-3317

1. Joy Schroeder: Women and the Society of Biblical Literature: Commemorating 125 Years

In 1894, Anna Ely Rhoads (1862-1943), a Euro-American biblical scholar who held a master's degree from Bryn Mawr College, became a member of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis (as it was called at the time). An expert in New Testament and patristic Greek literature, she was the first woman invited to join what had been an all-male society, "a small guild of East Coast Euro-American scholars."[1] Later that decade, three more women joined the society: Rebecca Corwin (1862-1932), who taught Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and Assyrian cuneiform at Mount Holyoke College; Emilie Grace Briggs (1867-1944), who – uncredited – authored many entries for the magisterial *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (1906), co-edited by her father Charles Briggs; and Mary Emma Woolley (1863-1947), president of Mount Holyoke. It was not until 1913 that a woman, Eleanor D. Wood, would give a paper at a meeting of the Society.[2]

Though the number of female members grew over the first two decades of the twentieth century, women's involvement in the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) was not a story about steady progression. According to Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, by 1920, at "the crest of the first wave of American feminism," ten percent of the members were female. "Afterward, [the percentage] slowly declined until it achieved a low of 3.5 percent in 1970."[3] It was not until the 1980s that significant numbers of women were able to enter the academy, receive Ph.D. degrees in biblical studies and related fields, and obtain academic positions. In *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature,* a volume edited by Nicole Tilford that commemorates 125 years of women's membership, a wide array of authors – some of them feminist pioneers – reflected on their challenges: sexism, racism, anti-Judaism, and other forms of discrimination during graduate studies, on the job market, in the academy, and at SBL meetings. They also offered proposals for a more fully inclusive vision for the future of biblical studies as a discipline and for SBL as a scholarly guild.[4]

At the 2019 SBL Annual Meeting held in San Diego, the Recovering Female Interpreters of the Bible section, a program unit dedicated to retrieving the history of women biblical interpreters prior to the second wave of feminism, sponsored a session honoring 125 years of female membership in the Society. Invited panelists spoke about the contributions and legacies of pioneering women in the fields of biblical archeology, Hebrew scripture, early

Judaism, New Testament, and early Christianity. In the papers that follow, you will read words of tribute, testimony, and challenge: tribute to these intrepid foremothers and the inspiration they offered to those who followed in their footsteps; testimony to their struggles; and challenge to SBL members to be tireless and vigilant in their advocacy for all who may be marginalized.

Joy A. Schroeder (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame) is professor of Church History at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A, where she serves on the faculty of Trinity Lutheran Seminary and the Department of Religion and Philosophy. Schroeder chairs the steering committee of the Recovering Female Interpreters of the Bible SBL program unit.

2. Kristine Henriksen Garroway: Digging Up the Past. The History of Women Archaeologists in the Society of Biblical Literature

In 1894, Anna Ely Rhoads became the first woman to join the Society of Biblical Literature. Soon, other women joined and started not only to attend, but to present their own scholarship. Particularly meaningful for me was the presentation given by Professor Eleanor D. Wood in 1913. Wood, like myself, was a scholar engaged in both Bible and archaeology. I owe much to Wood as she paved the way for archaeologists in the Society.

Due to my position as a scholar of both Bible and archaeology, I was asked to present at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature on the topic: "The History of Women Archaeologists in the Society." Alongside the task of sharing some of my own story, I was also asked to answer the following questions: What challenges have women archaeologists faced? What opportunities have they had? What perspectives have they brought to the wider field? Looking back over the history of women archaeologists in the Society of Biblical Literature shows that while some things have changed, other things (unfortunately) remain the same.

In debating where to begin and how to shape the paper, I decided to weave my own story with that of the women archaeologists in the Society that have influenced me. This approach has the benefit of making the stories relatable, as well as covering women both past and present. To do so requires starting at the beginning. The beginning for me was college, where freshman year I dove head-first into a biblical archaeology major. While I had grown

up reading and studying the Bible, my only real background with archaeology at that point was through the adventures of two fictional characters: Indiana Jones and Agatha Christie's Hercules Poirot. I soon learned that Agatha Christie was married to an archaeologist and the following quote went up on my dorm room door:

> "An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older she gets the more interested he is in her."[5]

I should note that I did not marry an archaeologist; I married a scholar, and they are okay too.

Pioneering Women

My love for reading and archaeology soon led me to the delightful series by Elizabeth Peters starring a sharp witted, wickedly smart, and independent, British *woman archaeologist* named Amelia Peabody. As I came to learn, many of Amelia's exploits were fashioned after real life people. Amelia's spirit of adventure and Wanderlust is akin to that of Gertrude Bell.[6] Like the fictional character, Bell also kept a little pistol on her persons for "times of uncertainty." Bell is known by her sobriquet as the "Queen of the Dessert". She was born in an age where women were to marry and become proper housewives (b. 1868 – d. 1926). Defying standards of her time, she never married, fluently spoke six languages, and took up a career. She was many things, not the least of which was an archaeologist. While not a lead excavator, she did consult on digs in Turkey and Northern Syria and travel widely through the Arab world. We can thank Bell for forging a path for female archaeologists in the Near East.

While Amelia Peabody is a lot like Bell, she is quite similar to another pioneering archaeologist who is described as follows:

> "Although she had been born into the heart of the English scholarly community, and had all the help that influence and connections could provide, she had become one of the foremost excavators in Great Britain through hard work, commitment, and a flair for dirt archaeology ... In many ways an uncomplicated and conventional person, she led an unconventional life, devoting herself to her career and rising to the top of her field when it was unusual for a woman to have a career at all…."[7]

This excerpt comes from the biography of Dame Kathleen Kenyon. Known for her excavations at Jericho and Jerusalem, she is best remembered for giving us the Kenyon-Wheeler method of excavating. Kenyon has arguably gone down in the history books as "the greatest field archaeologist of her generation and the greatest woman archaeologist of her century."[8] Kenyon's work in the field opened the door for women, should they desire, to move beyond assistants or artists. Her excavations and reports on them ranged from technical to popular.[9] While not a member of SBL, subsequent generations of SBL members, women and men alike, were certainly influenced by her work.[10]

One woman who had the privilege of knowing Kenyon was Nancy Lapp. And it is perhaps with Nancy that Amelia Peabody holds the most in common. Like Amelia, Nancy is extremely sharp, struggled with the expectations that society had for women, and had an archaeologist as a husband.

Nancy studied under Frank Moore Cross and Ernest Wright. She impressed them so much they encouraged her to go on and study with Albright. Nancy became Albright's first female student, and for her student job she became Albright's first female secretary. She met her beloved Paul in their first year of studies and the two of them went on to have many adventures before Paul's untimely death in 1970. Nancy gave a talk this past spring at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary's Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology about her life titled "Adventures and Discoveries from Half a Century of Life as an Archaeologist". It is up on YouTube and I encourage you all to spend an hour alongside Nancy as she and Paul cross the world by boat, car, and train.[11]

I will relate a few anecdotes from her life and words of wisdom that I drew out of the talk. After their second year at Johns Hopkins, they both applied for a scholarship to study with the American Schools of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, what we now call the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research. Paul received a scholarship and Nancy was told that she deserved one too … but it should really go to the male head of the household. Nancy comments this was not the last time she heard things like this. But still, she persisted. On excavations, Nancy undertook the task of site recorder, and later in her career went on to teach at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, lead tours to the Holy Lands, and curate the Bible Lands Museum (now the Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology) in Pittsburgh. Her enduring contribution to academia, however, comes by way of the numerous publication reports left behind by Paul that she completed, as well as the guidance she offered in passing the torch to the next generation of students that had studied under Paul.[12]

Influential Women Biblical Archaeologists

As my training progressed, I again I found myself confronted with Indiana Jones, but this time it was in a popular magazine. *People Magazine* ran a story in 1981 titled: "Eric and Carol Meyers Didn't Dig the Ark in *Raiders*, They Found the Real Thing." This article pictured Eric and Carol dressed as Indiana Jones and Marion Ravenwood from the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. [13] It was the first time I encountered scholars who had crossed into popular media and I found their story fascinating.

Like Nancy Lapp, Carol Meyers married an archaeologist. According to *People Magazine*, this occurred after only knowing each other for nine weeks. Now, let's be honest, it is not very often one can say, "according to *People Magazine*" about a biblical scholar and archaeologist. This just goes to show the broad audience whom Carol has been able to reach in her career. In the chapter she contributed to *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature*, Carol reflects on how her career started. She says, "Let me be clear. I did not set out to enter the guild of biblical scholarship. It was an accident, or perhaps a serendipitous byproduct, of my college experience."[14] She goes on to explain how from her very first bible class her freshman year at Wellesley she was hooked. A passion for archaeology soon followed. Carol described her first excavation at a pre-historic site in Wyoming as: "hard, tedious work, much less adventurous than I had imagined."[15] This is a sentiment to which many who have excavated can relate. She further stated that it was "nonetheless exciting – intellectually exciting to learn about people who lived thousands of years ago by painstakingly uncovering and analyzing the material remains of their daily lives."[16]

In thinking about Carol, I thought about the following question. "What perspectives has she brought to the field?" It is hard to say if Carol's exegetical work stems from her archaeological acumen or vise-versa. Regardless, her well-known books, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* and *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* demonstrate how one can interpret the biblical text alongside archaeological realia.[17]

In pursuing a career that she called "a field that was a male bastion in the late 1960s" Carol credits the strong female role models she had at Wellesley in setting her up for success. These early female mentors made a big difference in Carol's life. Carol states:

> "I had confidence that I was as competent as any man for whatever the position was and thus would willingly accept any opportunity to serve an organization or institution

> in which I believed. Moreover, I felt it important to honor the policy of an organization or institution, be it SBL or my university, to work towards inclusion of women in all facets of its activities."[18]

True to her word, she has made every effort to "pay it forward." Carol served as the vice-president and president of the Society of Biblical Literature in 2012 and 2013 respectively. She has also received the Outstanding Service in Mentoring award (2008) given by the Society of Biblical Literature's Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession. Her role as a mentor has been in an official capacity during her time at Duke; but, she has also, as I have experienced first-hand, mentored in a non-official capacity, graciously reading essays and offering suggestions and guidance to younger colleagues in the field. This kind of collegiality is much needed in the field, especially when it comes to showing solidarity between women of all academic ranks.

North Carolina is also home to another scholar interested in ancient synagogues and Jewish life: Jodi Magness. Since 2011 she and her team have been excavating a synagogue at the site of Huqoq in upper Galilee. Her interests include everything from the archaeology of Jerusalem, Qumran, and Masada, to the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Roman army in the East.[19] And she too has had her moments in the media limelight. Jodi was interviewed about her work at Qumran as part of *The Story of God with Morgan Freeman*, a series put on by the National Geographic Society.[20]

In an email interview with Jodi I asked if she would share some of her experiences regarding her challenges, opportunities, and perspectives. Jodi started out by saying she feels extremely fortunate to have had the opportunities she has been given. Realizing not everyone is presented with the same opportunities she has had, such as a Mellon Post-Doc Fellowship and her positions at Tufts and UNC, she said that she has worked very hard and tried to make the most of them.

> "I want to do what I can to support the future of archaeology, which is why I ran for the office of President of the AIA. I consider service to the profession to be an important part of becoming an established academic."[21]

Giving back to the field is one of the ways that she has tried to repay the opportunities given her.

Jodi describes herself as motivated by a curiosity about the past and wanting to know what the science tells us about the finds. Noting that everyone brings a different and unique perspective, she pauses when considering just how to describe her own perspective. She describes her work as scientific and not driven by a faith-based agenda. Which, she hastens to say is not because she seeks to undermine anyone else's faith or religious beliefs, but that she herself does not have a religious agenda. Her success as an academic comes from a strong and supportive network of family, especially her parents and husband, as well as friends, and colleagues.

In commenting on obstacles in the field, she says**:**

> "I do feel as though I have dealt with my share of obstacles in terms of being a woman – and especially a petite American woman – working in Israel (especially when I was younger). However, I have always tried to compete on the same playing field as everyone else, and have always hoped that ultimately, I would be judged by the quality of my work and not my gender."[22]

To that I say, AMEN! Yet, the very fact that she referenced discrimination based on gender means women archaeologists today are facing some of the same obstacles that Nancy Lapp confronted in the 1950s.

Another scholar that has been influential in my studies is Susan Ackerman. While I first encountered Susan's work through her writings on popular forms of Israelite religion in *Under Every Green Tree*,[23] her scholarly interests as she describes them are quite broad: they have "generally been the people or the religious behaviors that the biblical writers were either not interested in or actually didn't like."[24] Since there are quite a few of these people and practices, Susan's work has spanned everything from women's life-cycle rituals, household religion, reproductive magic, child sacrifice, to various female biblical characters. When asked in an interview with Dartmouth News how she came to this field she said:

> "As an undergraduate, my adviser said, 'Liberal arts is for exploring; take courses in things you know nothing about.' One of the things I decided I knew nothing about was religion. I grew up in Arkansas in a very nonreligious family, and all I knew about religion was what my family said, which was dismissive, or what my peers said, which was a very literalistic reading of the Bible. So I took "Religion 1" and loved it. It was a

> way of thinking about the Bible as a body of literature created by an ancient people who were trying to express something about their religiosity."[25]

Susan has brought this perspective with her in her work. While the religions and cultures she studies might be millennia old, her approach to the texts make them relevant and interesting to all different kinds of audiences. She weaves her interpretation of the biblical text alongside the archaeological realia. For example, mirrors are not simply a means of checking one's hair, but for warding off demons. Brief references to clothing in the bible become transformed into a discussion regarding women and the textile industry. And the women in the book of Judges are not minor characters but powerful warriors, dancers, seductresses and queens.[26] Like many of her colleagues, Susan has given back to academia. She has served various positions on the boards of numerous professional societies, and just finished serving as the first woman president of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

After completing my B.A., I went on to pursue graduate work in Bible and archaeology. In my first year of coursework I took a course in Jerusalem on the ancient city of Jerusalem. The highlight of that class was studying the ancient tombs that surrounded the city. That course changed my life, as it set me on my current scholarly trajectory. I have heard my students describe me as "Professor Garroway, she studies dead babies."[27] I know that sounds a bit macabre, but I always say that one can learn so much about the past from the dead. This is something that I first learned through the work of Elizabeth Bloch-Smith.[28] Her work on Israelite burial styles, rites, and locations first opened the door for me to think about the presentation of the dead as witness to the lives of the *living* members of society who buried them.

When I asked Liz if she had an anecdote she would like to share, she chose one that speaks both to the challenges and opportunities she has had as a woman in the field:

> "From the first season at Ashkelon, in 1985, Larry Stager permitted me to dig while pregnant and then allowed me to bring the kids from infants through age five and he even covered a significant part of the cost. Had he not allowed me to dig while pregnant and contributed to the costs, I could not have continued in the field and would have lost my 'place' to others. When I started bringing two kids with me, I also brought a home baby-sitter who took care of the kids while I was in the field. Returning from the field, I resumed care for the kids – no free-time and no rest for the

> weary (though most of the baby-sitters helped out and volunteers on the dig often took the kids for short periods). I wanted to take care of the kids, also giving them the benefit of life in another country with a different language and culture, while continuing to progress in archaeology. Larry made it possible but it's a lot to manage if the dig director doesn't help out. Work demands might be adjusted or made more flexible to accommodate the demands of parenting while on a dig."[29]

She mentioned that Larry once commented that having little ones on the dig had a normalizing and calming effect and suggested this was something for dig directors to consider. Encouragement and support early on allowed Liz to continue working in the field. She has dug the length of Israel from Ashkelon, to Tel Dor, all the way up to Tel Abel Beth Maacah.

Not every dig is so supportive of mothers coming with children, and there are often other complicating factors affecting a return to the field after giving birth. Beth Alpert Nakahi addresses some of these tensions in her contribution to *Women in the Society of Biblical Literature.* She discusses her time as a graduate student digging at Tel el-Wawiyat. Like Carol, Beth was hooked on dirt archaeology from the start. However, after the birth of her first child she found it difficult to return to the field. For one, most digs occur during the summer months. With no school in session summer child-care becomes an issue. For graduate students and non-tenure track academics, paying for child-care might not be possible or desirable. Additionally, for those without a tenure-track job that secures a steady income, many in academia chose to pick up an extra job, such as teaching summer school. Quitting a job during the summer to dig might not be in every women's best interest. Beth comments:

> "The expense of international travel and related costs, coupled with the loss of summer school earnings, were more than I could justify. And, of course, the costs were both personal and professional. As recently as a few years ago, my commitment to archaeology was still being questioned by (male) colleagues who thought that if I had been serious, I would have stuck with field work."[30]

She goes on to discuss her dissertation topic and course of research, both which were focused on archaeology that could be done from the library and not the field.[31] I too chose a library-based dissertation for the same reasons and have received similar remarks from (male)

colleagues. The tension highlighted here between those active in the field and those who are not is real. In fact, some disparagingly refer to non-field archaeological work by the term "arm-chair archaeology," as if this kind of work was for the lazy, prissy, non-serious archaeologist.

As the fictional character Bob Wiley said: "I'm doing the work, I'm baby-stepping."[32] The field has made steps forward, not in one giant leap, but in small, steady steps. The Society of Biblical Literature has instituted the Commission on the Status of Women, a standing, not ad-hoc committee.[33] For her part, Alpert Nakhai has carved out space for women to discuss their experiences in archaeology at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR), documented the status of women in the field during her time on the (ASOR) Board Nominations Committee, and also served as the inaugural chair for the "Initiative on the Status of Women in ASOR."[34] This work is important seeing as the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Society of Biblical Literature have held their annual meetings back to back in the same city, and many women archaeologists in the Society of Biblical Literature also attend the American Schools of Oriental Research meetings. Through her work, Beth has brought a voice to women archaeologists who are active in fieldwork, as well as those who engage archaeology through other avenues.

Brief "Shout Outs" to Other Influential Women Archaeologists

While not every mother returns to the field, there are some who do. In getting to know Cynthia Shafer Elliot through her work on households, food preparation and gender, I found she has been able to regularly commit to summer digs.[35] She is currently at Tel Abel Beth Maacah. She told me about her mentorship of young, female students whom she takes with her to dig in a program she helped develop called #Jessupdigsisrael. She calls them "junior biblical scholars and archaeologists of the Southern Levant in the making!"[36] She has had several go on to MA and now Ph.D. programs, demonstrating the power of mentorship as the next generation continues to chip away at the proverbial "glass ceiling".

There are so many other female archaeologists in the society that have influenced me. Since I cannot name them all, a few shout outs will have to suffice. Deborah Cantrell is a woman from whom I learned a great deal about horses and tri-partite buildings. More importantly, I learned that your passions, what you do in everyday life, can provide insights into the past. Her passion for raising horses and knowledge of how horses behave have

changed the way that scholars think about the "stable hypothesis" with respect to the tri-partite buildings at Tel Megiddo, Tel Gezer, and Lachish.[37] Erin Darby tackled the establishment and pushed forward the study of Judean Pillar Figurines, demonstrating that there are always new ways to look at an artifact and new insights to be found. She suggested these statues were held and perhaps waved in an apotropaic manner to ward off demons from entering the house.[38] And my own mentor, Nili Fox told me to keep going and not give up on the dissertation. But perhaps, more importantly for this paper, she encouraged me to attend the Society of Biblical Literature yearly, because the things I would learn and the people I would meet would be important for my career. She was right, and nearly twenty years later we continue to meet up for a meal every November.

What I have found most heartening in researching and interviewing these archaeologists is first, their honesty in calling attention to those things in the field that need changing. Transformation cannot happen without frank discussion followed by action. Second, I was overcome by the warmth and acceptance I experienced from each of the women I interviewed. This project allowed me to make personal connections with scholars whom I had previously known only through their research. It goes without saying that connections and support are a critical part of surviving academia. Especially important are the relationships formed between women. Many of the women mentioned here share (for better or worse) similar stories with respect to gender discrimination and striving not to be considered "less than." Bonding together, then, is vital.

In Closing

Upon the end of my first international trip twenty-five years ago, which also happened to be my first archaeological dig in Israel, I remember feeling saddened that it was all coming to an end. The land, the mysteries that lay underground, the connections with the bible were all so exciting and I could not believe we had to leave them behind. I remember expressing this to my roommate that summer, my good friend and colleague Deirdre Dixon Fulton. She replied with the wisdom of a twenty-year old: "You know, you can always come back." You can always come back. While she was half joking, those five words had a profound impact on me. I, like all the women I have discussed have gone back. I have dug at Ashkelon, Tel Dor, and Tel Dan and my Marshalltown trowel is still sharp, waiting for my next dig. Until that time, I continue to engage with the bible and archaeology both in the classroom, as I teach classes on

archaeology, and in my own research on children in the biblical world. In this way, I "go back" to the field daily. Whether your circumstances only allow you to return in a figurative sense, to engage archaeology from your desk, or whether you have the opportunity for a literal return to excavate, the field is waiting for you. Just as importantly, the Society of Biblical Literature is waiting for you, waiting to support you and waiting for you to bring your insights to academia.

In closing, if you want to wish someone a long life in Hebrew we say *ad mea v'esrim*, "until 120". To us I say: *ad meah v'esrim … v'chamesh* – to 125! May the next 125 years find the Society of Biblical Literature enriched through even more scholarship, comradery, and leadership by women.

Kristine Henriksen Garroway, Ph.D., is the Visiting Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible at the Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles. Her research focuses on children in the biblical world from archaeological and textual perspectives. She is the author of *Growing Up in Ancient Israel* (SBL 2018) and *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household* (Eisenbrauns 2014).

3. Susanne Scholz: Reflecting on the Feminist Hebrew Bible Scholarship of Phyllis Trible, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, and Judith McKinlay

I am the daughter of a proud lineage of feminist Hebrew Bible mothers. I had to travel far and learn to speak and to write in a language other than my German mother's tongue to earn the privilege to align with my feminist Hebrew Bible mothers' scholarship and teaching. When I began my academic studies in Protestant Theology at the German public university of Mainz (FYI: in Germany all universities are "public" or government financed), only one woman professor taught there. She was a New Testament scholar and her name was Luise Schottroff (1934–2015). I will always remember Professor Schottroff with gratitude and admiration for what she and her scholarly circle of friends accomplished for German feminist theological scholarship and teaching. Her scholarly friends included the systematic theologian Dorothee Sölle (1929–2003), the church historian Leonore Siegele-Wenschkewitz (1944–1999), and also Marie-Theres Wacker, who just retired from her position as an Old Testament professor at the department of Catholic theology at the University of Münster and with whom I enjoyed

a lovely dinner after the international meeting of the European Society of Women in Theological Research (ESWTR) in Leuven, Belgium, this past September.

Because Luise taught New Testament Studies, I will not include her any further in my comments here, except to say that without Luise's international connections, I might not have received the seed idea to move into the big wide world on my own scholarly journey. Luise made it appear relatively effortless and, in fact, desirable to go to the "source" of feminist theological studies in the United States. She mentioned her international travels and connections as a given when I took her exegetical seminar on the New Testament as a M.Div. student back in the mid-1980s. Until her death in 2015, I had been in professional touch with Luise, and contributed to several of her important book projects, such as the *Bibel in gerechter Sprache (BigS)*, the first inclusive German Bible translation, published in 2006, and the feminist commentary project, entitled *Kompendium Feministische Bibelauslegung*, which Luise co-edited with Marie-Theres Wacker and which was published in 1999 (and translated into English only in 2012, which is another story altogether).[39]

Suffice it to say right from the start that without my feminist mothers of Christian theology and exegesis, I am not sure I would have been able to find intellectual meaning, depth, and inspiration in my own theological-exegetical studies at the master and doctoral levels. Born a feminist, I am not sure what would have become of me if I had not met them, had not sat in their classrooms, and had not been supervised for my doctoral work by one of the pioneering feminist Bible scholars of the past fifty years, Phyllis Trible. I am forever grateful to all of them. Their feminist determination, bravery, and ingenuity of focusing on the principles of second-wave feminism continue to inspire my own work. In my remarks here, I would like to address some of the challenges, opportunities, and perspectives three renowned feminist Hebrew Bible scholars endured and enjoyed during their careers. One of scholars is my doctoral mentor, Phyllis Trible (1932–); another one is Tikva Frymer Kensky (1943–2006), whom I met once over lunch at JTS after she already knew of her breast-cancer diagnosis—probably around 2004 or 2005, and yet another one is Judith McKinlay (1937–2019), whom I never met in person but knew through her publications. In fact, she contributed an essay to my forthcoming anthology on feminist Hebrew Bible scholarship that is scheduled to be published in 2020.[40] We had our last email correspondence in October 2018 when she inquired about the status of the volume, telling me that her essay will be her last written piece because she had been diagnosed with a brain tumor, from which she died in February 2019.

So let me begin with my former doctoral mentor and now colleague and friend, Phyllis

Trible. I begin with Phyllis not only because I know her and her work best but also because her feminist work in Hebrew Bible studies has shaped, nurtured, and inspired feminist biblical research of so many other feminist, womanist, gender focused, and queer exegetes. Trible rose to high prominence in the Society of Biblical Literature by serving as its second female president in 1994. Importantly, Phyllis tells the tale of how she became a feminist biblical scholar not as a story of challenges but of opportunities. It all began when she was a little girl, growing up in Richmond, Virginia, and attending Sunday school. The white little boys and girls were separated by their biological gender into the boys' group of "ambassadors" and the girls' group of "auxiliaries." Phyllis shakes her head when she remembers this nomenclature. One day her Sunday school teacher told the story of Genesis 2, the creation of woman. The teacher explained that God's creation became better and better, and then the teacher asked: "Little girls, what did God create last?" The girls chirped in unison: "Man!" The teacher replied: "No, woman was created last." Phyllis smiles in fond memory when she remembers this pedagogical feat of her Sunday school teacher. Early religious education nurtured in Phyllis a deep love for the Bible and the conviction that Scripture is more than androcentric literature, containing possibilities of joy, subversion, and liberation for women and little girls.

Trible highlights another challenge as an opportunity, as she continued on her path of becoming a pioneering voice in feminist Hebrew Bible studies. It goes back to the heart of the second feminist movement and the founding mother of feminist Christian theologies, Mary Daly, who taught at Boston College. By the early 1970s, Phyllis had moved to a teaching position at Andover Newton Theological Seminary in Boston, MA, where she taught until the early 1980s after which she moved to a position as the Baldwin Professor of Sacred Literature at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, where I met her in the fall of 1990. In the early 1970s, the Boston academic and religious community was ablaze from the work of radical feminist philosopher Daly. Intrigued, Trible began attending Daly's public lectures and read Daly's books, *The Church and the Second Sex*, and *Beyond God the Father*. These books investigate the patriarchal history and tradition of Christianity. Daly always asserted that both Christianity and the Bible are thoroughly patriarchal and contributed to the oppression of women. She thus urged feminists to leave patriarchal religions behind and to take seriously women-centered spirituality and space.

Trible remembers that Daly mentioned Genesis 2–3 as an important narrative for women's oppression in Western societies. To Daly, the story blames women for the evil in the world because Eve was tempted by the serpent and human nature has been corrupted ever

since. Recalling her inner conversations during those days of feminists challenging the authority of the Bible, she counters Daly's position when she remarks on her exegetical journey in 2000:

> "I had left the South to live in the Northeast where I found a theological world in ferment. Feminists were faulting the Bible for patriarchy, faulting it for promoting the pernicious paradigm of male dominance and female subordination. I did not have to be convinced. I knew that even before God formed me [in] the womb, feminism was bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. At the same time, I also knew—decidedly at variance with many feminists—that the Bible fed my life in rich and beneficial ways; that the book I had grown up with in Sunday School where sword drills were routine and memory verses mandatory, continued to make a positive claim upon me, despite its well-documented and oppressive patriarchy. To be sure, I had learned at Meredith College and later in graduate school that the Bible was rather different from what Sunday School teachers and some preachers said. But not even critical and sophisticated ways of studying it diminished and supplanted my love for it. There is a power in the document, and need not work adversely for women or for men. This I knew and this I know, no matter how much others rush to say it isn't so."[41]

Provoked by Daly, Trible did not succumb and did not let go of the Hebrew Bible. As a result, she started re-reading Genesis 2–3 and other biblical narratives, employing the literary method of rhetorical criticism, as she had learned about it from her doctoral mentor, James Muilenburg. She investigated the literary structure of the Hebrew syntax, compared vocabulary, and studied the commentaries, as she had been trained for years. She also asked herself if perhaps she had overlooked the Bible's oppressive qualities for women and if it was possible that her love for the Bible would make her excuse its patriarchal bias. The rest is history, and her book, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narrative*, published in 1978, and the companion volume that is probably more often quoted than her first book, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narrative*, published in 1984,[42]are the result of her considerations of Daly's challenge. Both books wrestle with "depatriarchalizing" biblical literature.[43] In many of her later writings, Trible emphasizes repeatedly "to love this book"[44] and to "not abandon the Bible" and, in fact, to "take back the text."[45] In short, her work centers on the conviction that we need to wrestle

with the Bible and to search for its blessing and not for its curse "so that you and your descendants, indeed so that all the families of the earth, may live."[46]

The second feminist Hebrew Bible scholar I would like to mention is Dr. Tikva Frymer-Kensky, who was friends with Trible. She taught at the University of Chicago Divinity School until her death in 2006. When Tikva visited her husband who taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), both feminist exegetes often met for lunch, talking about feminist exegesis and more. I, too, met Tikva for lunch at the cafeteria of JTS around 2003 or 2004 – I do not remember the exact date anymore. But I had already published my book on Genesis 34,[47] and I knew she disagreed with my translation of *'innah* as "to rape." She found this translation anachronistic although she was sympathetic to my efforts of deconstructing interpretations that classified Shechem's rape as "love" or approved of his marriage proposal. Tikva was a hardcore Assyriologist and Sumerologist whose Jewish background made her want to understand the origins of the biblical texts within the ancient Near Eastern world, but who was definitely open to feminist perspectives and concerns.

Importantly and similar to Phyllis, Tikva recognized in her religious tradition much liberating potential already during her early school years. She remembered that going to school became "traumatic" after the public school decided to bring differently gifted elementary-school children into the same class. From that moment onward, Tikva became the "whiz kid" whose smartness annoyed the other children. They even attacked her and recalled that going to Hebrew school offered her reprieve from the steady does of boredom and harassment at her public school. She explained:

> "Going to school became a tormenting mix of intellectual boredom and social anxiety. [But] [t]here was one oasis in my education: Hebrew school, which I attended for two hours each Monday through Thursday and all morning on Sundays…. Hebrew school was a joyous spot in my day: I was accepted socially and stimulated intellectually – certainly not most children's reactions to Hebrew school…. It was there that I first began to associate religious studies with intellectual challenge and stimulation."[48]

Frymer-Kensky's educational aspirations were always high. At ten years of age, she wanted to become a nuclear engineer, teaching "the peaceful uses of the atom" with the goal of contributing to *tikun olam*, the repair of the world.[49] Yet she felt harassed by the "mean-spirited persecution that the physical sciences teachers inflicted on me, the girl who wanted to

go into a 'man's profession'."[50] Then, in college as a first-year student, she discovered "much to my surprise I didn't like calculus and I didn't like engineering." She again felt bored in general studies courses and only "came alive intellectually in the evening when I studied Bible and Talmud" in her classes at JTS.[51] She realized "I had my priorities backward: I should read science for fun and study Bible as a profession."[52]

As she began to prepare for a career in biblical studies, she realized that "[t]he field of biblical studies was no more open to women than high school physics." There, too, she missed "female role models."[53] She wrote about this moment of insight:

> "But none of that mattered because I was determined to master it [biblical studies] and learn everything I needed to know to answer the questions about the Bible that interested me—questions about law and religion and the relations between them, questions about the development of biblical ideas from prebiblical through postbiblical times. That meant going to graduate school to earn a Ph.D. – not in Bible, but in Assyriology. I had spent eight years at the seminary studying Bible with Muffs, Paul, Moshe Held, and H.L. Ginsberg. Not realizing that there were approaches to the Bible other than the philological and close-reading techniques I had learned at the seminary, I didn't even consider the possibility of a graduate degree in biblical studies. The seminary taught us a kind of arrogance: Along with the texts, we learned that our professors were the best text readers in the world, and that to the degree that we mastered their techniques we could aspire to grow into their excellence. I couldn't stay at the seminary, which did not have a graduate school and did not admit women to the rabbinical school, so I would have to leave to study elsewhere, but why go somewhere to a pale imitation (we all thought) of the seminary?"[54]

And so the whiz kid went to Yale University to study Assyriology and law with J.J. Finkelstein, where she flourished and thrived. Yet in 1978, a "funny thing happened to" her; she became pregnant.[55] Since academic women like her tried to ignore what was happening to their bodies and were told to just take off two weeks after giving birth and then come back to work as if nothing had happened to their bodies and changed in their lives, Tikva had not even asked for a maternity leave. She feared the tenure committee would not look favorably at her request. In her fortieth week, however, she realized that things would not go so smoothly. Her obstetrician told her that he would need to do a C-section right away, and she should come

back for surgery the next morning. On "[t]hat evening, I couldn't get interested in the novels and I didn't want to watch television. I realized that I didn't want to distract myself; I wanted to concentrate and meditate on the birth. I spent a lovely three hours studying the birth incantations, during which time my anxieties melted away into a feeling of being part of a long chain of women giving birth and having difficulty doing so."[56]

After the recovery, the Assyrian scholar became "angry," wondering: "Why was it that a woman fairly well trained in Judaism and in Christianity had to go all the way to ancient Mesopotamia to find something to read to focus on birth—and what did the poor women do who couldn't read Sumerian?" This question changed Frymer-Kensky's research agenda despite warnings from "well-meaning colleagues" that her new interest in women and religion, and more specifically on goddess religion in the ancient Near East, would "destroy my reputation."[57] The result of her careful, diligent, and meticulous work led to her renowned monograph, entitled *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture, and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth* and published in 1992. In this book, Frymer-Kensky traces the literary-historical developments of goddess worship in the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East.

The research shift toward a feminist understanding of the biblical and ancient Near Eastern past changed Frymer-Kensky's hermeneutics dramatically. The change is obvious in a 1994 essay on the relationship between biblical and women's studies. In the first paragraph she explained:

> "In the past two decades there has been a tremendous change in biblical studies. The scientistic philosophy that prevailed for more than a century has given way, in biblical studies as in other humanities, to a more sophisticated understanding of the interaction between the now and the then, the reader and the text. Old ideas of history as "what actually happened" and text as having one correct and original meaning have yielded to a current view of the continual interaction of the viewer and what is seen, of the text and its reader. No longer do we believe that there is a truly "value neutral" way of reading literature or reconstructing history."[58]

She appreciated the hermeneutical development in biblical studies that takes seriously the significance of readers in the exegetical process. She also mentioned that hermeneutical approaches from liberation theology, womanism, feminism, literary criticism, or "third-

world" perspectives prove the significance of readers. She recognized that "[t]his turmoil in biblical studies has brought a general openness in the field."[59] She agreed that the Bible is patriarchal, as it emerged from a patriarchal society, and she considered this trait as a "fundamental moral flaw" of the Bible because "it does not treat all humans as equals."[60] Wrestling with this situation, she stated in 1994:

> "We in the modern world are learning that respect for the equality of all human beings and their common dignity is a moral imperative. Our perception of a moral imperative that does not derive from biblical teaching indicates that the Bible is no longer our only or even our *final* arbiter of morality. This has enormous religious implications. The authority of the Bible must be tempered with the authority of our experiences as human beings and our principles of morality. It is true that many of our moral ideas ultimately come from the Bible, but it is also true that they have been inspired by our continued relfection on the Bible during the millennia since it was written. The Bible did not eradicate slavery; it was up to people to do so. The Bible did not eradicate patriarchy; that is a task for current generations. The Bible did not eradicate economic oppression, and we do not have a clue as to how do so."[61]

The acknowledgement of the Bible's limitations did not sit well with Frymer-Kensky. Like Trible, she was attached to the Torah and tried, perhaps unconsciously, to "rescue" or "take back" the Bible from feminist rejection. For instance, Frymer-Kensky emphasized that "the Bible does not attempt to justify this subordination [of women] by portraying women as subhuman or as *other* in any way."[62] She asserted that biblical women have "the same set of goals, the same abilities, and the same strategies as biblical men" and that "the Bible is not *essentialist* on gender."[63] In other words, Frymer-Kensky maintained that "the Bible did not justify social inequality by an ideology of superiority or otherness," but that "the Bible's explicit ideology presents a unified vision of humankind wherein women and men were created in the image of God and no negative stereotypes are attached to women, the poor, slaves, or foreigners."[64]

In short, Frymer-Kensky considered the Bible "gender blind and gender-neutral"[65] and not "completely patriarchal."[66] Tikva did not want to give up combining the "intellectual occupation" and "spiritual exercise" in her study of the Torah because she recognized "that my studies could have ramifications on the spiritual lives of people who might never even

hear my name."[67] Her publications on women's prayers and religious practices, such as *Motherprayer: The Pregnant Woman's Spiritual Companion* (published in 1995), are the most obvious indicators for the theological and spiritual care she hoped to offer as a feminist biblical scholar.

The third Hebrew Bible scholar whom I would like to mention is Judith E. McKinlay who passed away in February 2019. Her son, who is an Otago Daily Times editor, wrote a very touching obituary of his mother that includes hitherto unknown personal and academic details about McKinlay's academic and professional journey.[68] I also would like to acknowledge that Judith and I never met in person although we were in email contact because of my anthology to which she contributed. Her essay in this volume is her last written piece, entitled "Biblical Border Slippage and Feminist Postcolonial Criticism." Her essay illustrates the intellectual, hermeneutical, and exegetical maturity of her work. Taking cues from the biblical figures of Eve and Wisdom, McKinlay reflects on the accomplishments and positioning of postcolonial biblical (feminist) studies, stressing that "despite differing methodologies [postcolonial feminist] scholars share a concern for the ways in which women are represented and frequently 'othered' in border-slipping texts."[69]

Judith was born into a clergy family in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1937. The family traces its settler lineage back to Rev. Norman McLeon whose community "left Scotland for Nova Scotia in 1817, and after some years there sailed on to New Zealand where, after requesting land for his close Gaelic speaking community, finally settled in Northland at Waipu…. Her Waipu family was one of teachers, her greatgrandfather the first teacher and registrar of the community there."[70] Judith acknowledged the geopolitical connections between her social location and her biblical hermeneutics as a feminist scholar. For instance, she stated in 2017: "As a woman, and a feminist, I know a little about Othering from the underside, but, as a white New Zealander (a Pakeha) belonging to the dominant culture in a postcolonial society, I am also aware of its binary opposite."[71] In fact, she was always very precise and open in referring to her personal background, explaining in 2004:

> "Geographically I am a New Zealander, living at the south of the Pacific. But if I expand that to say that I live in Aotearoa New Zealand that already hints at more to be said. For I am a *Pakeha*, non-Maori, living in a country originally settled by Maori, but subsequently entered by Europeans, first arriving in significant numbers in the nineteenth century, as whalers, traders and settlers. On my father's side my roots in

this land go back four generations. My ancestors left Scotland under the leadership of a somewhat charismatic religious figure, Norman McLeod, who had had a number of disputes with his church authorities, and had decided to emigrate to Nova Scotia in Canada. There they settled and formed a self-identified Presbyterian community. Then, in the 1850s, a significant number, including McLeod, left Nova Scotia and travelled on again to New Zealand. The family history that has been passed down to my generation begins with the highland clearances and the enforced landlessness of disposed crofters, followed both by the failing herring trade in Scotland and divisive church disputes. Those that set sail again from Nova Scotia arrived in New Zealand as settlers with the land-buying power of a self-contained Gaelic speaking community, an identity that was carefully maintained for a generation or two and still remembered in Waipu, the original area of settlement, which celebrates this tradition with Highland Games each January. On my mother's side, however, I claim Yorkshire ancestry, my mother having arrived here in the 1920s with her parents, who were looking for better business opportunities. This mix of early and more recent arrivals is a typically New Zealand heritage."[72]

In her view, then, postcolonial feminist readers cannot pretend to read biblical texts and characters from distant, uninvolved, and objective positions. McKinlay always related her feminist work to geopolitics, stating that "I will be reading this text from within the worldview I inhabit" and "[t]his is true of all readers, whether we are conscious of it or not."[73] Because of her intersectional sensibilities, McKinlay's work belongs to a later feminist exegetical development than the scholarship of Trible or Frymer Kensky. It is deliberatedly intersectional and postcolonial although Judith's year of birth puts her squarely into the pioneering feminist generation. Yet she began her doctoral work late and only in 1987. She published her doctoral thesis entitled *Gendering Wisdom the Host* only in 1996. Prior to her academic work, she raised four children and worked as a school teacher at Rangiora High School. In the 1970s, she joined the feminist activist movement in Dunedin where she lived. In 1983, she decided to train for the Presbyterian ministry, which led to her decision to enter a doctoral program in biblical studies. Her son reports:

"In 1990, Judith was nominated for the chair in Old Testament Studies [at Knox Theological Hall, her alma mater], [but] there was opposition that continued all the

> way to the Church's highest court, the General Assembly. It looked very much like both Judith's gender and her feminism were at issue. Nevertheless, a vote at the assembly confirmed Judith in the position, over objections from the floor, and she became professor of Old Testament Studies."[74]

I do not recall reading anything about this tense time in Judith's professional career in her writing. As one of her students, Johanna Stiebert, explains: "Again and again, Judith has found new ways to illuminate both the biblical text, as well as something about who and where we are now."[75] Clearly, she went through a lot, paving and preparing the way for postcolonial feminist biblical exegesis.

In sum, Phyllis Trible, Tikva Frymer Kensky, and Judith McKinlay have shaped the field of biblical studies in profound ways. Most importantly, all of them claim the adjective "feminist" with pride while they pioneered the development of feminist biblical exegesis. Although they focus on "women," they approach biblical texts from non-essentializing perspectives. They connect the study of the Bible with the "world," which in their cases means including and building upon feminist theories and practices of the second feminist movement. All three of them were trained in white, male, Eurocentric, and colonizing ways of studying the Bible, as they are members of the first generation of feminist scholars in the field of biblical studies. We also need to appreciate that they emphasize intellectual-exegetical contradictions as they saw them as feminist scholars. In their exegetical publications they look to resolve those contradictions in more intellectually coherent ways than they were taught. Furthermore, all three scholars practice a text-focused hermeneutics, whether they read behind, within, or in front of the text, still so prevalent in the field. While all three of them accept the significance of readers for the meaning-making process, they assume that (biblical) meanings reside ultimately in the text or behind the text. Importantly, only one of the three feminist scholars (McKinlay) places her feminist analysis consistently within an intersectional framework (postcolonialism). However, Trible and Frymer-Kensky are not opposed to making intersectional connections. For instance, they mention repeatedly the significance of their respective religious backgrounds in their publications. Their almost exclusive focus on "women" might be related to the fact that most of their works appears at a time when feminist theorists uplift "woman" or "women" as analytical categories while intersectionality gains prominence only in the late 1990s and the early twenty-first century. I am certain that Trible and Frymer-Kensky approve of intersectionally framed feminist exegesis although they would

always want to keep women as the primary feminist concern in the development of biblical studies as feminist biblical studies and vice versa.

Susanne Scholz, Ph.D., is Professor of Old Testament at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas, Texas, USA. Her research focuses on feminist biblical hermeneutics, the epistemologies and sociologies of biblical interpretation, cultural and literary methodologies, biblical historiography and translation theories, interfaith and interreligious dialogue, as well as general issues related to women, gender, and sexuality studies in religion. Among her fourteen books and over sixty essays and journal articles are *The Bible as Political Artifact: On the Feminist Study of the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress Press, 2017) and *Introducing the Women's Hebrew Bible: Feminism, Gender Justice, and the Study of the Old Testament* (second rev. and exp. edn; T&T Clark Bloomsbury, 2017), *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospect: Method (Volume 3)* (editor; Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2016), and *La Violencia and the Hebrew Bible: Politics and Histories of Biblical Hermeneutics on the American Continent* (co-editor; SBL Press, 2016). She also is the editor of the book series *Feminist Studies and Sacred Texts* (Lexington Books).

4. Sara Parks: Bernadette Brooten. Outstanding Among 125 Years of Women in the SBL

It is a pleasure to be here in San Diego, and I want to extend thanks to everyone who has joined us to celebrate this 125th anniversary, everyone who has agreed to contribute on this panel, and to Nicole Tilford who's worked all year to organize this and other anniversary celebrations. When I was invited to join the panel to tell the story of a woman scholar worthy of note in the field of second-temple Judaism, my choice was made in nanoseconds. The scholarship, both published and public, of Professor Bernadette Brooten has on numerous occasions catalyzed for me major turning points in my ways of thinking about the ancient world, about the intersection of academic scholarship and personal ethics, about writing, and about feminism.

Bernadette Brooten is the Robert and Myra Kraft and Jacob Hiatt Professor of Christian Studies, emerita, at Brandeis University. She is a Resident Scholar at the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis. She's a Professor Emerita of Women's, Gender, and

Sexuality Studies, of Classical Studies, and of Religious Studies. And she is now the Director of the Brandeis Feminist Sexual Ethics Project.[76] Her Harvard PhD Dissertation in 1982 was titled "Inscriptional Evidence for Women as Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue," and since then she has authored a 23-page CV of books and articles in several languages, not to mention a lifetime of service contributions, with no signs of slowing down anytime soon. In particular, her incisive and exhaustive monographs *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism*[77] and *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues*[78] still constantly inform my work and blast my students' stereotypes about women in antiquity into smithereens.

Knowing how people who are raised as women are often socialised, perhaps it should come as no surprise that these women we are honouring for their scholarship also deserve honour for their mentorship. Professor Brooten received the Society of Biblical Literature Award for Outstanding Service in Mentoring in 2001. I experienced this mentorship firsthand when Brooten delivered the Birks Lectures at McGill University as I was just starting my PhD in 2006. Her talk was called "Slavery's Long Shadow over the Lives of Girls and Women," and there was a special reception just for grad students. This was a time before I had heard the term "imposter syndrome," but: I had it, badly. The thought of possibly *speaking* to a scholar whose work was already influential in my graduate work made me so nervous that I came very close to skipping the luncheon. If I had, I would have missed a pivotal learning experience which played an important role in sustaining me when, in the following years, I sometimes considered dropping out of academia. Brooten's example at that luncheon, where she spoke to graduate students with genuine curiosity, serious respect for our ideas and concerns, and simple kindness, was an image I would later call repeatedly to mind when tempted to quit. Brooten's generosity with us reminded me that the main reason I had enrolled in a PhD was not to complete a dissertation, but to become that type of encourager for others.

It is another example of her mentoring spirit that she kindly provided me with much of the information that follows. I wanted to make sure that this talk mentioned some of the achievements she herself in hindsight has judged to have had the most impact, and she was gracious in sharing her reflections. I will take this opportunity to share just a few of her field-changing contributions.

Number one. Let's start with a bang. In 1977, Brooten published a piece called "'Junia...Outstanding among the Apostles' (Romans 16:7)."[79] In this piece, she used

epigraphy and reception history to demonstrate how women can, in her words, "be hidden in plain sight." She noticed that the feminine name Ἰουνίαν (which would translate to something like Julia or Junia) had been transformed to the masculine Ἰουνιᾶν (as if it were an abbreviation of Junianus or Junilius). In the ancient and early medieval church, the Ἰουνία of Rom 16:7 was a woman, who sneakily became Ἰουνιᾶς in order for male interpreters to avoid the discomfort of dealing with a named female apostle in the undisputed Pauline epistles. This article, together with the subsequent work of others, resulted in a modification of the accents in Greek editions of the New Testament and a reversion to the feminine name in many contemporary translations of Romans. So I could just end my paper now: "Bernadette Brooten fixed the Bible."

Number Two. In 1981, Brooten published "Jüdinnen zur Zeit Jesu. Ein Plädoyer für Differenzierung" (Judaism in the time of Jesus: A plea for differentiation). [80] We who work today in the field of women in early Judaism and early Christianity are quite mindful of the dangers of throwing the rest of Judaism under the bus when elevating Jesus as a proto-feminist, but Brooten's 1981 article was one of the earliest that spoke out against the methodological (and factual) error in using Judaism as a negative patriarchal foil against which to contrast Jesus' treatment of women. Brooten told me that piece was a major catalyst to her monograph *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*, which I'm saving for the end.

Number Three. I'll start number three with a story. I did my undergrad just a few miles from my home, at a small Baptist University. The Baptists gave me just enough of an education to free me from the shackles of fundamentalism. (They probably didn't mean to, but what did they expect if they taught me Greek?) But I still had a lot of catching up to do in terms of critical thinking and academic writing. So when I was accepted to McGill University for my Masters I approached my supervisor with a well-meaning but grandiose topic: "Homosexuality in the Bible: A Biblical Case for Ever Widening Circles of Compassion." The draft thesis proposal I handed in had no footnotes and no biblical citations, and included vague phrases like "the Bible says…." When I asked my supervisor, Prof. Gerbern Oegema, where to go from there and how to start, he simply handed me his copy of Brooten's "*Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism.*"[81] He said, "First you read this from cover to cover. You will enjoy it." I did, and by the time I got to the end I knew exactly why he'd assigned it. He knew I would compare my own sweeping generalisations

with Brooten's meticulous caution, and my untested assumptions with the signature Brooten move: an exhaustive catalogue of primary texts including inscriptions, coins, and other material evidence. In the end, I narrowed my project drastically, to women in 1 and 2 Maccabees. Via Oegema, Brooten had changed my focus AND taught me scholarly method. Let's talk about this book for minute:

* Winner of a 1997 *Lambda Literary Award* in the Lesbian Studies Category
* Winner of a 1997 *Judy Grahn Award for Lesbian Non-Fiction*
* Winner of a 1997 *American Academy of Religion Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion* in the Historical Studies Category
* Nominated for a 1996 *National Book Award*
* Several additional accolades
* Currently being translated into German in a revised edition with a new foreword.

It might be considered obvious today, but *Love Between Women* forcefully established that sexual desire and sexual relations between women occurred within the ancient Mediterranean world. Scholars beforehand had actually argued that early Christian, ancient Jewish, Roman, Greek, and other discussions of female homosexuality were purely hypothetical.

But that's not all. This book also established an intimate connection between, on the one hand, a rejection of the existence of sexual desire and behaviour between women, and on the other hand, female subordination – and the rigid gender expectations that come with it. The book also demonstrated that the scholarly discourse on sexual relations between men differed significantly from that on relations between women, and that subsuming women under men (which is still being done) is a methodological flaw. *Love Between Women* also collects many precious contributions to our knowledge of the history of women: women commissioned love spells to attract other women; some women may have viewed their long-term relationships with other women as marriages, although this was not legally recognized; some women were subjected to clitoridectomies as adults if they had, as one ancient source puts it, "masculine desires."

It would be nice to see historians, classicists, and biblical scholars really engage this work, rather than only mentioning it, and if that only sparsely. Brooten confided to me that one scholar at a distinguished U.S. institution offered a "helpful" explanation for this lack of

engagement: the book is "too hard." The ways in which this important book is NOT used are unfortunately typical of the gendered politics of citation. In a recent article *Bible & Critical Theory* I have described the scholarly tendency to perpetuate a cycle of ignoring books by or about women as "The Brooten Phenomenon."[82]

In fact, just as I was getting ready to come to SBL, a colleague Stephen Young, sent me an example of why this book deserves more widespread engagement. He gave permission to share his email. Stephen wrote:

> "As you know, there is endless scholarship on Rom 1.18–32, and most of it interacts with male commentators. In fact, I not infrequently hear a bemoaning mansplainy excuse, 'But there *are* no major commentaries on Romans by female scholars!' And yet, one of the most detailed commentaries on the passage in the last generation is by Bernadette Brooten (*Love Between Women* 219–302). That entire section of the book is, indeed, called, 'Romans 1:18-32: A Commentary' plus 'Intertextual Echoes in Romans 1:18-32' (thus the other thing commentators obsess over these days). It remains rare for mainstream publications on Rom 1.18-32 to engage with Brooten […] Another example of your Brooten Phenomenon."
>
> In writing this paper, along with the above article, I hope that I might push the academy to engage deeply with the work of women scholars – especially Brooten – and to stop seeing work on women in antiquity as 'niche' work that is 'optional'."

Number Four: Next I want to mention the book *Beyond Slavery: Overcoming Its Religious and Sexual Legacies*, along with Brooten's array of articles on enslaved women and female slaveholders in early Christianity, and the website the Feminist Sexual Ethics Project. Few have focused on enslaved women and female slaveholders, especially regarding sexual dynamics and sexual abuse. Brooten demonstrates the gendered nature of slavery: the enslavement of women and the enslavement of men are both horrible, but often in different ways. Only since the early 2000s have scholars seriously examined what the toleration of slavery means for early and later Christianity. Few have engaged critically with the ethical contradictions between promoting virginity and chastity for certain women, while tolerating the sexual abuse of enslaved women. Brooten demonstrated that female slaveholders were not kinder and gentler, which also helps us to understand intersectionally gendered ways of being. *Beyond Slavery* and the Feminist Sexual Ethics Project are to be

commended for this intersectional work, which brings Brooten's ancient slaveholding research into the present day. Here, as elsewhere, her rigorous historical research and careful writing translate directly into practical ethics.

Number Five. Brooten is currently working on a collaboration with the social sciences on "Hindrances Faced by Black Women Students in Reporting Sexual and Racial Harassment and Violence." Combining social-scientific approaches with Brooten's typical rigour and tendency toward being exhaustive will undoubtedly produce an extremely useful tool against Harassment and Violence at the intersection of race and gender, and will fill a gap in research, which remains largely focused on *either* sexual violence *OR* racial violence.

Number Six: I will finally circle back to *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue,* the book that inspired my phrase "The Brooten Phenomenon." "The Brooten Phenomenon" refers to the way in which women's scholarship, and scholarship on women, doesn't cross the bridge into what is considered to be "real" (i.e. male-centred) scholarship. I chose this term because of the crowning example of Brooten's *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*, which has yet to pass through the barrier to change the classroom or the field outside of what is incorrectly perceived as the realm of "women's" scholarship.[83]

Although at least half of the scholars entering the fields of early Judaism and Christian Origins may now be women, and although scholarship on ancient women, on biblical and apocryphal female characters, and on the construction of femininity and masculinity in antiquity is now thriving, there remains an impermeable wall between them and what is perceived as "real" scholarship. The unwritten rule, that the study of women and gender is "niche," conceptually delimits investigations into ancient women, into ancient female literary characters, and into the construction of gender in the Second-Temple Period and early Christianity as "ancillary." The way Brooten's work on women leaders in the ancient synagogue has been used (or not used) over the years is a perfect example.

In this book, Brooten refutes the unargued assumption that, unlike other religions in Greco-Roman antiquity, Judaism had no female religious leadership in the form of priestesses or synagogue heads. Each inscription analysed in the book provides evidence for women leaders in Jewish antiquity. The effect is all the stronger when the totality of the evidence is considered.

Each scholar before Brooten who had treated these inscriptions – to a man – had

dismissed the plain sense of each inscription as being impossible. *A priori* they had collectively said, "we know that women were not leaders in ancient Judaism, so this inscription must have a meaning other than what it says."

Although *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* is incorporated into other works on women, such as *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*,[84] or *Daughters of the King: Women and the Synagogue*,[85] it is not incorporated into general scholarship on synagogues or on the Jewish priesthood. If it is, it is in the manner of the influential volume on Synagogues by Lee Levine in 2000, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*.[86] That is, it has a chapter on women in which Brooten's work, along with the work of others – such as Kraemer, who analysed an inscription with a diasporic Jewish woman elder – is discussed.[87] Yet the contents of the one chapter called "Women in the Synagogue" remain compartmentalised. While Brooten's and others' evidence of the active leadership of Jewish women is treated in this chapter, the material is kept hermetically separate from influencing the rest of the book, including, remarkably but typically, the chapter called "priests."

Over her lifetime Bernadette Brooten has done the slow and painstaking work of really learning ancient languages to be able to interact competently with fragments and inscriptions. She has wrestled with method, by no means only to make her own work impeccable, but also to communicate methodological discoveries and errors to the field and especially to junior scholars. She has brought her discoveries into frequent, sustained conversation with contemporary society in a way far above and beyond the norm. She has put research funding straight to work not only investigating but working to remedy the legacies of slavery and sexual violence. All of this is done while maintaining a strong mentoring presence, a highly engaged ethics of community service, beautiful writing, and all around excellence. On a personal note, I consider my discovery of Brooten's work to have been nothing less than life-changing. I will end my talk here by expressing my deep gratitude, both personal and on behalf of our field, to Professor Brooten for her lifelong work. I look forward to her continued contributions.

Sara Parks (Ph.D., Early Judaism, McGill University, 2017) is Assistant Professor in New Testament Studies at the University of Nottingham in the U.K. Her research focuses on women in the Second-Temple Period, and on gender and anti-Judaism at the "Parting of the Ways." She is the author of *Gender in the Rhetoric of Jesus: Women in Q* (Lexington Fortress 2019).

5. Shively T. J. Smith: Brief Reflections on the "Head, Heart, and Hand" Legacy of Dr. Clarice J. Martin through the Social-Conscious Literary Voice of Anna Julia Cooper

The only sane education, therefore, is that which conserves the very lowest stratum, the best and most economical is that which gives to each individual, according to his [her] capacity, that training of 'head, heart, and hand,' or, more literally, of mind, spirit and body which converts him [her] into a beneficent force in the service of the world. This is the business of schools and this the true cause of the deep and vital interest of all the people in Educational Programs.[88]

Anna Julia Cooper's Legacy for African American Women's Biblical Scholarship[89]

The 1993 first volume of *Searching the Scriptures,* edited by Dr. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Anna Julia Cooper as an African American foremother of feminist biblical studies.[90] Born into slavery in 1858, Cooper refused to accept gender and race were barriers to education, training, accomplishment, and global citizenship. She received her doctorate in history from the Sorbonne in 1924, becoming the fourth African American woman to earn a doctoral degree.[91] Before receiving her doctorate, however, Cooper was already busy thinking, writing, and speaking about the inequities, oppressions, and violence facing those living at the intersections of race, gender, and class. She persisted in arguing that caring about the world is most decisive and effectual if those rendered most neglected, exploited, disenfranchised, invisible, and silenced by our Western-contrived societies were attended to first.[92]

Cooper viewed education as a pathway for righting racial and gender inequities that can affirm the full humanity and gifts of African Americans. In an essay called "On Education," written sometime in the early 1900s, Anna Julia Cooper penned the words above as a declaration about the state of the American educational system. She was particularly keen on narrating the challenges and opportunities newly emancipated African Americans faced as they struggled to carve out a livelihood and community in a country, whose investment in their enfranchisement was short lived. Lasting less than 15 years after the effective date of the Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863), Reconstruction was the period when the United States (US) "intended to institutionalize for its black citizens what President Lincoln

had called 'a new birth of freedom.'"[93] These national efforts came to a grinding halt in 1877 as the result of state-by-state politics, "the power and persistence of white Southern resistance to black empowerment," and waning "Northern concern for the free people's well-being."[94] Consequently, African Americans were left without systematic and federal power to enforce their rights as full, voting citizens and human beings in the American system. Thus, they were forced to establish alternative community systems, employment opportunities and businesses, and educational institutions while facing the rise of racial violence and disenfranchisement and the looming realities of white supremacist backlash.

Cooper privileged head, heart, and hand language as a mechanism for affirming the agency and gifts of African Americans and women. In addition to the opening epigraph from Cooper's works, this language occurs in several other places across her writings. For instance, in an 1886 essay titled, "Womanhood: A Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race," Cooper describes the yearly enrichment gained by the US and global world from the quality education and training made available to former enslaved and disenfranchised African Americans, especially African American women. She says it creates "a fresh infusion of vigorous young hearts, cultivated heads, and helpful hands…"[95] According to one scholar, "For Cooper, 'head, heart, and hand' (45) must be thought of and enacted together: emotion and spirit are epistemologically significant and also politically and ethically important, for it is 'faith' and the 'spirit' that propel us to act (286–304)."[96]

In considering the challenges and opportunities facing the study of New Testament in the Society of Biblical Literature – past and future – recalling the work and commitments of women pioneers provide insights into potential ways forward in the Society's efforts to include a more diverse and representative global membership. Cooper designated women's heads, hearts, and hands a necessity and asset in the work of changing the world through access to higher education for all. She characterized global diversity and realities as resources to be embraced and used in cultivating human minds, spirits, and bodies, no matter their identities, locations, and histories. Such acts are what Cooper called, "the Gospel of intelligence" in service to the "moral and material uplift" of a people as well as all peoples across the global world.[97]

Cooper's head-heart-hand priority seems to be echoed in the pioneering efforts of many women who have worked and are working in the field of New Testament studies. One, in particular, has journeyed with me in the library and embodied the spirit of Cooper's work in her own way nearly 100 years after Cooper named head-heart-hand as a requisite for people

teaching, thinking, and acting on behalf of those living at the intersections of race, gender, and class. Dr. Clarice J. Martin, the first African American woman degreed in New Testament in SBL in 1985, has modeled and extended Cooper's head-heart-hand imperative in the field with courageous and critical erudition.

My First Encounter with Cooper and Martin: The Head

It is quite natural for me to talk about Cooper's head-heart-hand priority and Martin's pioneering scholarship and presence in the field of New Testament Studies a century later because I was introduced to them at the same time. As an undergraduate enrolled in a university based in the United States (US), I studied theology for a short period abroad in the United Kingdom (UK) as an English-Speaking Union Luard Scholar. During that time, I learned Greek, translated and studied the history of interpretation for the Gospel of Mark, and explored early Christian apologists such as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian with much curiosity and zeal. Captivated by my studies in biblical history and literature and early Christian history, I contemplated pursuing doctoral studies in bible and patristics. Yet, as an African American woman student, I wondered: "Do people who look like me pursue and earn doctoral degrees in biblical studies and early church history?" From my young and limited undergraduate vantage point, it did not appear doctoral studies in biblical studies was achievable for females of the African Diaspora, neither inside nor outside the US.

Fortunately, my undergraduate mentors from the US were unmoved by my disappointment and observations abroad. They instructed me to continue my studies in the UK and to read two books they sent me through international mail, which were: Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South* from The Schaumburg Library of Nineteenth-Century Black Women Writers, and the 1991 edited volume of *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation.* In the latter, my mentors earmarked Clarice Martin's essay, "The *Haustafeln* (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women,'" with a note that said, "African American Women are New Testament Scholars, too."[98]

In her essay on the *haustafeln*, Martin reframes the task of critical biblical scholarship and its endeavors to "challenge, probe, affirm, critique, and recover" the meanings, histories, and significance of New writings – or as Martin refers to it – "Christian Testament Studies."[99] Martin says, "…It is appropriate to note that African American women, with women in the

Western culture in general, have often tasted the pungent fruit of androcentric, hierarchal domination. Black women are no strangers to arguments that the Bible sanctions their submission as wives and women in the domestic and socio-political spheres. They, too, have challenged literalists interpretations of women's subordination in the *haustafeln* and similar narratives."[100] Martin's insistence that "they, too, have challenged," functioned as a critical intervention in the field at a time when she – along with her Hebrew Bible contemporary, Renita Weems – were the only two African American women of record holding terminal degrees in biblical studies from PhD-granting universities in the United States. In the early 1990s, less than 100 years after Ann Ely Rhoads became the first female member of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis (as it was called at the time) and only a few years before Schüssler Fiorenza published the first volume of *Searching the Scriptures* with its dedication to Anna Julia Cooper, Martin situated biblical interpretation as work that occurred at the intersections of race, gender, and class. The multidimensional identity markers of people historically on the underside of American history had yet to be theorized expansively in the field of biblical studies and outside it.[101] As such, Martin was a pioneer in biblical studies in her hermeneutical decision to position the historical realities of African American womanhood as a site of critical interpretative engagement in New Testament Studies.

Like Cooper, Martin has in no way been the proverbial "shrinking flower" in our field. In addition to being the first African American woman with a doctorate degree specializing in New Testament from Duke University in 1985; she has served as a teacher-scholar of biblical studies at leading institutions of religious and theological education in the United States, including: Princeton Theological Seminary (1985–1992), Colgate Rochester Divinity School (1985–1992), and currently at Colgate University (1997–present) as Jean Picker Chair and Professor of Philosophy and Religion. She has had visiting professor appointments at Graduate Theological Union, New College Berkeley, United Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary, and New York Theological Seminary.

Moreover, Martin's publications are extensive. Indeed, many titles of her scholarly contributions reflect the unique mixture and manifestation of Cooper head-heart-hand that is sometimes difficult to find in a field not practiced in making space for contextually-informed interpretative approaches and perspectives produced by interpreters of biblical writings – canonical and noncanonical – who leverage intersectional lenses and histories. The following are some examples of Martin's scholarship that represent the nature of her work and its innovative imprint in the field: (1) a 1990 essay called, "Womanist Interpretations of the New

Testament: The Quest for Holistic and Inclusive Translation and Interpretation;"[102] (2) an essay called, "Somebody Done Hoodoo'd the Hoodoo Man: Language, Power, Resistance, and the Effective History of Pauline Texts in American Slavery," published in the Fall 2000 Semeia volume titled *Slavery in Text and Interpretation;*[103] and, (3) an essay called, "Normative Biblical Motifs in African American Women's Moral Discourse: Maria Stewart's Autobiography as a Resource for Nurturing Leadership From the Black Church Tradition," published in *The Stones That the Builders Rejected. The Development of Leadership from the Black Church Tradition.*[104] These writings capture Martin's scholarly voice and legacy, but they also represent scholarship that is useful for classroom instruction. Many of Martin's scholarly articles and essays are standard assigned readings in my introductory courses to the New Testament and womanist/feminist biblical hermeneutics. They provide students with a sense of how multiple dimensions of biblical history and reconstruction can interact with the interpretative histories of particular communities.

In addition to these writings, Martin produced commentary readings for projects such as the 2007, *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary.* She wrote the First and Second Timothy and Titus commentary essays while also serving as one of the associate editors for the project.[105] She has written commentary and interpreter's notes for *The HarperCollins Study Bible* produced by SBL and she wrote "The Acts of the Apostles" commentary essay in *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary.*

Furthermore, she contributed to encyclopedic entries defining womanist biblical interpretation. She characterized womanist biblical interpretation as developing from the Black Theology movement of the 1960s and 1970s, informed by the scholarly works of such figures as James Cone, Jacquelyn Grant, J. Deotis Roberts, Gayraud Wilmore, and Delores Williams.[106] Martin noted that these scholars "and other African American Christian theologians in major divinity schools and seminaries throughout the United States for the first time attempted to construct systematic theologies from the Black perspective." According to her description, such endeavors repositioned "the African American experience, with its legacy of struggle arising from slavery, oppression, resistance, and survival in the New World" as a "starting point for doing theology."

Furthermore, according to Martin, black theology and its emergence created the space for the particular development of African American women's approaches to the bible, known as womanist biblical interpretation.[107] One key characteristic of the "richly diverse and

eclectically wide-ranging" approaches in womanist biblical discourse that Martin delineates is its blend of traditional approaches with the contextual realities and histories of African Americans, particularly women. She says womanist biblical interpretation is informed as much by "the standard and traditionalist methodologies and practices of biblical criticism in the academic guild" as it is "by the discourses, values, and sociopolitical and religious experiences and cosmological worldview of African American culture.[108]

The Tasks of Heart and Hand in Martin's Work

Like Cooper's triad imperative suggests, Martin has also worked with heart and hand, supporting emerging women scholars of the New Testament, especially African American women. She has read and endorsed scholarly works such as Mitzi J. Smith's book, *Toward Decentering the New Testament*, Shanell T. Smith's book, *The Woman Babylon and the Marks of Empire,* and Angela N. Parker's essay, "One Womanist's View of Racial Reconciliation in Galatians."

She has also made herself available in an advisory role, sharing stories about her career trajectory and her perspectives about the future of the field. When asked about the challenges she faced while pioneering the way for other African diaspora women, women of color, and women in general, Martin emphasized the importance of leveraging the particularities of her contextual markers in the work of biblical scholarship.

> "I have always viewed myself and my work within the larger context of a global, diasporic community of people of African descent, where spirituality and theism were integral to the psyche of Black peoples. Within the North American context of enslavement and white supremacy, I have always known that I stand on the shoulders of Black women and men with a long history of engagement with the Bible—the extant literature on this subject is voluminous. In those "early years" of my academic journey, my deliberate search for African American scholars in Christian Testament Studies and Early Christian Origins yielded few results. I learned of Dr. Carl Marbury and Dr. Cain Felder, and a precious few others. Knowledge of their scholarly careers was profoundly encouraging—but my search for Black women scholars in that diminutive number—dispiriting. Like those Black male colleagues before me, I was sometimes met with initial curiosity and skepticism about my competence as an

> African American Christian Testament graduate student and scholar ("Do you really know Greek?" "Don't you really want to study Christian Education?"). But none of these sometimes derisive quips could uproot the deep intellectual roots that defined my love for the "life of the mind" my parents had tended and nurtured in the soil of my being all of my life."[109]

Martin's reflections function as a cipher to her interpretative contributions to the field. In particular, it signifies the way her work uniquely blends traditional methodologies in historical and literary criticisms with attention to the existential realities of black life in the US. Moreover, her story demonstrates the resilience and tenacity many scholars from underrepresented groups had to muster to succeed in a field unaccustomed to their bodies, voices, and perspectives. Describing the role of persistence in her scholastic journey, Martin said, "The countervailing winds of white supremacy were powerless to "sink this ship"– so I pressed delightfully and determinedly forward thankful to be in a position many in that "great cloud of African American witnesses" labored and prayed for, endured for, fought for, for their progeny – to avail themselves of the opportunity to pursue their hopes and dreams."

Clarice J. Martin's work on the *haustafeln* in New Testament writings and her larger portfolio of scholarship provided an intellectual companion and interlocutor for my work on 1 Peter, the general letters, and household codes. She was the starting point through whom I, and others in the field, encountered different voices and perspectives not easily visible in scholarship. For example, Martin's scholarship introduced me to the work of Ann Holmes Redding, another womanist biblical scholar less known, who also extended Cooper's legacy of head-heart-hand in critical ways. Holmes Redding, a 1999 PhD in New Testament from Union Theological Seminary, wrote a dissertation titled, "Together, Not Equal: The Rhetoric of Unity and Headship in the Letter of Ephesians."[110] She also wrote several essays about the household codes, arguing they represent Christian Testament creations that postponed addressing slave and gender inequities with the intention of returning to those issues at a later moment. As Holmes Redding notes, that intended "return" did not occur in early Christian history; thus fixing these literary creations as static prescriptions, rather than social and cultural constructions under negotiation and review by different early Christian communities.[111] In her career as a New Testament scholar and priest, Holmes Redding eventually embraced a radical interfaith identity, which was informed by her intertextual studies of different sacred religious canons.

Conclusion: Final Questions and Perspectives for Consideration

Commemorating the pioneering careers and scholarship of Clarice J. Martin and others like Ann Holmes Redding in light of Anna Julia Cooper's head-heart-hand criteria, raises questions about the prospects for biblical studies in the future. Thus, I conclude my brief reflections of appreciation by posing three questions for further consideration about the future of the field in light of these scholarly trajectories with the hopes it encourages us to continue the work of extending their legacies.

1. What assets and fresh ideas of the head, heart, and hand have we yet to engage and resource as necessities of the research, scholarship, and teaching of our Learned Society as women and allies of SBL, striving to extend this 125-year legacy of Rhoads, Cooper, Martin, Schüssler Fiorenza (and others)?
2. When we look around our field, what contexts, texts, and voices are missing in critical numbers among the ranks of our Society—from undergraduate to graduate students, professorships and chairs, to institutional leaders?
3. What steps have we yet to take to ensure radical inclusion that challenges exclusion, erasure, and invisibility in our scholarship and teaching as well as in our academic discourses and public platforms?

This panel of women biblical scholars reflects the way the field has made strides toward inclusion and diversity, but it also represents the necessity to endeavor collectively to extend that history. The work of widening the guild space and revisiting the ancient texts and worlds that diverse global communities have historically held dear, requires approaching familiar source material from new angles with new eyes, perspectives, and commitments historically underrepresented (if represented at all). Martin's final expressions of hope articulate the potential for the field: "My hope for women in the field, in particular, and for women in SBL, in general, in the present and future, is their continued intellectual expansion, critique, and transformation of the discipline and the conference itself—across—and within--every thematic subject area—and within the administrative hierarchy of the broad domain of the academic study of religion—regionally, nationally, and globally."

Rev. Dr. **Shively T. J. Smith** is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Boston University School of Theology (Boston, MA). She completed her PhD in New Testament Studies at Emory University, publishing her first book called, *Strangers to Family: Diaspora and First Peter's Invention of God's Household* with Baylor University Press. She is completing a commentary on Second Peter for SBL Press and several articles on Diaspora in the New Testament.

6. Carly Daniel-Hughes: Fantasy Echoes. Critical Reflections on "Women" & the Feminist Historiography of Early Christianity[112]

> "A story always starts before it can be told. When did *feminism* become a word that not only spoke to you, but spoke you, spoke of your existence, spoke you into existence?...What did it mean, what does it do, to hold on to feminism, to fight under its name; to feel in its ups and downs, in its comings and goings, your ups and downs, your comings and goings?"
>
> – Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*[113]

There was no better moment to begin your graduate work at Harvard Divinity School (HDS) then in 1998, if what drew you there was a passion for feminism and the historical study of ancient Christianity. When I arrived at HDS, there was a sizable and expanding body of feminist work in these areas, and critical resources to undertake it (not to mention all of the feminist work taking place in allied fields). There were path-breaking professors working at the intersections of feminism, gender theory and early Judaism and Christianity; a sizable number were circulating in and around Cambridge: Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Bernadette Brooten,[114] Joanna Dewey,[115] Gail Yee,[116] Ross Shepard Kraemer,[117] and my own supervisor, Karen King.[118]

As keen graduate student, I came into HDS imagining that my work, like that of the feminist scholars surrounding me, could address the needs of a collective of which I was part and to whom I felt responsible: "women." Connections and histories were forged in this pursuit (sometimes with intention and other times as the rumbling bass of unconscious desires), connections between me and my mentors, between all of us and the "women" in the past, whether in early Christianity or in my own familial genealogy. Yet I was only beginning

to understand then that the production of this collective identity was, and continues to be, heavily scrutinized in feminist and queer theory.[119] As I will go on to elaborate here, I have only in recent years understood that my hopeful attachment to it came with a cost, amplifying my disillusion with the academy and raising the existential stakes of academic pursuit for me, and I hazard, for others as well. It is one we are perhaps now better prepared to reflect on, with the critical distance of time and the persistent, nagging questions about "diversity" and marginalization that plague the Society of Biblical Literature and the field of biblical studies in which we labor.[120] Critical reflection, I suggest, is necessary for feminist scholars if we care not just about the vibrancy of feminist work, but the conditions under which we do that work in the academy.

In *The Fantasy of Feminist History*, Joan Wallach Scott develops the concept of "fantasy echo" as an analytic to explore how the identity "women" coalesced in the Republican French feminist movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Echo serves as "a gloss" on the psychoanalytic concept of fantasy, "a reminder" that "identity…is constructed in complex and diffracted relation to others."[121] Fantasy echo describes the mechanism by which the feminists Wallach Scott analyzes could "transcend history and difference" and see themselves, and their audiences, as part of "a vast, undifferentiated collective" of women stretching back in time. By means of a fantasy echo, feminists imagined themselves in "similarly structured scenarios" with women who had come before them.[122] Two dominant scenarios that played themselves out for these eighteenth and nineteenth figures: the female orator and the maternal fantasy. In the first, the orator, a woman seemingly contravenes the bounds of her gender, occupying speaking positions that are the domain of men; in the maternal, a woman derives pleasure from the bonds of a shared sisterhood. Both fantasies, the orator and the maternal, also neatly capture the dominant affective impulses of Anglophone feminist historiography of early Christianity too, particularly for the decades of the 1970–1990s, the very work that I consumed and drew me (and many other women) into this subfield.

Take, for instance, feminist historical analyses by scholars like Jane Schaberg or Karen King, which restored the historical Mary Magdalene from repentant harlot to teacher and apostle.[123] In the extra-canonical Gospel of Mary,[124] as King, for instance, has shown Mary Magdalene imparts special knowledge (a vision offered to her by the resurrected Christ) to a group made up entirely of male disciples.[125] Two of them, Andrew and Peter, openly question her right to be among them, to teach what Christ had told her *to them*, a potential

transgression. (Indeed Peter takes it just this way: "Did He really speak *privately with a woman* and not openly to us? Are we to turn about and all listen to her?" To which is Mary is stunned; her right to teach finally defended by Levi: "Peter you have always been hot tempered…if the Savior made her worthy, who are you indeed to reject her?").[126] Feminist historiographical work that shows up such moments in early Christian literature solicits a libidinal charge that comes from trespassing perceived "social and sexual boundaries." It is this charge that garnered women's excitement about this historical work both inside and outside of the academy. It drew animosity for the very same reason.[127] What the orator fantasy could also do is consolidate feelings about and experiences of discrimination into a coherent narrative. Fantasy *can* create the conditions for agency and self-determination. And so, women outside the academy looked to this feminist work to kindle their own sense of religious authority.[128] For my own part, this scholarship enabled a conflation of Mary's erudition and teaching in the Gospel of Mary with that of my feminist professors – and what I hoped would one day be my own.

The maternal fantasy, on the other hand, is on display in feminist calls for "sisterhood." This fantasy is premised on the recovery of a pre-Oedipal love, to quote Wallach Scott, "a desire distinct from and potentially prior to that which is associated with heterosexuality, with phallic economies, with men."[129] The world of women conjured by feminist calls for solidarity and action, notes Scott, "is one in which women find pleasure among themselves, or '*jouissance d'elles-mêmes*,' in Luce Irigaray's words." What is it that women share "among themselves"? "The historian's pleasure…is in finding herself party to this scene of feminine *jouissance*," Scott writes. [130]

The feminist historiography of early Christianity has long invoked this fantastic scene. Key to my argument here: The movement of fantasy is not unidirectional – that is, it is not simply the result of projection from non-academic women, or keen graduate students, onto ancient materials and feminist scholars who analyze them. Rather fantastic affinities with biblical women and the scholars promoting those images were encouraged by the ambience of this feminist historiography itself: "the women's bible," "the discipleship of equals," "wo/men church," "love between women," or "the lost world of early Christian women."[131] What is being conjured in these titles and concepts if not a homosocial space of women's pleasure?

In early Christian studies, the Acts of Thecla has been the text that has most readily aligned with feminine *jouissance*. It is the extra-canonical story of an elite woman who abandons marriage and family to follow the apostle Paul's message of celibacy. Saved,

remarkably, from death on multiple occasions, she ultimately finds support among the women of Antioch. (Paul, a poor excuse for a mentor, has long left her behind). In the end, she baptizes herself, dons a male cloak, and spends her final days as an iterant missionary. Feminist work on the Acts of Thecla in the 1980s popularized the view that here was a narrative that contained the memory of widows' oral storytelling; one that spoke to women's motivations and intentions to what drew them to the Jesus movement; one that is filled with a range of female characters (including, household slaves, and improbably, a lioness) who come to Thecla's aid.[132] Paul, who has for most of the narrative abandoned Thecla, now suddenly wishes her well with a commission: "Go and Teach the word of God." This reads as a lame and late-coming blessing for a woman who has just finished an inspired speech that spared her life and gathered around her women who cry out "praise to God." There is much in this short narrative to evoke the *jouissance* of the feminist historian.

Thecla could nicely support the orator fantasy too, a reminder that the orator and maternal fantasies sustain each other. Feminist scholars have repeatedly emphasized Thecla's gender inversions, her cross-dressing, and her brazen acts of public speech and transgressive self-baptism. They have variously allied the text with the early-third century Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas because perhaps they can be read in either of these fantasy scenarios, orator and maternal. Perpetua too is unafraid to challenge men in the public-space of courts or arenas. Yet she has an intense bond with her female slave, Felicitas. And she is a mother who at once nurtures and resists her maternal role. Perpetua, like Thecla, in short, has complicated relationship to femininity and to masculinity.[133]

By the time that I entered my doctorate under Karen King's supervision in the early 2000s feminist historians were largely denying themselves pleasurable encounters with texts like the Acts of Thecla. Informed by the linguistic turn, and the work of scholars like Elizabeth Clark, feminist historians of early Christianity had to take seriously the theoretical insights of post-structuralist theory, the rhetoric of texts and how women were being deployed as constructs in them.[134]

One thing that these post-structuralist approaches did was place feminist historians at a greater distance from their subjects: women.[135] It became harder to use early Christian writings to advance feminist political aspirations. The route was more circuitous when we did.[136] In the mature period of feminist historiography operating out of some erotic charge that homosociality provided no longer seemed possible, or entirely ethical. Fantasies of solidarity ignored feminists of color who pointed out – and for decades at this point – that white

feminists were masking critical differences in their emphasis on women as a singular collective, thereby obscuring and appropriating others' lives and histories.[137] In the 2000s feminists no longer stood on sure ground to found "women's history": subjectivity, the body, agency, and identity had come under the force of challenge and critique (and they remain so). Yet this fantasy of feminist solidarity persisted (even if more elusive) in feminist biblical scholarship that now problematized, but still remained attentive to "women" as its object.

The fantasy of feminist solidarity can fall apart in subtle ways too. The setting for this failure need not be grand, involving large-scale critiques of language, agency and subjectivity. It can also entail the fine-grained encounters between people. Feminism analyzes power and its effects, attending to how gender serves in those operations. But its critical tools are not often enough turned to nitty-gritty power dynamics at work in feminist academic contexts, between faculty, between mentors and students, between students, and between those occupying the same race and gender. As feminists, we might be aware that assertions of a shared identity as women masked differences and renders invisible the conditions of women of color and queer women. Yet some feminists have been less willing to critically consider the power dynamics at play in claiming to do justice on behalf of marginalized people, or I think more regularly, how our claims to be doing justice lend our speech and our actions moral authority that can render invisible the more proximate structures of power circulating within our academic institutions and circles, and our role within these. "There is no guarantee that in struggling for justice we ourselves will be just," Sara Ahmed states in *Living a Feminist Life*.[138]

The hyper-intellectual environment of my Harvard graduate program facilitated meaningful encounters and intense affiliations across groups of students and faculty, but it enabled certain devastations – to which I will only gesture here. I was not alone in feelings of despair and insecurity, as conversations with my peers has revealed. I wonder: why were encounters with faculty and other students so vulnerable making? Why did they feel so consequential? I am not saying that my experiences were more wounding than others. I know this absolutely not to be the case (it would be obscene to ignore how race, sexuality and disability would only have magnified the disaffection that I am naming here). Rather my point is that the academy enables conditions in which dissolution and self-doubt thrive – conditions that constrain us all, and some more than others.

Part of what made me, and my peers, vulnerable to moments of existential doubt were the feminist affiliations and deep (but carefully managed) investments that were part and

parcel of our sub-discipline. "Auto-identification," noted Eve Sedgwick is "strange and recalcitrant."[139] It is not easily shaken off. My doctoral work trained me to feel embarrassment about any explicit longing for feminine *jouissance*. Yet there remained in me a sensibility that I owed my allegiance to these female scholars, that there was some common ground we occupied that should make our relationship operate smoothly. So often the opposite was the case. These relationships appeared more vexing, harder to understand. Reflecting on the tensions that circulated in and amongst women in one of her early feminist seminars, Eve Sedgwick wrote: "Afterall, to identify *as* must always include multiple processes of identification *with*. It also involves identification *as against*; but even did it not, the relations implicit in *identifying with* are…quite sufficiently fraught with intensities of incorporation, diminishment, inflation, threat, loss, reparation, and disavowal."[140]

It did not occur to me that my identification with feminist professors might work in the other direction, their identification with (and against) me. This movement of auto-identification necessarily rendered us uncertain figures for one another. Tensions, disappointments, abuses of power, these do not only describe interactions in feminist academic circles, of course. But in the affective landscape cultivated by feminist historiography in which I was caught up (with colleagues and professors, whether by our choice or not), there was a risk unremarked upon. Utopic visions of solidarity and shared transgression gave the impression that we could count on certain loyalties and affections, and thus, face fewer difficulties. When inevitably these surfaced, what could we make of them? What did we do with them? Fantasies (unmarked as such) left me without the critical tools to understand what was happening. Now, as a professor with graduate students of my own, I can see that it left them without those tools too.

Even as I write this there is a troubling thought that I have engaged in a form of betrayal – by suggesting that a utopic homosocial tenor persisted in the orbit of the feminist historiography in which I (and many of us) were disciplined, and that as unnamed, it did harm to the allegiances it was meant to cull and sustain. I worry that talking about the fracture of fantasies implies something of a longing for that failure (and with it gives credibility to those openly hostile to feminist politics). But what if such a critique is not so withering? Addressing how the fantasy fractured can create the conditions for gratitude (both intellectual and more) for the feminist historiography that formed us, even as it attends to the limits of this work.

What if, instead, we identify our fantasies, the orator, the maternal, the ones that propelled feminist history of early Christianity for a time, sustained some important

affiliations, came together, but then fell apart, and necessarily so? "Feminism," writes Ahmed in the quote that opens this essay, "has its ups and downs, its comings and goings." Naming how fantasies emerged and then collapsed can allow recognizing that the affective tenor that surfaced in the feminist scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s, and was institutionalized in the 1990s, did change the social and political landscape (if disproportionately in favor of "white, middle-class, professional women").[141] We need not pine for its loss, or unwittingly replicate its negative effects. In light of psychoanalytic theory that supports me here, fantasy is integral to intersubjective lives and to the projects that animate all of us. It is not enough, indeed impossible in this framing, to simply be rid of it.[142] It is possible, however, to be more attentive to its enigmatic movements.

It is 125 years after the first woman, Ann Ely Rhoads, joined the SBL. Feminist scholarship has obtained its place in biblical and religious studies. If not always certain, secure enough to welcome appreciation for and critique of what has been done, and also consideration of where we might go. I suggest with others that what ultimately defines feminist inquiry may not be a haunted collectivity of "women," but rather a collective impulse toward the critical, and the possibility of social and political transformation.[143] What defines feminism, in this rendering, is a relentless, but necessarily shifting interrogation of normative knowledge, of power and exclusion, and their effects. If that is the case, to rephrase Sara Ahmed, perhaps our business is not just to advocate that feminists work *in* academic institutions, but for feminist work of this kind *on* those institutions and their cultures?[144]

Carly Daniel-Hughes, Th.D., is Associate Professor of Religions and Cultures at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. Her research focuses on the study of sexuality, gender, and the body in early Christianity. Among her publications is *The Salvation of the Flesh in Tertullian of Carthage: Dressing for the Resurrection* (Palgrave 2011), and co-editor of *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion, Sexuality and Gender* co-edited with Donald Boisvert (Bloomsbury 2016).

ISSN 1661-3317

7. Kay Higuera Smith: Response to the Panel on "Recovering Female Interpreters of the Bible"

> *"Wherever power is at work, we should be ready to ask who or what is controlling whom, and why."*[145]

Consistent themes emerge in the essays in this volume, all involving reflections on women's experiences in the Society of Biblical Literature. These themes offer a microcosmic history of how class status, Whiteness, proximity to male power, and affirmation of and assent to gendered social norms paved the way for women to gain access to the academic field of religious studies in general and the SBL in particular. After surveying the essays here, we can see that many of these regulatory norms are still functioning to maintain existing social power structures. Hence, a history of women in the SBL not only allows us to honor those women but also to examine the social power structures that these women encountered. It is appropriate, then, for any treatment of this topic to include both a critical disclosure of how these power structures work and also a program for change in the Society's ethical norms.

Our contributors have rightly honored the groundbreaking and pioneering work of female archaeologists, linguists, and biblical and religious scholars. The legacy of these women needs to be recounted and their contributions acknowledged. In my response, however, while I want to affirm the risks taken and price paid by these women who paved the way for others, I also want to consider the extent to which the stories of these groundbreaking women highlight the gendered, racialized social structures and institutional barriers that required those women to endure so much in the first place.

The Society of Biblical Literature is itself a legacy institution. Part of the legacy that endures, even as its members labor to overcome it, is a history of discourse which is structured upon certain social and political epistemological assumptions. These assumptions involve class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and ability as categories for constructing a discursive social identity that is marked and bounded. The history of women in the SBL helps us to expose and critically examine these discursive and social structures, which continue to present obstacles, especially for women and men of color, queer scholars, international scholars outside of Europe, Canada, and Australia, and differently abled scholars.

The first observation noted in the contributors' essays is that, in the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries, class status and Whiteness were necessary social identity markers in order for women to carve out a presence in the fields of religious studies and archaeology. The academic guild of biblical scholars, linguists, and archaeologists, as well as the women who aspired to join it during this period, was marked by its efforts to obscure the importance of these markers for establishing its own social identity. Given this, it is not surprising that women and men of color and from less privileged social classes have been invisible throughout most of the history of the Society.

The second is that male mentors were often the key players in women being able to gain access. The price of being mentored, however, was to endure indignities, humiliations, and patronizing behavior by those same mentors. Moreover, these mentors made their support conditional upon their female mentees internalizing and advancing the gendered, racialized norms that had emerged as salient in the Society's own social identity. This changed as more women entered the guild. Female scholars became committed to mentoring younger female scholars without expecting them to endure the same indignities and demands to internalize the Society's salient norms. Often it was their intervention that allowed younger scholars to flourish. But, as we will see, senior female scholars also exacted a price.

Third, many female scholars survived what Miranda Fricker has called "testimonial" or "hermeneutical injustice."[146] Established scholars would fail either to grant them credibility as knowing agents or to provide epistemological resources for them as female scholars entering the guild to make sense of their experiences.[147]

Finally, in spite of their contributions, many senior female biblical scholars also constructed new sets of regulatory social norms that silenced and denied credibility to the testimony of queer, differently abled, or other minoritized scholars. They did this while making concerted efforts to open the door for up-and-coming White female scholars. These scholars had so internalized the norms of the academic guild that they were unable to perceive their own efforts to construct new social norms. These new norms did not take into account the urgent questions of women or men of color, international, or differently abled scholars. They constructed their salient identity markers as normative for all women and thus reproduced the same kind of epistemic injustices that they had inherited, merely shifting the sites of the discursive boundaries in the process.

In all of these ways, the history of women marks a history of knowing agents being forced first to perceive, then to identify, then to choose whether to overcome or internalize social norms that had regulated and policed the boundaries of the social group identified as

biblical scholars and internalized as part of the development of the Society of Biblical Literature. Charles Mills has argued that this kind of epistemic injustice, which emerges from group norms that have been mystified and obfuscated, is to be expected rather than remarked on. "Structural social injustice," he notes, that is supposedly precluded by the society's founding principles will generate structural opacities that can be thought of as epistemic injustices on an industrial and institutional scale, since they are requisite for maintaining the existing order."[148] The history of women in the SBL in this sense is not unique. Nevertheless, the ideological obfuscations that it brings to the fore are worth examining.

We turn now to examples of these obfuscations from the histories recounted in these essays. Kristine Henriksen Garroway, in her treatment of Gertrude Bell and Kathleen Kenyon – both early female archaeologists – demonstrates that, to the extent that women were able to make inroads into the Society, it was because they drew on their resources of class status and Whiteness. At the same time, these women ignored or failed to acknowledge the significant role played by such status markers in giving them entrée into traditionally male social spaces. That is not to say that these pioneering women did not display commendable independence, creativity, intelligence, resourcefulness, and a willingness to reject or to overcome these gendered norms which exerted powerful pressures on women of their era (late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries). It is to note, though, that Bell and Kenyon implicitly understood that in order to gain access, they must assent to the obfuscation.

Bell and Kenyon were upper class, wealthy British women and were afforded access and opportunities rare to those in other social groups. While these resources do not negate the intrepid nature of these early female archaeologists, they do explain why it was these women and not others whom we remember with honor. In that sense, we must acknowledge the complex social forces that made it possible for them to excel in the ways they did. Other excellent women of that era, not blessed with those resources, have gone into obscurity. The role played by their class and gender needs to be part of the record.

Henriksen Garroway also exposes us to the obfuscation of male hierarchical assumptions crucial to the mentoring offered by prominent male academics. Liz Bloch-Smith's claim that Larry Stager "permitted" her to participate in an archaeological dig although pregnant highlights the extent to which male-defined norms of acceptable gendered behavior could only be crossed if a male "permitted it." Hence, while Bloch-Smith made important inroads as a scholar, an important factor in her success was her willingness to assent to hierarchical gender norms and her "luck" in finding a male mentor who employed

them to her benefit. as well as his. Bloch-Smith also had to work twice as hard as her male colleagues given the male-defined family expectations she encountered. While women in the early and mid-twentieth century made inroads, they were expected to labor silently, without complaint, and without the kinds of support systems enjoyed by their male colleagues, maintaining the fiction that the male colleagues achieved their accomplishments on their own. All of this was due to the normalization of certain gendered, hierarchical norms that shaped and policed behavior of members of the guild of biblical and archaeological scholars.

For many of these early women scholars, the cost of having doors open for them by men was to accept and endure indignities and injustices assumed by their mentors to be normative for social interactions. That is, if they had resisted those injustices, they would have been shut out forever. The price they paid for entrance was silent assent. An example of this is Henriksen Garroway's recounting of Nancy Lapp's story. Lapp had applied for a scholarship to study at ASOR but was told that, although she was deserving of the scholarship, they had decided to turn her down and offer it to her husband instead since he was the head of the household. In this way, Nancy's commendable scholarship and presumably well-crafted application were not sufficient for her to overcome these social obstacles placed in her way. She would have known that the price to continue to maintain status within those circles was to accept the unjust verdict with grace and hope for future opportunities.

Susanne Scholz tells of the indignities that Judith McKinlay endured as late as 1990, when her nomination for a position as Chair in Old Testament Studies at Knox Theological Hall was disputed all the way to the Presbyterian Church's highest court. To be sure, McKinlay ultimately was installed; however, the appointment had to have been bittersweet given her recognition of the role that entrenched gender hierarchies played in delaying the decision. She nevertheless graciously accepted the appointment.

Happily, once women did make inroads, other women stated that their paths were smoothed for them by female mentors. Nevertheless, the reality that the earlier generation of women could not have accomplished much that they did without "permission" must be part of the record of the barriers placed in the way of women's attainment of discursive power within the academic world of religious studies. Moreover, as we have alluded, female mentorship itself constructed its own restrictive norms that merely reproduced the discursive models of power that already existed in the Society.

Miranda Fricker argues that epistemic practices of any social group – the ways of knowing and the pre-assumptions about what makes a person a credible knower – are deeply

political. In order to make her point, Fricker famously has coined the phrase "epistemic injustice" to identify two situations. The first is "*testimonial injustice*," which she describes as "a wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower." It occurs when hearers or entire social groups set up pre-assumptions that impair the perception of hearers within those groups with the result that they are not likely to lend credibility to a speaker because of that speaker's social situatedness. The second type of epistemic injustice that Fricker identifies is "*hermeneutical injustice,*" which she describes as resulting "when a gap in collective interpretive resources" creates an environment in which social agents cannot even come to speech or craft a theory to describe their social experiences.[149]

Fricker causes us to consider that social groups, in forming their identities, form epistemic norms as mechanisms to control people's behavior and actions.[150] It is in the interests of the social custodians and high-status individuals at the center of social groups to obscure and mystify these mechanisms so that they are presented as self-evident and inevitable. Once members of the group have internalized these epistemic norms, this lessens the need to use overt coercive force to maintain the social power underwritten by those norms. Only those who test the norms – those on the social margins – experience the silencing and disenfranchising power of the norms as coercive. Others internalize them and assent to them as normative and just. It is the liminal figures – in the case of the guild of biblical scholars, women, scholars of color, international scholars, queer, and differently abled scholars – who experience the social violence and injustice of having their testimony deemed not credible simply based on either their social situatedness or the questions they bring to the guild.

José Medina argues that both forms of injustice – testimonial and hermeneutical – incapacitate not only the knower whose knowledge production has been deemed not credible but also the hearers who, because of the political power of the reigning epistemologies, do not have adequate resources to respond. Medina writes, "In the hermeneutical and testimonial injustices we encounter in our epistemic interactions, we find specific problems and obstacles that disadvantage subjects and limit their capacities to express concerns and demands, and they also limit their interlocutors' capacities to register, process, and respond to those concerns and demands adequately."[151] Epistemic injustice, then, produces what Medina calls "bodies of ignorance." A social group normalizes certain epistemic assumptions by deeming certain "bodies of ignorance" to be as necessary as certain "bodies of knowledge."[152] Charles Mills calls this phenomenon "strategic 'ignorance.'"[153] These "bodies of ignorance" occur when dominant social agents in a particular social group determine that certain discursive

realms, such as those explored by minoritized scholars, are unworthy of exploration or are illegitimate sources for scholarship.

Fricker and Medina describe the mechanisms by which discursive communities construct norms that affirm certain persons as credible knowing agents and others as non-credible and hence incapable of producing legitimate knowledge. One mechanism is to force would-be knowing agents into peripheral areas of research. Our contributors give several examples of how now-senior female biblical scholars were forced to carve out spaces, albeit liminal, in which they could participate in the discursive social group. They did so by researching topics male scholars were simply not interested in researching. Henriksen Garroway writes of Susan Ackerman describing how this process drove her own research. Susanne Scholz writes of Tikva Frymer-Kensky being told that if she explored feminist approaches in her research, her career would be ruined. The price paid by Ackerman, Frymer-Kensky, and others to gain access to the guild was to accept that their work would be marginalized and labeled as peripheral.

Social groups construct collective norms as a way of forming social identity. There arises a consensus among the custodians of the epistemic norms as to which questions are legitimate to be asked. The SBL, developing in a period in which Enlightenment era norms were salient, offered an environment in which only certain questions, based on Enlightenment assumptions, were considered worth researching. Not surprisingly, those questions arose out of the urgent issues faced by those who constructed the norms. Women thus were faced with a difficult decision, and this epistemic demand is still placed on women and minoritized scholars. On the one hand, the message we still often receive is that, in order to gain entrée into the guild, we must internalize and assent to the urgent questions produced by the ways of knowing that flow out of the historic, social, group norms. Yet, at the same time, if we do so, we often experience Fricker's testimonial injustice as we present the fruits of our research. We sometimes are not granted credibility as knowing agents. Therefore, we explore other urgent questions that flow out of our own social situatedness – questions in which traditional members of the guild simply have not been interested. This results in our marginalization and compartmentalization into sub-genres of knowing that guild members at large do not feel compelled to explore. Gender and Queer Studies and critical race theory were compartmentalized and not granted epistemic legitimacy until very recently.

On the other hand, if promising young scholars choose to explore the urgent questions that arise out of their social situatedness, like Frymer-Kensky, they are warned by their male

mentors that they will be ruining their careers. Our contributor, Sara Parks, calls this "niche" work that is expected to be optional and a "side-gig."

The real scholarship, it is still assumed in many circles, is the work that addresses the urgent questions and accepts the pre-assumptions of those who define and assent to the discursive social center. Henriksen Garroway notes that in her interviews, the pressure to internalize Anglo-European, masculinizing and colonizing epistemic norms was a common trope among women scholars who are now in their sixties and seventies. Parks argues that this divide continues, referring to "an impermeable conceptual wall between them and what is perceived as 'regular scholarship.'" She gives several examples from Bernadette Brooten's illustrious career to demonstrate this divide, including her efforts to challenge the "unargued assumption" present among her peers that there were no female Jewish priestesses during the Second Temple period. Parks points out that Brooten studied the same inscriptions that male scholars had studied; however, the male colleagues had dismissed evidence even though it was based on a prevailing plain-sense reading of the inscriptions. Ally Kateusz, who is currently writing on women priests in early Christianity, finds the same kind of dismissal of her research, even though she has identified countless artifacts and ancient Christian iconography to support her claims.[154] Carly Daniel-Hughes remarks on the verbal attacks, threats of harm, and tenuous status within her university that Jane Schaberg received in response to her publication, *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Theological Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives.* Female and minoritized scholars, despite carrying out painstaking and thorough research, consistently have had to overcome such epistemic suspicion in challenging the pre-assumptions of the guild.

In many cases, the senior White female scholars who had carved out places in which they had gained epistemic testimonial credibility, were careful and intentional in ensuring that younger female scholars be given much more credibility. Scholz writes of Judith McKinlay, a White New Zealander, who has made explicit the claim that social location drives the questions we ask. McKinlay has openly acknowledged that she is a member of a social group that colonized and displaced Maoris. Scholz also gives a nod to Phyllis Trible, who sought to bring readerly attention not just to gender but also to race. Parks recounts that Brooten and Frymer-Kensky both acknowledged the significance of womanist readings and the key roles that race plays in meaning construction. Happily, we could recount many such examples of senior White women scholars working to shift the epistemic norms.

Nevertheless, just as often, women of color have found that White feminist senior

scholars create environments not unlike those of the larger guild in their efforts to control the epistemic norms that they themselves had forged. Daniel-Hughes notes how black female scholars recognized quickly that the claims of female solidarity among White feminists was based on an assumption of an essentialized category called "woman," unchanged across time and geographic space. This norm, produced in scholarly feminist circles, effectively masked the key differences observed by minoritized women—young women, women of color, and queer women. This new epistemic social space changed the boundaries of the norms for testimonial credibility but not the silencing and cloaking of power that marked those norms nor the racialized nature of those discursive strategies. Daniel-Hughes notes that, while minoritized feminists have brought this testimonial injustice to the fore, the "fantasy of feminist solidarity" remains to this day. Because of these abuses of discursive power, she claims, the academy, even when female voices are granted testimonial credibility, often becomes a place of pain and self-doubt rather than a place of healing as suggested by its dominant voices.

Daniel-Hughes recommends that the most important feature of feminist-critical scholarship is its location within critical theory. She argues that, rather than defining ourselves as all being feminist, we define ourselves as all being committed to a critical hermeneutic. Her argument is that we will better be able to address testimonial injustice if our commitment is not just to some essentialized notion of "woman." Rather, it must be to a hermeneutic centered on critical evaluation of how discursive power becomes normalized and how it becomes reified into boundary-creating mechanisms that result in injustice toward those whose questions are not considered normative or whose voices are not granted legitimacy. Claiming to be feminist alone does not exempt us from the impulse to construct discursive spaces that support our interests in a way that silences and disenfranchises others.

Shively Smith offers us resources that advanced this kind of critical challenge even before Foucault and Fricker offered the terminologies of "discipline and punish" or "testimonial" and "epistemic injustice."[155] Smith describes Anna Julia Cooper, writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, who argued for the necessity of listening to, and attending to "those rendered most neglected, exploited, disenfranchised, invisible, and silenced by our Western-contrived societies," in Smith's words. While not employing the same semantic field, Cooper was arguing for the need in education to create space for those who had not been rendered credible because of race, gender, or class. Smith also cites Clarice Martin, who wrote openly about the constraints imposed by the White-dominated interests of

the academy. While these scholars may not have been employing the same philosophical categories as Foucault and Fricker, they recognized the social violence that occurred when questions that arise from spaces situated outside of the academic social center get marked as not credible or, worse, not even worthy of coming to speech or expression to describe them.

Shively Smith, like Carly Daniel-Hughes, also argues for an ongoing commitment to a critical gaze. She adds the importance of engaging in this critical work together. She draws on Martin and the late Toni Morrison to call us to imagine otherwise. Smith calls us to engage critically the unspoken yet oppressive epistemic injustices that we women – especially we White women – are just as capable of fostering as our male colleagues. It is as important to turn this critical gaze on ourselves as it is to turn it on others. Like Daniel-Hughes, Shively Smith calls on us to designate this critical gaze as central to our task as scholars and educators.

José Medina shares these concerns. He suggests that we engage in "epistemic resistance," "resistant imaginations," taking into account our "sensibilities" as well as our practices, and actively seeking out dissenting viewpoints, as ways to maintain critical social stances and practices.[156] We have a long way to go. Shively Smith, as an African American female scholar, asks, "Do people who look like me successfully pursue and earn doctoral degrees in biblical studies?" Too often, the answer is no. This concern is even more urgent among Latina scholars, who make up an even more miniscule fraction of biblical scholars in the U.S. While we celebrate, honor, and treasure our female innovators who carved out the epistemic space to see ourselves as contributors, we nevertheless recognize that the task of critically evaluating discursive power moves must be consistently at the center of our academic endeavors.

Kay Higuera Smith, Ph.D., is Professor of Biblical and Religious Studies and Program Director of the Religious Studies Minor program at Azusa Pacific University. She writes about social justice issues as they relate to Critical Gender Theory, and Postcoloniality. In her most recent publication, she was Editor-in-Chief of *Postcolonial Evangelical Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2014). She currently has two books under contract, one on the historical figure of Mary of Nazareth, and another on Latinx Biblical Hermeneutics.

[1] Marion Ann Taylor, "Celebrating 125 Years of Women in the Society of Biblical Literature (1894–2019)," in *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature,* ed. Nicole L. Tilford, Biblical Scholarship in North America 29 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 1.

[2] Ibid., 9.

[3] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 19–20.

[4] Tilford, *Women and the Society of Biblical Literature,* xi–xiv.

[5] The quote is attributed to Agatha Christie.
https://quoteinvestigator.com/2016/07/12/husband/

[6] Georgina Howell, *Gertrude Bell: Queen of the Dessert, Shaper of Nations* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008).

[7] Miriam C. Davis, *Dame Kathleen Kenyon, Digging Up the Holy Land* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008), 12.

[8] Davis, *Dame Kathleen Kenyon*, 12.

[9] *Inter alia,* Kathleen Kenyon, *Digging Up Jericho* (London: E. Benn, 1957); *Digging Up Jerusalem* (London: Book Club Associates, 1975); *Excavations at Jericho* vols. 1–5 (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1960–1983).

[10] While both Bell and Kenyon enjoyed tremendous success in field archaeology it is notable that neither woman married. In light of the stories to come, one wonders if this life-choice had something to do with their engagement and success in the field.

[11] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMQHmUPrU5g

[12] *Inter alia,* Nancy Lapp, "A Comparative Study of a Hellenistic Pottery Group from Beth-zur," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 151 (1958): 16–27; Ovid R. Sellars, Robert W. Funk, John L. McKenzie, Paul Lapp, and Nancy Lapp, *The 1957 Excavation at Beth-zur* (Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1968); Nancy Lapp and Paul Lapp, *Discoveries in the Wadi ed-Daliyeh* (Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1974); Nancy Lapp and John Allen Graham, *The Third Campaign at Tell el-Ful: the excavations of 1964* (Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1981); Nancy Lapp and R. Brown, *The Excavations at Araq el-Emir*, Ann Arbor, MI: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1983 (with Brown, R.); Nancy Lapp, "Cylinder Seals and Impressions of the Third Millennium B.C. from the Dead Sea Plain," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research 273 (1989): 1–15; Nancy Lapp and T.

J. Barako, *Tell er-Rumeith: The Excavations of Paul Lapp, 1962 and 1967* (Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2014).

[13] September 14, 1981. https://people.com/archive/eric-and-carol-meyers-didnt-dig-the-ark-in-raiders-they-found-the-real-thing-vol-16-no-11/

[14] Carol Meyers, "Accidental Biblical Scholar," in *Women in the Society of Biblical Literature*, ed. Nicole Tilford (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 81.

[15] Meyers, "Accidental Biblical Scholar," 83.

[16] Meyers, "Accidental Biblical Scholar," 83.

[17] Carol Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[18] Meyers, "Accidental Biblical Scholar," 86.

[19] Jodi Magness, *Debating Qumran: Collected Essays on its Archaeology* (Leuven: Peters, 2005); *Stone and Dung, Oil and Spit: Jewish Daily Life in late Second Temple Palestine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011); *The Archaeology of the Holy Land: From the Destruction of Solomon's Temple to the Muslim Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); *Masada: From Jewish Revolt to Modern Myth* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

[20] Magness has been recognized for her work at various sites and appears in many different documentaries (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm2669542/).

[21] Personal email correspondence.

[22] Personal email correspondence.

[23] Susan Ackerman, *Under Every Green Tree: Popular Religion in Sixth Century Judah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

[24] From interview with the *Oberlin Review*, 2015.

[25] Interview with *Dartmouth News* 2017 upon being awarded the *Elizabeth Howland Hand-Otis Norton Pierce Award for a Faculty Member Who Is an Outstanding Teacher of Undergraduates.*

[26] Other works by Ackerman include: *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2009); *When Heroes Love: The Ambiguity of Eros in the Stories of Gilgamesh and David* (New York, NY: Columbia University, 2012).

[27] Kristine Henriksen Garroway, *Children in the Ancient Near Eastern Household*, EANEC 3

(Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014); *Growing Up in Ancient Israel: Children in Material Culture and Biblical Texts*, ABS 23 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2018).

[28] Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practice and Beliefs about the Dead* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); "Life in Judah From the Perspective of the Dead," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 65.2 (2002): 120–130; "Resurrecting the Iron I Dead," *Israel Exploration Journal* 54.1 (2004): 77–91.

[29] Personal email correspondence.

[30] Beth Alpert Nakahi, "Archaeology/History," in *Women in the Society of Biblical Literature*, ed. Nicole Tilford (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 117.

[31] Beth Alpert Nakhai, *Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel* (Atlanta: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2001); ed. *The Near East in the Southwest: Essays in Honor of William Dever*, Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research 58 (Atlanta: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2003); "Female Infanticide in Iron II Israel and Judah," in *Sacred History, Sacred Literature Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible and Religion in Honor of R. E. Friedman on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Shawna Dolansky (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 245–60; "When Considering Infants and Jar Burials in the Middle Bronze Age Southern Levant," in *Tell It in Gath: Studies in the History and Archaeology of Israel. Essays in Honor of A. M. Maier on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday,* ÄGYPTEN UND ALTES TESTAMENT 90, eds. Itzhaq Shai, Jeffrey R. Chadwick, Louise Hitchcock, Amit Dagan, Chris McKinny and Joe Uziel (Weisbaden, Ugarit-Verlag 2018), 100–28.

[32] From the 1991 movie "What About Bob."

[33] Alpert Nakhai, "Archaeology/History," 124.

[34] Alpert Nakhai, "Archaeology/History," 123.

[35] Whereas Alpert Nakhai was not able to return to the field, others, like Shafer Elliot, may be able to do fieldwork because their children are older, or their husbands can be the primary care giver during the summer. The stories here demonstrate the diverse family situations of the women in the field and the different choices that each family makes based on their own family needs.

[36] Personal email correspondence.

[37] Deborah O'Daniel Cantrell, *The Horsemen of Israel: Horses and Chariotry in Monarchic Israel (Ninth–Eighth Centuries B.C.E.)*, HACL 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

[38] Erin Darby, *Interpreting Judean Pillar Figurines: Gender and Empire in Judean Apotropaic Ritual* FAT 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

[39] Ulrike Bail, Frank Crüsemann, et al. (eds.), *Bibel in gerechter Sprache* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005); Luise Schottroff and Marie-Theres Wacker (eds.), *Kompendium Feministische Bibelauslegung* (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser/Gütersloher Verlagshaus 1998).

[40] Judith McKinlay, "Biblical Border Slippage and Feminist Postcolonial Criticism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, in press).

[41] Phyllis Trible, "Take Back the Bible," *Review and Expositor* 97 (Fall 200): 428.

[42] Fortress Press published both volumes.

[43] Phyllis Trible, "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Literature," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 41 (March 1973).

[44] Phyllis Trible, "Five Loaves and Two Fishes: Feminist Hermeneutics and Biblical Theology," *Theological Studies* 50.2 (1989): 295.

[45] Trible, Take Back the Bible," 431.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Susanne Scholz, *Rape Plots: A Feminist-Cultural Study of Genesis 34* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000).

[48] Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Introduction: A Retrospective," in *Studies in Bible and Feminist Criticism* (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 2006), xi–xii.

[49] Ibid., xiii.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid., xiv.

[55] Ibid., xv.

[56] Ibid., xvi.

[57] Ibid., xvii.

[58] Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "The Bible and Women's Studies," in *Feminist Perspectives on Jewish Studies*, ed., Lynn Davidman and Shelly Tenenbaum (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 16.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., 18.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid., 23.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., 23–24.

[65] Frymer-Kensky, "Introduction," xviii.

[66] Frymer-Kensky, "The Bible and Women's Studies," 24.

[67] Frymer-Kensky, "Introduction," xxi.

[68] Tom McKinlay, "A life well spend in search of knowledge," (May 11, 2019): https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/otago-daily-times/20190511/283171494970543.

[69] Judith E. McKinlay, "Biblical Border slippage and Feminist Postcolonial Criticism," in *The Oxford Handbook on Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, in press).

[70] McKinlay, "A life well spend in search of knowledge."

[71] Judith E. McKinlay, "Jezebel and the Feminine Divine in Feminist Postcolonial Focus," in *Feminist Frameworks and the Bible: Power, Ambiguity, and Intersectionality*, ed. L. Juliana Claassens and Carolyn J. Sharp (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 630; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 60.

[72] Judith E. McKinlay, "A Matter of Difference," chap. in *Reframing Her: Biblical Women in Postcolonial Focus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2004), 16–17.

[73] McKinlay, "Jezebel and the Feminine Divine," 60.

[74] McKinlay, "A life well spend in search of knowledge."

[75] Johanna Stiebert, "A Response and Tribute to Judith McKinlay," *The Bible & Critical Theory* 15.1 (2019): https://www.bibleandcriticaltheory.com/issues/vol15-no1-2019/vol-15-no-1-2019-a-response-and-tribute-to-judith-mckinlay/.

[76] www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/

[77] Bernadette Brooten, *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

[78] Bernadette Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues* (Chico: Scholars, 1982).

[79] Bernadette Brooten, "'Junia...Outstanding among the Apostles' (Romans 16:7)," *Women Priests: A Catholic Commentary on the Vatican Declaration* (ed. Leonard Swidler and Arlene Swidler; NY: Paulist, 1977), 141–144; German translation in *Frauenbefreiung. Biblische und theologische Argumente* (ed. Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel; Munich: Kaiser, 1978), 148–151.

[80] Bernadette Brooten, "Jüdinnen zur Zeit Jesu. Ein Plädoyer für Differenzierung." *Theologische Quartalschrift* 161 (1981): 281–285; also appeared in *Frauen in der Männerkirche?* (ed. Bernadette Brooten and Norbert Greinacher; Mainz: Grünewald; Munich: Kaiser, 1982), 141–148.

[81] Brooten, *Love Between Women.*

[82] Sara Parks, "'The Brooten Phenomenon': Moving Women from the Margins in Second-Temple and New Testament Scholarship." *The Bible & Critical Theory* 14/2 (2018): 46–64.

[83] Section six is dependent on material that first appeared in Parks, "'The Brooten Phenomenon': 46–64, and is used by permission of *The Bible & Critical Theory* journal.

[84] Sharon L. James and Sheila Dillon, eds., *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2012).

[85] Susan Grossman and Rivka Haut, eds., *Daughters of the King: Women and the Synagogue* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

[86] Lee Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale, 2000).

[87] Ross S. Kraemer, "A New Inscription from Malta and the Question of Women Elders in the Diaspora Jewish Communities," *Harvard Theological Review* 78/3–4 (1985): 431–38.

[88] Italics font is my own. Anna J. Cooper, Charles C. Lemert, and Esme Bhan, *The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper: Including A Voice from the South and Other Important Essays, Papers, and Letters*. Legacies of Social Thought (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), 250. Cooper uses the language of head, heart, and hand elsewhere in an 1886 essay titled, "Womanhood: A Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race" saying: "Will not the aid of the Church be given to prepare our girls in head, heart, and hand for the duties and responsibilities that await the intelligent [woman] wife…" See Anna Julia Cooper and Janet Neary. *A Voice from the South*. Dover Thrift Editions (New York: Dover Publications, 2016), 18; Cooper, Lemert, Bhan, *The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper*, 70.

[89] This essay is a lightly revised version of the original paper presentation offered at the 2019 Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) Annual Meeting in San Diego, California called, "Recovering Female Interpreters of the Bible." The purpose of the session was to honor the 125th Anniversary of the first woman invited to become a member of SBL, Anna Ely Rhoads. The panel was charged to offer personal stories and reflections on women scholars and mentors in the field that have impacted the invited panelists and extended the legacy of Rhoads in SBL. This essay upholds the spirit of that task in its storytelling and narration of Drs. Anna Julia Cooper and Clarice J. Martin.

[90] "However, it must be noted that the first volume of *Searching the Scriptures* (Schüssler Fiorenza 1993) is not dedicated to Stanton but to the memory of Anna Julia Cooper, an African American foremother of feminist biblical studies. The contributors to the volume were not primarily Society of Biblical Literature members but feminist contributors located in different areas of religious studies. The second commentary volume of *Searching the Scriptures* (Schüssler Fiorenza 1994) sought to honor *The Woman's Bible* project of Stanton but did not adopt its title because of the problematic confessional and racist underpinnings of this historic work." Quoted in, Marion Ann Taylor, *Celebrating 125 Years of Women in the Society of Biblical Literature (1894-2019)* (Atlanta: SBLPress, 2019), 51. Also see, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Searching the Scriptures*: A *Feminist Introduction*, vol. 1 (New York: Crossroad, 1993); *Searching the Scriptures*: A *Feminist Commentary*, vol. 2 (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

[91] Hollis Robbins and Henry Louis, Gates, Jr., eds., *The Portable Nineteenth-Century African American Women Writers* (New York: Penguin, 2017), 414.

[92] A similar claim is echoed centuries later in the famous 1949 monograph by Howard Thurman called, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996 [1949]).

[93] Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *Stony the Road: Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Jim Crow* (New York, NY: Penguin Press, 2019), 6.

[94] Mia Bay, *To Tell the Truth Freely: The Life of Ida B. Wells* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2009), 15-16. Bay narrates the brief period of Reconstruction in the United States as the historical context for another African American woman literary writer and contemporary of Cooper, Ida B. Wells.

[95] Cooper, Lemert, Bhan, *The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper*, 69.

[96] Vivian M. May, "Thinking from the Margins, Acting at the Intersections: Anna Julia Cooper's A Voice from the South." *Hypatia* 19, no. 2 (2004): 87.

[97] Cooper, Lemer, and Bhan, *The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper*, 250.

[98] Clarice J. Martin, "The *Haustafeln* (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women," in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation*, edited by Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 206–231.

[99] Some of the quotations from Clarice J. Martin are taken from an email correspondence and interview that occurred in preparation for this panel and paper reflections. Clarice J. Martin, interviewed by Shively T. J. Smith, San Diego, CA, November 21, 2019.

[100] Martin, "The *Haustafeln*," 222.

[101] The concept of "intersectionality" was originally deployed and defined by legal scholar, Kimberlé Crenshaw in a 1989 essay titled, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," to characterize the multidimensionality of African American women's lived experience. Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine," *University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1989): 139–168; "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity, and Violence Against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43.6 (1991): 1245–46; Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge, *Intersectionality*. Key Concepts (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016), 7. In biblical studies, the concept has been deployed in recent conversations about biblical approaches in new textbooks and was the framing interpretive lens for the Gale Yee's 2019 SBL Presidential Address in San Diego, California at the SBL Annual Meeting called, "Thinking Intersectionally: Gender, Race, Class, and the etceteras of the Discipline." At the time of this paper revision, the address was not yet published in the guild's peer-reviewed journal called, Journal for Biblical Literature. Also see, Mitzi J. Smith and Yung Suk Kim, *Toward Decentering the New Testament: A Reintroduction (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018),* 52-53.

[102] Clarice J. Martin, "Womanist Interpretations of the New Testament: The Quest for Holistic and Inclusive Translation and Interpretation," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 6, no. 2 (1990): 41-61. The essay was reprinted in Mitzi J. Smith, *I Found God in Me: A Womanist Biblical Hermeneutics Reader* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2015), 19–41.

[103] Clarice J. Martin, "'Somebody Done Hoodoo'd the Hoodoo Man': Language, Power, Resistance, and the Effective History of Pauline Texts in American Slavery," *Semeia*, no. 83/84 (1998): 203. This article engages the complicated reception history of Pauline texts and American's history of slavocracy. It is also exceptionally generative for classroom conversation about the intersections and differences between the world of the Paul and the world of American social and geopolitical histories.

[104] This work informs my current emerging work on 19th century African American women literary writers and their bibles. Walter E. Fluker, *The Stones That the Builders Rejected: The Development of Ethical Leadership from the Black Church Tradition* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press, 1998), 47–72.

[105] Brian K. Blount, Cain Hope Felder, Clarice J. Martin, and Emerson B. Powery, *True to*

Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007).

[106] James H. Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power*, An Original Seabury Paperback (SP 59; New York: Seabury Press, 1969); James H. Cone and G. S. Wilmore, *Black Theology: A Documentary History*, 2 volumes (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979/1993); Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (American Academy of Religion Academy Series No. 64; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1989); J. Deotis Roberts, *Black Theology Today: Liberation and Contextualization* (Toronto Studies in Theology, v. 12; New York: E. Mellen Press, 1983); Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-talk* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1993).

[107] Clarice J. Martin, "Womanist Biblical Interpretation," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, John H. Hayes, gen. ed., vol. 2 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 655–658.

[108] Martin, "Womanist Biblical Interpretation," 2:657.

[109] Excerpt from written interview with Clarice J. Martin. See note 10.

[110] Ann Holmes Redding, "Together, Not Equal: The Rhetoric of Unity and Headship in the Letter to Ephesians." Order No. 9930857, Union Theological Seminary, 1999.

[111] Ann Holmes Redding, "The Christian Family and the Household Codes," *The Living Pulpit* 8.3 (1999): 36–37.

[1] This paper is drawn from a chapter entitled "Mary Magdalene in the Fantasy Echo: Reflections on the Feminist Historiography of Early Christianity," Pages 135–158 in *Re-Making the World: Categories and Early Christianity. Essays in Honor of Karen L. King.* Taylor Petrey, Carly Daniel-Hughes, Benjamin Dunning, Laura Nasrallah, and AnneMarie Luijendijk, eds. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019. This longer chapter weaves the discussion here with a consideration of Karen L. King's contribution to the field of early Christian studies. King is currently the Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard University and author of titles including *Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 2003) and *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[113] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 4.

[114] She is Kraft-Hiatt Professor of Christian Studies at Brandeis University (Waltham).

[115] She taught at Episcopal Divinity School (Cambridge) for thirty years and served as its Dean as well.

[116] She joined the faculty of Episcopal Divinity School in 1998.

[117] She taught at Brown University (Providence) where she was hired as Professor of Religious Studies in 2000.

[118] Outside of biblical studies, there was a rich repository of feminist scholars working in theology and the history of Christianity, for instance, Sara Coakley, Clarissa Atkinson, Ann Braude, and Amy Hollywood. In Boston, students also had access to scholars working in other institutions, such as Carter Heyward, Kwok Pui-Lan, and Mary Daly.

[119] See Scott, *The Fantasy of Feminist History* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011). 8-11.

[9] It is critical to stress that scholars of color have been working in the field of biblical studies for many decades, as the essay by Shively T.J. Smith on Clarice Martin importantly notes. Yet such work remains still "at the margins" of our field.

[121] Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 53.

[122]Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 57.

[123] Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 53.

[124] Rediscovered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Gospel of Mary has been preserved in Coptic the Berlin codex and two papyrus fragments. Likely originally wrttien in the second century, it contains a post-resurrection dialogue in which Mary relates a vision shown to her by Jesus regarding the soul's ascent.

[125] See King, *Gospel of Mary of Magdala: Jesus and the First Woman Apostle* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 2003) and Jane Schaberg, *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene: Legends, Apocrypha, and the Christian Testament* (New York: Continuum, 2006); other studies include Ann Graham Brock, *Mary Magdalene: The First Apostle. The Struggle for Authority* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Divinity School Press, 2003).

[126] Translation from King, *Gospel of Mary* 10*,* pgs. 17–18.

[127] Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 20. A well-known example from the field of feminist biblical studies would be the work of Jane Schaberg on the gospel infancy narratives. In her 1987 monograph, Schaberg argued that behind Matthew and Luke's birth stories lay not a tradition of virgin birth, but rather of Mary's illegitimate conception of Jesus as the result of rape. Jane Schaberg endured intense animosity, including verbal attacks, threats of harm and tenuous status within her university in response to its publication; see *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Theological Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives.* Twentieth Anniversary Edition (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield University Press, 2006), 3–10.

[128] See for instance, Cullen Murphy, *The Word According to Eve: Women and the Bible in Ancient Times and Our Own* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998) and Barbara Kantrowitz and Anne Underwood, "The Bible's Lost Stories," *Newsweek Magazine* December 8, 2003, 49-59. Both of these titles are discussed in the longer chapter from which this essay is drawn.

[129] Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 65.

[130] Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 65.

[131] The Women's Bible refers to the commentary and translation project undertaken by Elisabeth Cady Stanton and a committee of women. This effort is evoked in the work of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and the terms "discipleship of equals" and "wo/men church" are also hers (taken up by other feminist scholars as well), see, *In Memory of Her*, 7–14, 140–155, and in the "New Introduction," xxx–xxxv. The other expressions here appear in book titles, namely Bernadette Brooten, *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Nicola Denzey, *The Bone Gatherers: The Lost Worlds of Early Christian Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007); more recently, Kate Cooper, *Band of Angels: The Forgotten World of Early Christian Women* (New York: Overlook Press, 2013). It is particularly interesting to read Cooper's forward in this monograph in light of the maternal fantasy (it details the story-telling of her mother and grandmother); her reading is somewhat of a surprise given that her earlier work challenged the notion that the Acts of Thecla was a gynocentric text, see Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 127–33.

[132] For feminist scholarship on this text, see Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses*, 120–36. For a discussion of early work on it, Shelly Matthews, "Thinking of Thecla: Issues in Feminist Historiography," *JFRS* 17:2 (2001), 39–55.

[133] For example, Gail P. Streete, *Redeemed Bodies: Women Martyrs in Early Christianity* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009).

[134] Two important articles appeared in the same year: Elizabeth A. Clark, "Holy Women, Holy Words: Early Christian Women, Social History and the Linguistic Turn," *JECS* 6:3 (1998): 413–30 and "The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the Linguistic Turn," *CH* 67:1 (1998): 1–31. Feminist scholars, of course, are now thinking through the implications of the material turn, a corrective to post-structuralist approaches that seemed to grant language too much epistemological priority and eschewed attention to materiality.

[135] Clark, "The Lady Vanishes," 5.

[136] See Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses*, especially 1–11.

[137] References here could be manifold: the work of bell hooks, Angela Davis, Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzadúla, Audre Lord, and Gayatri Spivak. In the field of biblical studies, as well, the work of Kwok Pui-Lan, Clarice Martin, Renita Weems, Dolores Williams and Elsa Tamez to name but a few powerful and critical voices.

[138] Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*, 6.

[139] Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 59.

[140] Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, 61.

[141] Scott, *Fantasy of Feminist History*, 37.

[142] For a complementary set of reflections that also deploys fantasy but to look at pedagogy and notions of "mastery," see Maia Kostrosits' chapter "Darkening the Discipline: Fantasies of Efficacy and the Art of Redescription," in *The Lives of Objects*: *Material Culture, Experience, and the Real in the History of Early Christianity.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming 2020.

[143] A notion in sympathy with Wallach Scott's introductory chapter "Flyers into the Unknown," *The Fantasy of Feminist History*, 1–22 and the essay by Judith Butler "The Question of Social Transformation" in *Undoing Gender* (New York, NY: Routledge Press, 2004), 204–231.

[144] This framing is part of her new work on "complaint"; see https://www.saranahmed.com/.

[145] Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2007), 14.

[146] In responses to Fricker, these two categories have been developed in much more complex ways; however, for our purposes, they suffice as is.

[147] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 1.

[148] Charles W. Mills, "Through a Glass Whitely: Ideal Theory as Epistemic Injustice," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 92 (2018): 58–59.

[149] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 1.

[150] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 4.

[151] José Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations*, Studies in Feminist Philosophy Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 10.

[152] José Medina, *Epistemology,* 14.

[153] Mills, "Through a Glass Whitely," 59.

[154] Ally Kateusz, *Mary and Early Christian Women: Hidden Leadership* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

[155] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* translated by Alan Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, 1977; Vancouver, WA: Vintage Books, 2nd ed., 1995); Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice.*

[156] José Medina, *Epistemology,* 3, 7, 10.