

All manuscripts published in Claremont Journal of Religion are owned solely by the author(s). Authors retain copyright. When published, all manuscripts are available to read, download, search, and link for educational purposes. All authors agree to have CJR publish and distribute the article at CJR's discretion. Authors agree to hold CJR innocent for any unauthorized use of their manuscript. Commercial uses of the manuscripts published by CJR must be requested in writing to the Editor-in-Chief at [kile.jones@cst.edu](mailto:kile.jones@cst.edu) before distribution of any kind.

CJR is committed to promoting diversity (racial, sexual, ethnic, etc.) and fostering an environment of respect and compassion. We encourage submissions from minorities and marginalized groups.

ISBN-13# 978-1468118148

ISSN# 2162-3732

Claremont Journal of Religion ©, Kile Jones 2013

## Table of Contents

|                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Editor's Introduction</b>         | <u>4-7</u>   |
| <b>Interview with Ruth Messinger</b> | <u>8-13</u>  |
| <b>Interview with Ani Zonneveld</b>  | <u>14-18</u> |

### Women and Religion

- *'The Garment of Piety is Best': Islamic Legal and Exegetical Works on Bodily Covering* by Celene Ibrahim-Lizzio 19-54
- *Virgin Motherhood: A Case Study from the Life of St. Agatha* by Brooke Nelson 55-78
- *Review of Gina Messina-Dysert's 'Rape Culture and Spiritual Violence: Religion, Testimony, and Visions of Healing'* by Stephanie N. Arel 79-85
- *Toward a Stanpoint Hermeneutic: The Case of the Evangelical Gender Subordination Debate* by Landon Schnabel 86-112
- *Lived Religion in 140 Characters or Less: Lived Religion and the Art of Remembering in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by John Erickson 113-132

### Additional Articles

- *Killing New England's Golden Calf: William Bradford's Use of Moses as a Political Model in His Description of the Merrymount Crisis* by Seth Rushton 133-146
- *De Principium Originis: Thomistic Epistemology and the Doctrine of Creation* by Thomas Farmer 147-168
- *Review of Aaron Rizzieri's 'Pragmatic Encroachment, Religious Belief and Practice'* by Mark Satta 169-178

## **Editor's Introduction**

The recent litigation regarding same-sex marriage in the U.S. illustrates an important dialectic between religion and culture. That is, not only does religion affect culture, but culture affects religion, both in terms of creating objective realities and appropriating those realities. In particular, culture affects the way religious texts can be interpreted, resolved, in some cases updated, and in others, abandoned altogether. The acknowledgment of this revolving door equips us to engage thoughtfully with the relationship between women and religion, this issue's theme.

This issue begins with two interviews that illustrate how women within religious traditions are working toward gender equality. Ruth Messinger, president of the American Jewish World Service (AJWS), explains that by holding true to the central values of the Jewish tradition that underscore the equal value of all individuals, more and more women of faith are tackling issues of gender inequality and female empowerment both within the Jewish community and in society at large. In an interview with president and founder of Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV), Ani Zonneveld focuses on the topic of education and the importance of progressive Muslim scholars in combatting antiquated views of female roles in society. Zonneveld and the MPV invoke sacred texts to disprove justifications for contemporary injustices against women, justifications that are often upheld by what she explains as misguided appropriations of Sharia Law.

In addition, this issue of the Claremont Journal of Religion includes a book review of Gina Messina-Dysert's "Rape Culture and Spiritual Violence." In the review, Stephanie N. Arel gives a lucid overview of the book as a guide to dispelling the overwhelming presence

of rape culture that persists across societies regardless of religious affiliation. Arel discusses the prevailing silence that surrounds rape culture and dutifully asks the reader if and where resistance to rape culture can be found within the Christian tradition.

To follow are four pieces that examine women and religion from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Celene Ibrahim-Lizzio uses feminist theory of body to critique Muslim legal rulings regarding the female body. The author grounds such rulings in the patriarchal social locale of Muslim leaders and subsequently takes the reader through a scriptural investigation of the references to body covering to unveil the metaphor of the Quranic notion of the “garment of piety.” Further, to continue an historical venture into this issue’s topic, Brooke Nelson gives a comprehensive tour of virgin motherhood as seen through Saint Agatha. The author hones in on the ideological divergences between Roman (a la Cicero) and subsequent Christian depictions of virgin motherhood in the literature of the time.

Shifting gears to a contemporary consideration of women and religion, Landon Schnabel engages the evangelical subordination debate. Utilizing standpoint theory, Schnabel identifies inconspicuous power dynamics that persist within evangelical communities and goes on to call for a hermeneutic that is more attuned to the pervading structures of power and privilege. Additionally, Erickson takes the reader’s focus to the advent of social media in general, and the confluence of feminism and Twitter in particular. Erickson makes the case that Twitter has made the struggle for equality accessible and arguably more attainable because of the way in which the social media platform allows anecdotes and personal testimony to move outside of historical isolation in order to become lived experiences at the drop of a hashtag.

In moving away from the central topic, but in keeping with the Claremont Journal of Religion's continuing mission to explore religion at large, this issue features an additional book review and two scholarly pieces. Mark Satta reviews Aaron Rizziera's "Pragmatic Encroachment, Religious Belief and Practice." In his review, Satta gives a well-received and in-depth overview of the pragmatic encroachment principles as laid out by Rizziera. He then goes on to critique the author's demonstration of how these principles influence action-guiding beliefs. To follow, Thomas Farmer takes a magnifying glass to the theology of Thomas Aquinas with specific attention to the issue of God's knowability. Farmer eloquently situates the theologian's beliefs within and in contrast to prominent historical forbearers (among them, Aristotle and Parmenides) to show how Aquinas' positive understanding of the world and humanity, as well as the individual's ability to acquire transcendent knowledge of God, is the result of the existence of analogical truths between creative agents and creation.

Shifting away from epistemological concerns of belief, Seth Rushton contributes a wonderfully in-depth and playful piece on the events of a 17th century New England feud between Calvinist governor, William Bradford, and the egalitarian followers of Thomas Morton. In his investigation, Rushton argues that God-centric governor Bradford, of the Plymouth Plantation, justified an attack on the economically thriving Morton of the Merrymount Plantation. Rushton then draws scriptural similarities between the people and actions of Merrymount and those who were slain under God's orders for disrespecting the Covenant in Exodus 32.

Many thanks are in order to the talented scholars and leaders who contributed to this issue. In addition I would like to thank the journal's founder and a trailblazer in the field of inter-faith dialogue, Kile Jones. I would also like to thank our Editor-in-Chief, Kyle Thompson, and our Editors, Matthew Zaro Fisher and Geoffrey Weiss, for their immeasurable contribution to and oversight of this publication's intellectual caliber. Next, I would like to thank our team of referees and referee coordinator, Seth Nunan, without whose expertise this issue would not be possible. And last but not least, I want to thank Steve Eberhardt for contributing his fantastic photography for the cover.

Sincerely,

Courtney Anderson

*Editor*