

WOMEN'S CONSULTATION ON CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGY

Topic:	Theologies of Trauma and Hope: Insights from Intersectionality
Conveners:	Rosemary P. Carbine, Whittier College Paulette Skiba, B.V.M., Clarke University
Moderator:	Elisabeth T. Vasko, Duquesne University
Presenters:	Jane Grovijahn, Our Lady of the Lake University Nancy Pineda-Madrid, Boston College

For its 2015 session, the Women's Consultation on Constructive Theology adopted "intersectionality" as its framework for attending to women's experiences. This session concluded a three-year cycle of themes for the Women's Consultation, which included "interreligiosity" in 2013 and "interculturality" in 2014. Intersectionality, a hermeneutic employed in fields of sociology and feminist studies, attends to the multiple spheres of influence in which a marginalized group may experience oppression. The Consultation invited two presenters to develop and apply this theme with a theological perspective. Both presenters pointed to the faithful's participation in and understanding of the body of Christ as a key theological foundation for considering multiple frameworks of trauma and hope.

Jane Grovijahn presented an interdisciplinary approach titled "The Sensus Fidelium in An Age of Trauma: Mapping Theological Disruption of the Imago Dei within the Intersectionality of Grace and Terror." Through the use of scholarly and literary texts, as well as images, Grovijahn invited her audience to consider how the body functions as the location for experiencing both trauma and grace. Trauma shapes the human person, "individually, indelibly," and permeates human memory, "leaking into everything, leaving permanent traces of insidious harm in our bodies." A Christian theological perspective, however, invites intersectionality; the body is not only the location for trauma, but the location for grace. Such a view attends to the theology of the Incarnation, in which Christ's body becomes the location for trauma and suffering, but realizes the ultimate experience of grace. Grovijahn suggested that embodiment, thus, not only houses "traumatic memory," but also becomes the site for "new formations" of grace to occur. She concluded by asking if, "as a Church," we are ready to find new ways of relating grace and trauma.

Nancy Pineda-Madrid offered a presentation titled "Femicide: Interrogating the Broken Body of Christ." Focusing on two instances of large-scale, systematic and brutal violence which targets women, in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua (Mexico) and in the Mar del Plata region (Argentina), Pineda-Madrid described the challenges and context of these attacks, which leave the perpetrators with impunity, and crucify "poor, brown women." These instances can no longer be considered isolated events, but are examples of a "poly-centric eruption" of sustained violence against women which warrants a response. Pineda-Madrid emphasized the complexity of these women's vulnerability, drawing on the intersectionality of their destruction; she suggested that intersectionality "increases a consciousness of the interplay of oppression and privilege" that mark these instances of femicide. Not only are these women forgotten because they are women, but because they are poor, culturally-marginalized "women of color." Pineda-Madrid concluded by asking how the reality of femicide's crucified victims challenges us to "refigure how we envision, embody, and desire the mystical body of Christ."

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Prompted by the speakers' presentations and concluding questions, attendees participated in round-table discussions, with central themes including a discussion of what is meant by the term, the "Mystical Body of Christ," and noting the role of the Cross and atonement theologies in attending to discussions of the suffering Christ.

Following the speakers' presentations and round-table discussions, Paulette Skiba, on behalf of the Women's Consultation, presented the Ann O'Hara Graff Award to Patricia Beattie Jung, Professor of Christian Ethics at the St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri. Mary Jo Iozzio of Boston College's School of Theology and Ministry, Susan Ross of Loyola University in Chicago, and Cristina Traina of Northwestern University, offered congratulatory words on the occasion. Approximately 70 persons attended the session and presentation of the Award.

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