

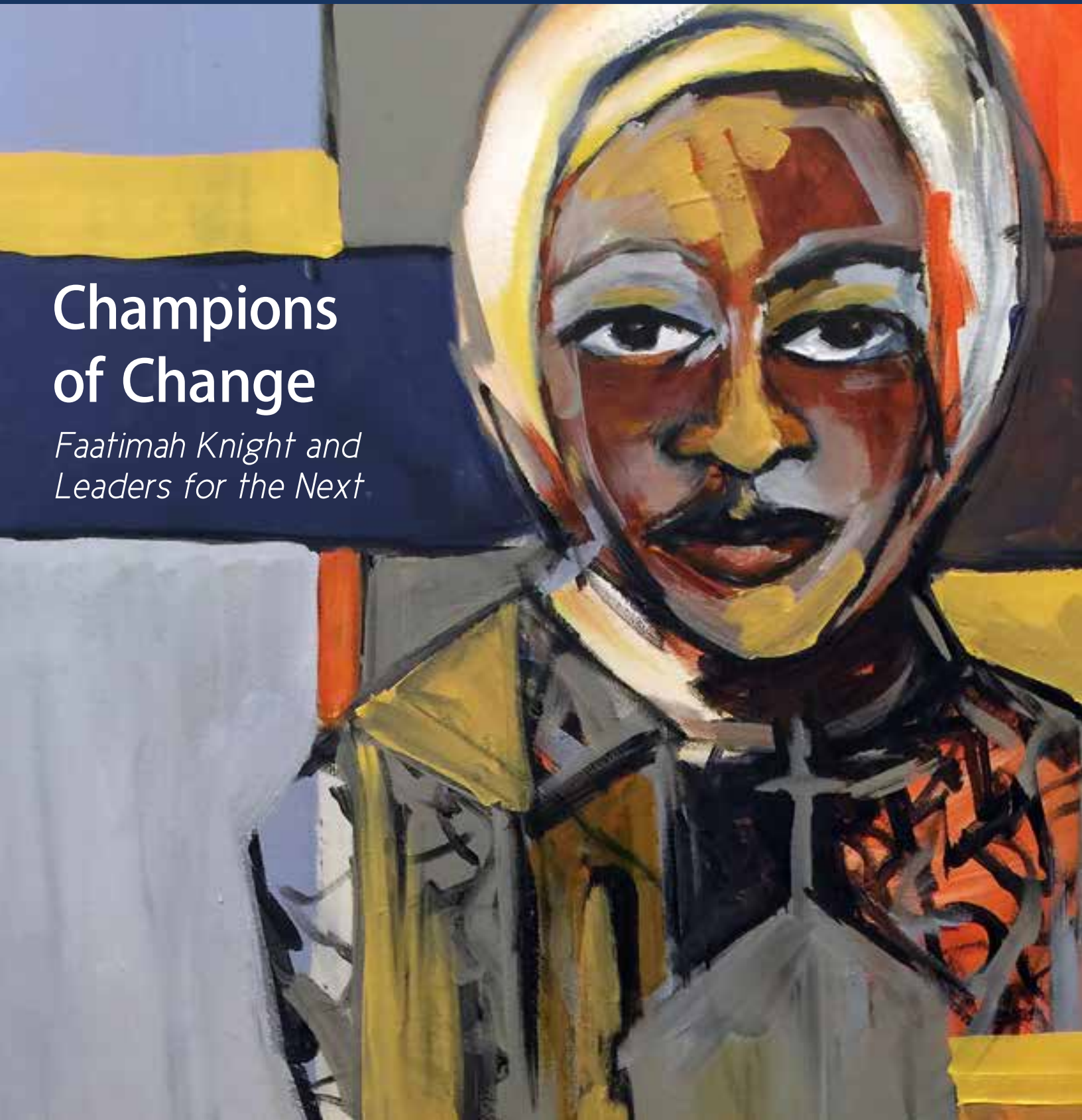
Challenge & Response

CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Winter 2016

Champions of Change

*Faatimah Knight and
Leaders for the Next*



President's Welcome

Alice Hunt, President



During the 1960s CTS welcomed a remarkable group of students from South Africa, many of whom became leaders in the anti-apartheid struggle. One of them, John deGruchy, has since published widely on Reformed Theology and its relationship to social change as well as on the relevance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer for resistance movements today. His contributions to the *Kairos Document* in South Africa in the 1980s helped galvanize international church opposition to the South African regime. In a reflection on the theological task following his time at CTS, deGruchy wrote,

"South Africans come to CTS out of a rather unusual third world context... In such a context theology becomes a pursuit which you either use to escape the issues, as many seem to do, or it becomes a means of engaging with the issues more clearly and directly, which is what I believe theology is largely about... [South African] students need to encounter a theology of adequate proportions and depth while at CTS. But then the same is true for other students – a theology without guts is useless to everyone concerned." (Found in Perry LeFevre, *Challenge and Response: The Chicago Theological Seminary Story, 1960-1980*).

Students do not come to CTS to escape the issues! They come seeking a "theology with

guts" and that is what animates the work of theological education in this place. The Commitments of CTS remind us of the call to "public ministry, articulating the cry of the dispossessed, the transcendent claim of true justice and helping to heal the wounds and divisions that disfigure the social body." This commitment is woven through our courses, our community life, our field education experiences, and our faculty's research – racism, sexism, homophobia, religious exclusivism, poverty.

This year our academic and extra-curricular work, as well as this issue of *Challenge & Response*, focuses on the theme, "Leaders for the Next: Leading Social Change." As you read about the work of our students and faculty in the context of the grave challenges to justice and peace in our world, I hope you will discover that our theological work continues to have the "adequate dimensions and depth" called for by our former student.

As always, know that we are profoundly grateful for your support of our work through your generous gifts and constant encouragement.

A handwritten signature in white ink, which appears to be 'A. Hunt', located in the bottom right corner of the page.

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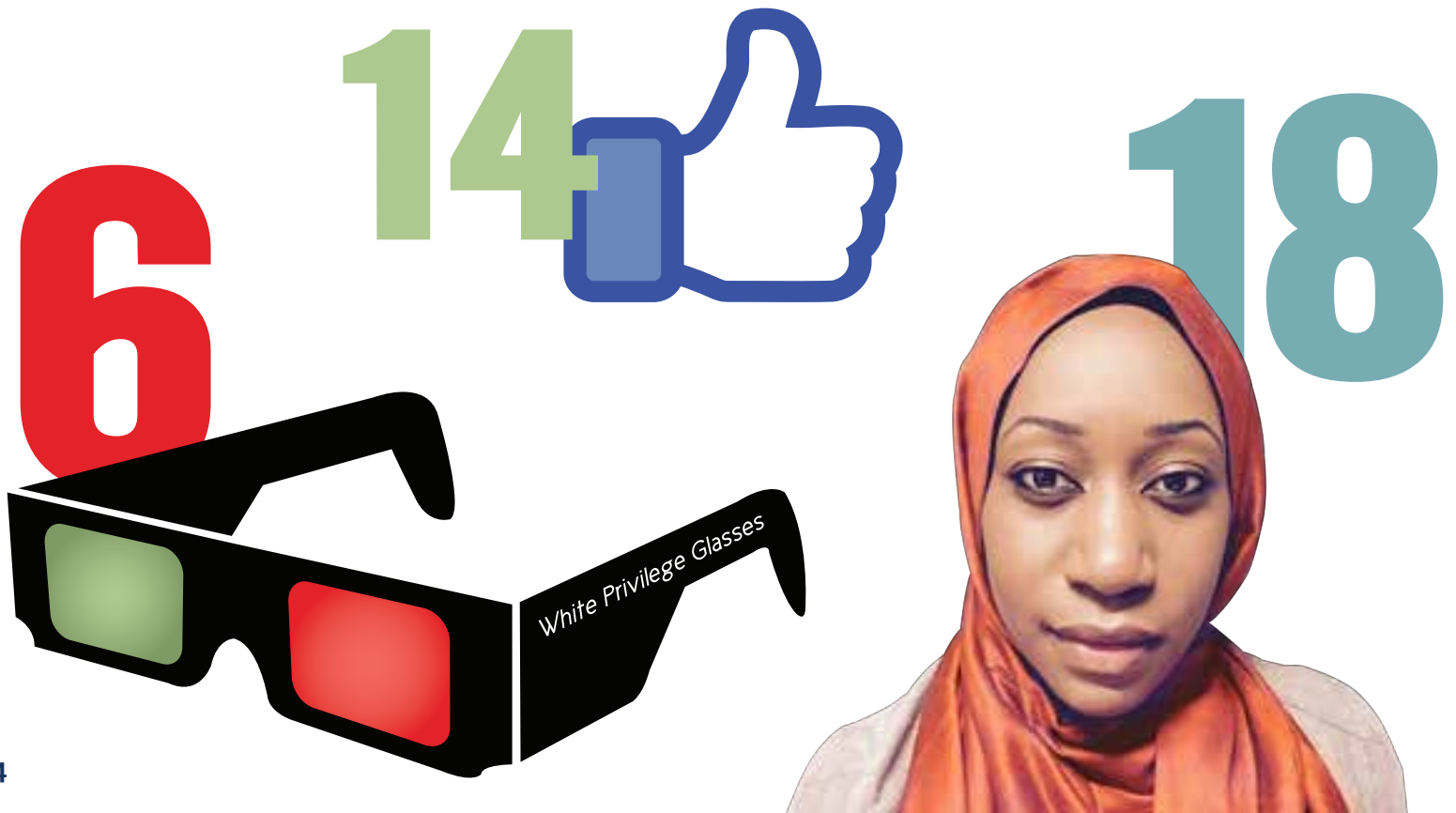
Rhonda K. Brown, "Faatimah," acrylic, 2015.
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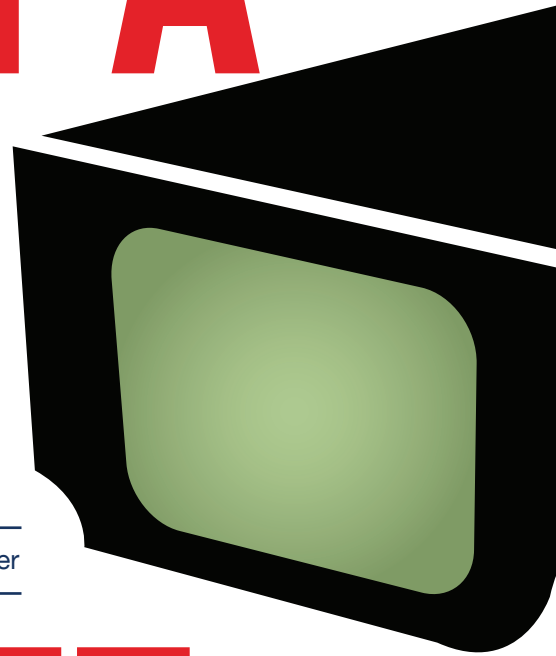
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PUTTING A FRESH LENS ON WHITE PRIVILEGE

Michael Jordan, Guest Writer



CTS Addresses Racism in New Online Video



Photos from the sets of "White Privilege Glasses" video shoot in Brooklyn, NY.



“Building the CTS brand goes far beyond promoting classes. It is also about becoming a leading voice in the national dialogue; championing important social justice issues.”

— Rhonda K. Brown

What if you could see what it was like to walk in someone else's shoes? What if you could actually experience the racism that others do on a daily basis? You would probably be more understanding of the notion of White Privilege.

That is the concept behind the new web video created by CTS called “White Privilege Glasses.” In it the main character, Mike, gets a pair of glasses, from his two African American friends, that opens his eyes to subtle racism in everyday life.

“At CTS, we believe the racial divide will change when the collective “we” not only understand the concepts of privilege; but together begin to identify and correct the systems that advantage one group over the other,” said Rhonda K. Brown, Vice President for Advancement.

“We intend for White Privilege Glasses to spark discussions about a very serious issue,” said Brown.

The CTS Advancement Team gathered in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, in mid-November to shoot this 60-second video. The plan is to launch the video and support it with additional guerrilla marketing techniques, including handing out actual White Privilege Glasses.

“Obviously, White Privilege is much more prevalent and

profound than we can show in a simple video. But we just wanted to start people thinking ... and talking,” said Susan Cusick, Director of Marketing.

Says Cusick, “White Privilege Glasses is not just a video – it’s a movement. Our plan is to make this message go viral. We will support it on social media and we need your help. Watch it online. “Like” it. Leave a comment. But, most importantly, share the message with your friends.”

The spot was created in conjunction with 31 Lengths, CTS’s New York-based marketing agency. 31 Lengths has produced a number of talked-about campaigns for CTS, the UCC and other faith-based organizations. Michael Jordan, the CEO of 31 Lengths, said, “Racism is the pre-eminent social justice issue of our time. In fact, this video was shot the same week that sit-ins were happening on college campuses and marches were happening in Chicago. The purpose of this spot is to challenge people to see the oppressive prevalence of racism in our world.”

All of this is just part of a larger effort to elevate CTS to the forefront of social activism. “Building the CTS brand goes far beyond promoting classes,” adds Brown. “It is also about becoming a leading voice in the national dialogue; championing important social justice issues.”

Watch the video and join the discussion – launching February 1st at ctschicago.edu/wpg.



MR. WILLIAM P. EVERS

is the son of CTS' first African American president, Charles Shelby Rooks, the first African American president of a predominantly White seminary in the Association of Theological Schools. Evers built his career in marketing and sales, working for companies such as Harley Davidson and Ford Motor Company. Evers received his Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education from Montclair State University and his Master in Business Administration from Fairleigh Dickinson University. Evers is the recipient of the National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers (NAMAD): Distinguished Service Award and the State of Wisconsin Certificate of Commendation for receiving the Milwaukee Times Black Excellence Award. Mr. Evers has been a long time friend of and ambassador for Chicago Theological Seminary through his consistent support for CTS' Center for the Study of Black Faith and Life.



MS. CAROL STRAM WROBLE

brings experience from a variety of disciplines. She has worked in human resources management, consulting, and served as the board president of Washington Square Retirement Community for five years. Wroble is affiliated with the Union Church of Hinsdale (UCC) since 1988 where she has served numerous roles including Sunday School teacher and human resources committee chair. Wroble received her Bachelor of Science in Business Management from Northern Illinois University and her Master of Science in Industrial Relations from Loyola University Chicago.



REV. STARKY WILSON

is currently the pastor of Saint John's United Church of Christ in St. Louis, MO. He also serves as the president and CEO of Deaconess Foundation, a grant-making organization that focuses on children in the St. Louis area. He is co-chair of the crucial Ferguson Commission. Rev. Wilson serves on several boards, including: United Church of Christ Cornerstone Fund, YMCA of Greater St. Louis, FOCUS-St. Louis, Teach for America-St. Louis, stl250, and the Mayor's Commission on Children, Youth and Families. Rev. Wilson received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Xavier University of Louisiana and his Master of Divinity from Eden Theological Seminary. Rev. Wilson is the recipient of the following awards: 2013 Urban League Young Professionals Civic Engagement and Social Justice Award, 2012 St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council Open Door Award, 2012 YMCA of Greater St. Louis Human Dignity Award, 2011 Alexander-Pulaski County NAACP Martin Luther King, Jr. Award, 2006 Monsanto Family YMCA Zealot Award, 2005 Phi Delta Kappa Respect Award for Clergy Leadership, and the 2005 Alton Tri-Del Women's Club-GLOBE Award for Community Service.

IN
B
WE

“We are thrilled to have these individuals be a part of our Board of Trustees. Their unique experiences and commitments to their communities truly reflect the values CTS staff, faculty, trustees, alumni/ae and students hold dear.”

—Alice Hunt, CTS President

BOARD TRUSTEES

Chicago Theological Seminary proudly welcomes four new members to the Board of Trustees

Julianna Nunez, Staff



REV. TRACI DEVON BLACKMON

has years of experience in both healthcare and ministry. Rev. Blackmon is the newly appointed Executive Minister of Justice Witness Ministries for the United Church of Christ. Rev. Blackmon is a graduate of Leadership St. Louis and has served on several local boards such as St. Louis Effort for AIDS; the Kidney Foundation; the Minority Business Council; and the St. Louis Black Representative. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors for Magdalene House St. Louis, the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, and WomanPreach! Rev. Blackmon has also been the recipient of the following awards: the President's Volunteer Service Award, St. Louis University - Community Leader of the Year, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionist-Drum Major Award, NAACP - Rosa Parks Award, the Urban League of St. Louis Woman in Leadership Award, National Planned Parenthood Faith Leader Award, and the United Church of Christ- Antoinette Brown Award. She serves as a prominent faith leader in the BlackLivesMatter movement in Ferguson, MO.

Black Lives Scholars

FACULTY REFLECTIONS ON LESSONS
FROM FERGUSON CONFERENCE

“**H**ands up—don’t shoot.” These four words sparked a revolution among Americans. After the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Rekia Boyd, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland, and so many others, more attention is being given to police brutality and systemic racism. On the one-year anniversary of the killing of Michael Brown, hundreds of scholars, activists, and leaders gathered together as a part of the Lessons from Ferguson: National Black Scholars Gathering conference. Four Chicago Theological Seminary faculty members as well as some CTS students attended this conference. The faculty shared their personal reflections with us:



ALICE HUNT

It was 6 a.m. on August 9, the one-year anniversary of the killing of Michael Brown at Canfield Green in Ferguson, MO, when a group of clergy gathered to pray for justice and peace at the site of his death. I stood there frozen, with a heavy sickening weight in the pit of my stomach. Here, an 18-year-old young man stood with his hands up in the air and was killed by a police officer. HANDS UP – DON'T SHOOT.

How did this happen? Why did his body lay there on the ground, uncovered, for more than four hours? How did his mother feel as he lay there? I could feel her dread, her horror, her sorrow, her agony, her disbelief, her anger, her despair. I could feel, in that moment, how I might feel about my sons, Carl and Eric, laying there, lifeless, blood spilling onto the ground. Unimaginable. And, in that same nauseating moment, I knew in my heart of hearts that my sons would not be laying there, dead. Why? Because my sons are White. Yes, BLACK-LIVESMATTER. And I, as a White person am—all of us White persons are – accountable. We are called by God to live our lives making sure that Black Lives Matter as much as White lives matter.



Alice Hunt speaking at Conference

“We are called by God to live our lives making sure that Black Lives Matter as much as White lives matter.”



President Hunt, faculty, students and group of clergy pray for justice and peace at the site of Michael Brown's death in Ferguson, MO.

STEPHANIE CROWDER

I have a Ph.D. in biblical studies. Yet, I was not in Ferguson as a scholar. I have ordination standing in the National Baptist U.S.A., Inc. and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denominations. However, I was not representing either body. I recently attended the Lessons from Ferguson: National Black Scholars Gathering as a mother. I took my teenage son with me to Ferguson. Why? Well, because a teenage African-American male is becoming an endangered, if not deemed dangerous, species. He needed to plant his feet on the soil that soaked up Michael Brown's blood.

The small gathering of about 200 activists, scholars, and religious leaders participated in conversations around the need for such tripartite collaboration. Activists help to kindle the political fire. Scholars explain the sociological and philosophical nature of the fire. Religious leaders are essential to keeping the theological fire burning. We all risk getting burned in the fire. It would be worse if the fire consumed or subsumed us.

Yet, what spoke with stentorian resolve was the age demographic of the activists. Three millennials with the boldness of Ella Baker shared their struggle with and in the struggle. These women under 30 with the fight of Fannie Lou Hamer revealed why they thought it not mandatory to say something, do something about the injustice Black men and women are facing. No, the #blacklivesmatter movement may not be our momma's or daddy's movement, but it is on the same Civil Rights Movement continuum.

What happened in Ferguson is just a harbinger of what lies ahead—fight on!

“The #blacklivesmatter movement may not be our momma's or daddy's movement, but it is on the same Civil Rights Movement continuum.”



Rev. Dr. Pamela Lightsey (Boston University), Rev. Dr. JoAnne Marie Terrell (Chicago Theological Seminary), Brittany Ferrell, Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman (Methodist Theological School in Ohio), Alisha Sonnier, and K.B. Frazier. Ferrell, Sonnier and Frazier are members of Black Lives Matter in St. Louis and surrounding areas, including Ferguson.

JOANNE MARIE TERRELL

I went to Ferguson to show that Michael Brown, Jr.'s life mattered to me. I wanted to impress upon my teenager the necessity of struggle, so she herself could bear witness that all black lives matter. I went, especially, to hear those who were at ground zero and giving shape to a new civil and human rights campaign, which requires theology in a new key. At the invitation of leadership, my role quickly became that of a ritual elder. I opened the convocation singing the spiritual, "Hush, Somebody's Calling My Name." In that Christian context, I needed to shift the song's christocentric focus to reflect the radical, normative inclusivity of the new movement, and to say that black non-Christian and LGBTQI lives matter. Instead of, "sounds like Jesus," I sang, "sounds like Sandra," "sounds like Michael," "sounds like Rekia," "sounds like John Crawford," and several others, and closed with "sounds like Jesus." I did not have time to think it through, but in the precise moment it occurred to me to do something different with the song, I felt that as an artist, I was mediating something on behalf of a few of the recently murdered beautiful souls who could no longer speak for themselves, and reaffirming my belief that in the face of so much challenge, struggle, and death, life, love, beauty, and creativity are to be cherished. For the closing, I chose the 1960s protest song, "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around." Black Lives (really do) Matter. We are not without divine companionship and help.

"I went, especially to hear those who were at ground zero and giving shape to a new civil and human rights campaign, which requires theology in a new key."

SCOTT HALDEMAN

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!" (Ps 122:1)

I did not need one more thing to do in a summer dedicated to research and writing, but the invitation arrived: join President Hunt, faculty colleagues, and students at a Black Scholars National Gathering in a conversation about racism, theology, and church in Ferguson, MO, on the weekend before the first anniversary of the killing of Michael Brown in August 2014.

I registered. I made the drive. I entered Wellspring United Methodist Church just off main street in Ferguson. The academic presentations were stimulating, empowering, humbling.

But it was the stories of colleagues who made the same drive but made sure a loved could monitor them on GPS to know if they were stopped, if they were taken off route, if they made it safely. It was the young people, daughters and sons of colleagues, who sat rapt in the front row. And, most especially, it was the activists, a panel of queer, trans, and allied college students, who had put their bodies on the line and their studies on hold, to speak truth to power, to create a new kind of movement without authorized leaders, without ordained prophets. Like baby sugs, Holy, who was unrobed, uncalled, unanointed – these unchurched saints are offering their hearts, their bodies, their lives, to make justice roll down as a mighty stream.

I was convicted and (re-)converted.
Black Lives Matter!

"It was the activists, a panel of queer, trans, and allied college students, who had put their bodies on the line and their studies on hold, to speak truth to power, to create a new kind of movement."

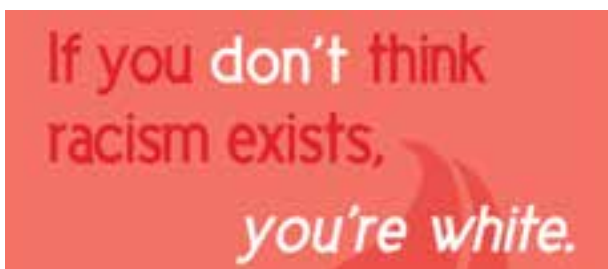


IF YOU DON'T THINK RACISM EXISTS, YOU'RE WHITE

CTS Advocates Love Speech over Hate

Topics on racism and white privilege play a major role in national discussions these days. Chicago Theological Seminary shared its stance against racism by posting a meme on Facebook that read: "If you don't think racism exists, you're white." The post touched a nerve with CTS Facebook followers and accumulated thousands of views and shares, generating lively discussions. The dialogue came to a temporary halt when Facebook took down the image, claiming it violated Facebook Community Standards. The response from CTS was swift, with President Alice Hunt writing an article for The Huffington Post. Facebook subsequently reposted the meme. She wrote:

On August 18th, Chicago Theological Seminary posted



on social media. After two weeks of wide engagement, the statistics were amazing. Over 200,000 people were reached. Over 16,000 people engaged with this internet post (meme) with either likes, comments, or sharing.

Last week, Facebook removed the post (meme) saying we had violated "Facebook Community Standards."


The post did what we wanted it to do. We wanted to make people think; we wanted to get people talking about difficult and important matters facing our society; and we wanted to take a stand on a crucial justice issue. And yet the post was removed. While we cannot know exactly why the meme was removed, we can only guess,

after a review of the Facebook Community Standards, that Facebook considered the meme to fall under their "Hate Speech" standard where they say, "Facebook removes hate speech, which includes content that directly attacks people based on their race, ethnicity..."

Should we then assume that some people complained to Facebook that our meme was hate speech against White people? I can tell you, as the seminary's President, that is just not the case. Yes, people may have been challenged by our post, and even felt angry and offended. But the primary offense is racism itself, not calling direction attention to racism.

Our stand against racism is exactly what theologian Dr. Beverly Harrison meant when she pointed to "the power of anger in the work of love." As people of faith, we must love enough to get angry at great injustice and call it out.

Our Facebook meme pointed directly to the fact that racism exists and is a fact, anecdotally and scientifically. Most people, even Fox News commentator, Bill O'Reilly admit that racism exists. Persons of color, subject to racism every day, know this all too well. They live it...they never need reminding that racism exists. (Another way to have created this meme would have been to say--If you

 16,804 people engaged.

THINK RACISM E WHITE. CENSORED

Speech on Facebook

Alice Hunt, President & Julianna Nunez, Staff

are Black, you already know racism exists.) Therefore, the only person/people who could possibly be explicitly unaware of the existence of racism are the ones who do not experience its oppressive effects--white people.

Those who are offended by the post are likely reading it incorrectly. We are not saying that all White people are racists. We are saying White Americans need to work harder to see racism. We are not saying that if you are White, you are a racist. We are saying White racism is a problem that needs to be highlighted. We are not saying that if you are Black, you cannot be a racist. We are merely making the point that persons of color know all too well the effects of racism.

Racism is a hot topic of conversation in our country right now. That is a good thing – although not an easy conversation – it is a crucial conversation. The BlackLivesMatter movement is central to today's conversations because it focuses on the specifics of race and violence. AllLivesMatter can sound like a good value, but it takes attention away from the specific and thus dilutes the concern for what is happening now, and to whom, and why.

'How do black lives matter?' is also an important question. Black lives mattered during slavery because they were counted as wealth and status. Black lives mattered post-reconstruction as a source of exploited labor. Black lives have matter today as a profit-center for private prisons. But that is not what our faith tradition teaches is the reason black lives should matter.

We are all created in the image of God. Genesis 1:26 has God saying, "Let us create humankind in our own image." All of us being created in the image of God does not mean only the men or only the white people or only the straight people or only the rich people. All means all. We are all created in the image of God.

This conversation must go forward. As a white person, I and other white Americans who are concerned about equal justice in our society need to make sure we are valuing black lives as much as we are valuing our own.

As an educator, I feel called to teach about these issues. African Americans are American citizens who are coming under fire. This cannot, in all conscience, be allowed to continue. White Americans must bear witness to the deaths and desecration of black lives.

As a religious leader, I feel called to teach and preach about these issues. People of faith, we need a new kind of prayer. Our prayer must be action. Here are three things: we must learn to 1) recognize how our white privilege pervades our culture; we must 2) name white privilege every time we see it; and we must 3) confront ourselves in the mirror and examine, accept and correct what we do on every front. Our prayer at this time must be action.

At Chicago Theological Seminary, we strive to love justice so much that we are willing to call out injustice and take a stand. We will not be deterred by Facebook taking down our meme, and we will post on white privilege and racial justice again. That's a promise and our prayer in action.



Chicago Theological Seminary Alumni Network

by Chad Schwickerath & Julianna Nunez, Staff

In October, Chicago Theological Seminary launched CONNECTS, a new alumni/ae network. CONNECTS brings together more than 3,000 CTS alumni across the globe into a network where they can collaborate, share achievements, and more. Alumni/ae will also have access to several new benefits, including access to alumni events, academic resources, and reading lists. The Reverend Eileen Gebbie, CTS alumna and Board of Trustees member, is helping coordinate CONNECTS benefits with alumni as our Alumni Advisory Committee chair.

"We have thousands of alumni across the world, and we want to make sure they are connected," Gebbie said. "CONNECTS is a great way for alumni to build and strengthen relationships with one another."

Overseeing this new endeavor is our new Annual Fund &

Alumni Relations Manager Chad Schwickerath. Schwickerath received his Bachelor's in Economics from Iowa State University and his M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary. Before joining CTS, Schwickerath worked for La Casa Norte in Chicago, which supports young adults experiencing homelessness.

"The CTS narrative is one impassioned with justice and mercy," Schwickerath said. "I look forward to providing support for our alumni and future alumni as they continue to live out and expand this narrative!"

A variety of membership levels are available, with corresponding benefits. Updates from CONNECTS will be made available on the CTS website and the CONNECTS Facebook page. In the meantime, CTS encourages alumni/ae to register for CONNECTS on the CTS website.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP LEVELS	BENEFITS
Registered Alumnus	CONNECTS membership card, CTS custom alumnus email address, monthly e-news, access to job postings, and invitations to CTS events & lectures
Recent Graduate <i>(within three years of graduation year)</i>	All of the above + *Lapp Learning Commons access, invitations to CONNECTS Gatherings, Bi-annual issues of Challenge & Response magazine
Friend	All of the above + *Lapp Learning Commons access, invitations to CONNECTS Gatherings, Bi-annual issues of Challenge & Response magazine
Supporter	All of the above + a complimentary CONNECTS t-shirt
Sustaining Member	All of the above + 50% discount on your admission to Spring Conference
Leader for the Next	All of the above + free admission to Spring Conference and a 2015-16 CONNECTS lapel pin
**Founders' Circle	All of the above + ability to audit one online or on-campus course annually at no charge

*Lapp Learning Commons access includes ability to borrow materials in-person, and access to ATLASerials database.

**Founders' Circle membership is a special level offered to commemorate the launch of CONNECTS Alumni Association. This select membership level is only available through April 2016.



The Fierce Urgency of Now

In 1966, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Chicago Freedom Movement confronted the rampant discrimination, inequality, and hatred that were tearing apart the soul of Chicago and the nation. With continued disparities between professed ideals and present realities, *RIOTcon 2016: The Fierce Urgency of Now* examines the historical and present relevance of the Chicago Freedom Movement for today's justice work. Fifty years later, Dr. King's call to forge a beloved community highlights the intersections of race, class, religion, gender, and sexuality.

Bringing together different spheres of influence, CTS invites activists, students, scholars, religious leaders, artists, and concerned community members to engage in the Raging Issues Of Today (RIOT) conference. Join us for two dynamic days of keynote addresses, panel discussions, and breakout workshops. We look forward to seeing you on April 15+16 in Chicago!

For more updates, visit riotcon.ctschicago.edu
Send inquiries to riotcon@ctschicago.edu

RIOTCON

RAGING ISSUES OF TODAY CONFERENCE

April
15 + 16



Knight come to the Rescu

Faatimah Knight & Muslim Communities Help Black Churches

Faatimah Knight, MDiv Student

When tragedy happens, society holds its breath and often fear takes root. But so can faith. After African American churches across the south were attacked by arsonists last summer, Chicago Theological Seminary MDiv student, Faatimah Knight took action. Faatimah practiced interreligious engagement and built solidarity between Muslim and Christian communities by helping raise money for four of the churches. Over \$100,000 was raised from over 1,500 supporters.

Faatimah was recognized as one of 11 “Champions of Change” at the White House this past summer. She recently shared her experience at the 2015 Parliament of the World’s Religions. Here is an excerpt of her remarks:

We all remember the shootings at the Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in July when a young white man killed 9 black church members. Just a week later, black church after black church across the south was set alight. These were arsons; hate crimes. Given the horrific event that happened at Emmanuel AME in Charleston one would think that other such attacks on black life and black religion would be lifted up. But this is exactly what frustrates victims to no end, when crimes and acts of aggression inflicted upon them are commonplace, yet they are highlighted as one time incidents. It means we don’t talk about and seek to address underlying issues because we don’t see underlying issues, we see one-time events, isolated incidents that are sad, yes, but not indicative of who we are as a people.

As some of you know, the burning of black churches is an old form of racial violence in America. The act of burning black churches is emblematic of the very difficult position black people have historically been in, the tenuousness, the fact of living in between a rock and a hard place; forced to exist in this land, but criminalized and brutalized for trying to create a life worth living in this land.

Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina was one of the churches this summer that was attacked by arsonists, and this was not the first time. It was one of 145 black churches that were attacked by arsonists between 1995-1996—that’s one church every few days. The situation was so bad that Congress passed the Church Arson Prevention Act.

So I, along with a few friends and colleagues started Rebuild with Love: a campaign to raise funds to help rebuild these churches from the ashes; to bring more attention to these church burnings; and to begin to develop a relationship with these churches based on goodwill. We did this in the middle of Ramadan, the annual month of fasting and the month in the Islamic calendar in which our scripture, the Qur’an, was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad.

Before giving ourselves completely to the cause we consulted our conscience and we also consulted one of our religious teachers for advice. There is a lot of historical precedent for this project, most of which I learned after we’d already began. Prophet Muhammad has used very strong language when talking about the need for Muslims to protect Christians, their churches, their

S e



monasteries and their dignity and quality of life.

We campaigned within the Muslim community because we thought it was important that Muslims recognize that we have a role here- in helping to restore these communities; that we are in so many ways part of the story of black people in America in that 30 percent of American Muslims as black and 20 percent of Africans brought to this country to be slaves were Muslim. So we thought it best that Muslims take our rightful role as helpers, and help. And although the majority of donations came from Muslims, we were honored that people of other faiths and no faith donated as well. The campaign was successful beyond our original hopes for it and we were able to cut each church a check for 25K to go toward their rebuilding effort.

Faatimah Knight is an MDiv Student at Chicago Theological Seminary and she holds a Bachelor's degree from the first American Muslim liberal arts college, Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, founded in 2009. This year, Faatimah spearheaded an initiative to raise funds for black churches across the South that had been victims of arson. The campaign was called #RebuildwithLove and gained national and international attention for the chord it struck with people all over the world. In under three weeks, she mobilized Muslim communities across the country and partnered with various Muslim charities to raise over \$100,000 for four black churches.



C. Shelby ROOKS

9th Annual Lecture with Rev. Dr. Alton B. Pollard III

Julianna Nunez, Staff

“God grant me the courage to change the things I cannot accept.”

—Rev. Dr. Alton B. Pollard III



Rev. Dr. Alton B. Pollard III

Chicago Theological Seminary welcomed Rev. Dr. Alton B. Pollard to speak at the 9th Annual C. Shelby Rooks Lecture on October First. The C. Shelby Rooks Lecture was named in honor of CTS's first African American president.

Dr. Pollard's lecture was "Life in the Valley of the

Shadow of Death: A Parable for 21st Century Black America." Dr. Pollard began his lecture with an overview of the death of Emmet Till and the more recent deaths of other African Americans including Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, and Sandra Bland. Dr. Pollard also mentioned the numerous deaths and acts of violence that occur in Chicago, including in August, where more than 40 people were shot on four consecutive weekends.

"The violence, the pathology, rooted in white racial supremacy...has seized us," Dr. Pollard said.

In the second half of his lecture, Dr. Pollard shared a parable he wrote called "The Endarkenment." The parable was about a pastor and her congregation that was able to reflect on its

past and grow from it. The pastor sought to "...understand the secret of her ancestors' survival in this land. How were they able to affirm life, even in the valley of the shadow of death?" As the pastor embraced her heritage and taught the congregation to do so as well, a new consciousness enveloped the congregation. The church began to grow beyond its walls and into the greater world, from community to community. The negative trends in society then reversed.

"By making our separate past our present source of strength, new generations of women and men were being prepared to become the leaders and lovers of us all," Dr. Pollard said during his parable.

Dr. Pollard is Dean and Professor of Religion and Culture at Howard University School of Divinity in Washington, DC. He holds degrees from Fisk University (BA with honors in Religion and Philosophy and Business Management), Harvard University Divinity School (MDiv), and Duke University, Department of Religion (PhD). His previous faculty appointments include St. Olaf College, Wake Forest University, Emory University where he was Director of Black Church Studies at Candler School of Theology and Chair of American Religious Cultures in the Graduate Division of Religion (PhD program), and various visiting lectureships throughout the United States and Africa.

View the entire lecture on the CTS YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/user/ctschiagoghd



Charles Shelby Rooks, CTS first African American president

ROOKS SCHOLAR AWARD

Quincy James Rineheart



The Center for the Study of Black Faith and Life (CSBFL) and the C. Shelby Rooks Society awarded its second annual C. Shelby Rooks Scholar Award to Quincy James Rineheart during the 9th Annual C. Shelby Rooks Lecture at Chicago Theological Seminary.

The C. Shelby Rooks Scholar Award acknowledges the outstanding work of a particular CTS student who carries C. Shelby Rooks' legacy in their commitment to community and uses the lessons from the past to guide the future.

Rineheart's seminary aspirations began in childhood, where his childhood pastor, Rev. Dr. Robert Smith, Jr. encouraged him to receive a secular education first. So he received a Bachelor of Arts in Literature from Wilberforce University, went on to receive his Master of Divinity in Ethics and Theology with a certificate in Black Church Studies from Emory University's Candler School of Theology and a Master of Sacred Theology from Chicago Theological Seminary where he wrote a thesis entitled "Mitigating Black Homophobia: Theologies of Masculinity in the Black Charismatic Church Tradition." Rineheart is currently a PhD student in the area of Ethics, Theology, and the Human Sciences with a focus in African American Religious History.

Rineheart described his studies at CTS as "intersectional," examining black male bodies, Bayard Rustin, and the Civil Rights Movement.

"The interdisciplinary work of this institution has afforded me the opportunity to deal with my research in an intersectional way," Rineheart said. "CTS has been a cutting-edge institution for a very long time and I knew that being here in this space would give me the theoretical and practical tools necessary for social and theological transformation. This institution marries theology and praxis quite well."

In addition to his work as a doctoral student, Rineheart is an ordained elder and has been very active in his local church and community. He is a member of Greater Harvest Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of his pastor, Elder Eric Thomas, and serves as the director for the Educational Leadership Institute and advisor to the ministers in training at the church. Rineheart said he has a "responsibility" to everyone, but in particular, to African American men and women.

"My responsibility is to reach back and to pull others and to create a path so that they, too, can have the same opportunities, if not better opportunities, than I was given."

The award was given by Dr. Julia Speller, Kenneth B. Smith Professor of Public Ministry and Associate Professor of American Religious History & Culture, who said Rineheart "challenges church leadership to embrace the responsibilities and accountabilities that keep them connected to the people, and he is also passionately committed to academic research and teaching in the area of African American religious history," before she gave him the award.

"He's an activist scholar," said Dr. Speller. "He's on the road to doing some great work and he's armed with the discipline of history. History is very important. You can't really know where you're going until you know where you've been and in his studies he's going to be well aware of what's happened, both good and not so good, and use that as a lens to critically assess what needs to be done in the future."

After CTS, Rineheart said he hopes to work as an academic dean, preferably starting with a historically black college or university.

FALL TEL



Emily Vogt, Maryam Boone, and Justin Kim at Orientation



Professor Rami Nashashibi in a group at Break-the-Fast



Hymnals lined up before Community Chapel



CTS MDiv student
Jan Remer Osborn



CTS student Ember Kelley
at Orientation



Rev. Lisa Goods, Director
of Community Life, at a
Community Chapel service



CTS Sukkah building crew

RM 2015



CTS Incoming Class of 2015



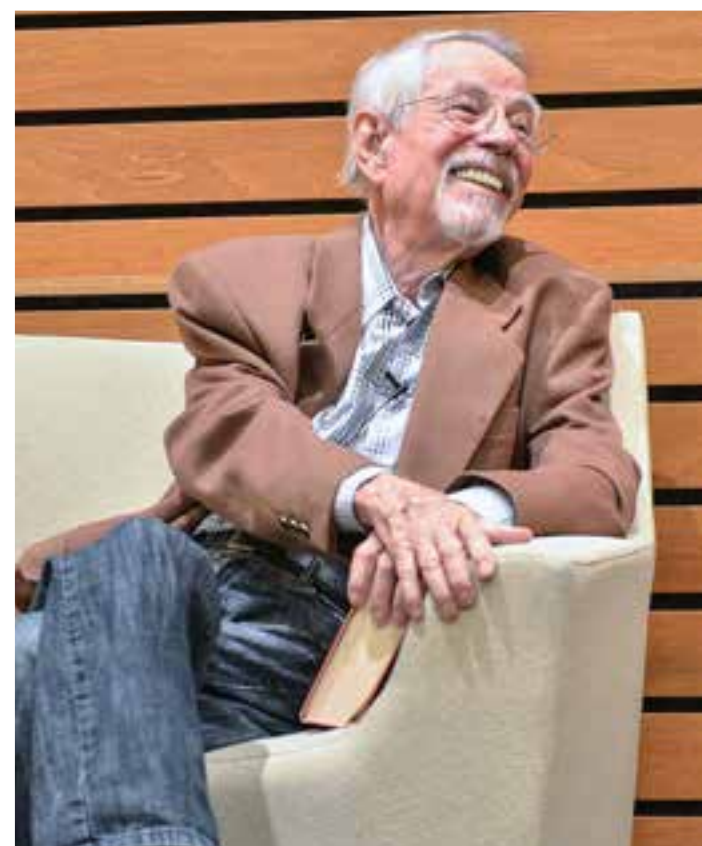
*CTS student Gilbert Martinez
at Orientation*



*Sand Ceremony during CTS
Community Chapel*



*Board Chair
Norman Williams*



Faculty Emeritus André LaCocque at his book release



Father Mike Pfleger at a Fireside Chat

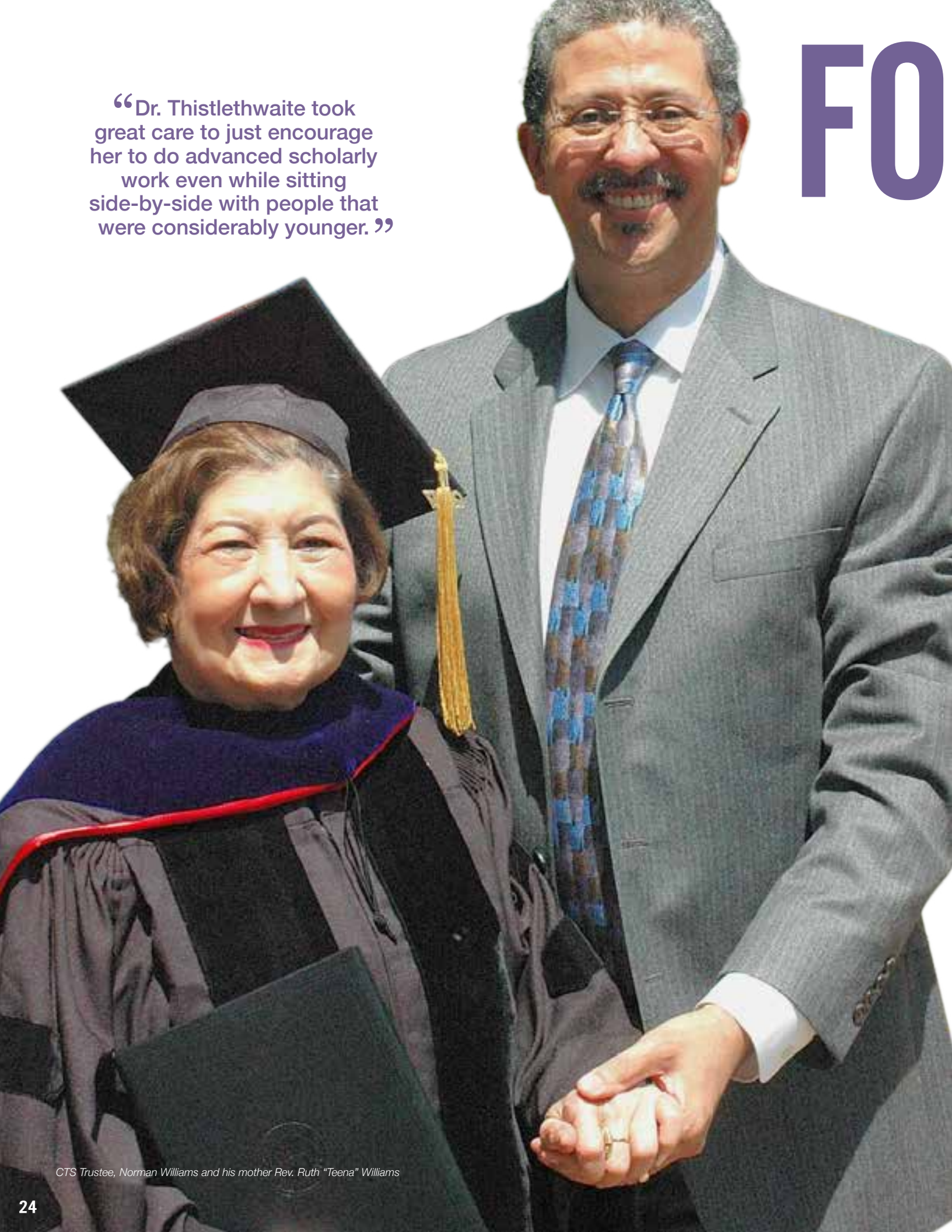


*CTS PhD Student
Jamel Garrett*



CTS Faculty before Fall Convocation I

“Dr. Thistlethwaite took great care to just encourage her to do advanced scholarly work even while sitting side-by-side with people that were considerably younger.”



CTS Trustee, Norman Williams and his mother Rev. Ruth "Teena" Williams

OLLOW THE SON

Julianna Nunez, Staff

Norman Williams Talks about CTS and his Mother

Chicago Theological Seminary cherishes several legacies from its 160 years, including the one between CTS Board of Trustees chairman Norman Williams and CTS alumna The Reverend Ruth “Teena” Williams. It is a legacy that spans several decades and continues to this day.

Norman did not follow his mother to CTS. Rather, Teena followed her son after he began taking classes at CTS as a student-at-large in 1979. Norman was introduced to CTS after meeting faculty members at the church he attended, the Church of the Good Shepherd. It was here that Norman met Dr. André LaCocque, Professor Emeritus of Hebrew Bible at CTS, during the ordination of a CTS graduate. Norman was intrigued by Dr. LaCocque’s expertise in the Hebrew Bible. Dr. LaCocque encouraged Norman to sign up for a class at CTS, specifically his class. As a result, Norman’s first CTS class was Dr. LaCocque’s Introduction to the Old Testament.

Realizing a Dream of Education

It was not long after Norman began taking classes at CTS that his mother took an interest and became an MDiv degree candidate at the school. Teena’s path to religious leadership was not straightforward. Born in the midst of the Great Depression and World War II, having 11 siblings made things difficult for Teena (she was the eighth one born) and her family. Teena used her love of education as motivation, eventually receiving a Master’s degree in Social Work from St. Louis University. Teena moved to Chicago after receiving that degree, and it was there that she met Albert Williams, an insurance executive and business entrepreneur, who among other things

helped found a bank and build a funeral business. Teena’s commitment to people never waived, and when she began taking classes at CTS, she accumulated the tools needed to further develop her connection to the community and to start her new career in ministry.

“As I followed her progression through her classes, one of the changes I noticed was her ability to articulate feelings of support for women in the workplace – especially in the area of religious leadership ... She developed the theological tools that helped her support not only people of color, but also people who have been marginalized in their career paths, social experience, and in their relationships with others,” Norman said of his mother.

Teena pursued multiple degrees at CTS, including a Doctorate in Theology she received when she was 80. Teena also became ordained a priest in the Anglican Church. Norman’s relationship with CTS took a different route. His responsibilities manifested in three ways: working at the family funeral home, teaching classes at Worsham College of Mortuary Science, and serving as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Illinois Service Federal Savings & Loan Association. While not being able to take classes as consistently as his mother, they were able to experience CTS together, and they found the leadership of its presidents often characterized their relationship with CTS.

Dr. Charles Shelby Rooks was president of CTS when Norman and Teena enrolled. Norman recalls that Dr. Rooks’ wife had a “real affection” for Teena because they were both raised in New Orleans. The families forged a friendship over the years.

Norman’s relationship with Dr. Rooks’ suc-

cessor, Dr. Kenneth Smith, was similar. Norman met Dr. Smith at the Church of the Good Shepherd and developed a friendship that began as church member to pastor. Later, upon Dr. Smith’s election as President of CTS, he was very encouraging and “pastoral” to Teena as she pursued her call in ministry.

Norman and Teena witnessed CTS’s continued dedication to progressive and affirming theology under the tenure of Dr. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite.

“[Dr. Thistlethwaite] developed a real admiration of my mother for pursuing this vocation and especially being at retirement age,” Norman said. “Dr. Thistlethwaite took great care to just encourage her to do advanced scholarly work even while sitting side-by-side with people that were considerably younger.”

Teena’s devotion to her community reached beyond her work in the church as she participated in a variety of women’s boards. Engaged activism runs deep in the blood, as Norman also tends to his community, including his current position as Chair of the Board of Trustees at CTS.

Norman said he did not expect to be voted onto the Board of Trustees because he was not a graduate of CTS. However, he came to embrace his role as a trustee which eventuated in his becoming Chair of the Board of Trustees two years ago.

“It’s a privilege to watch the students and the faculty learn together,” Norman said. “As a trustee, you often are in a conversation with faculty, where faculty are able to share their hopes and dreams, in their professional scholarship as well as what they hope to accomplish in their teaching. It’s a unique, and I think, a very special perspective.”

Teena died in 2011, leaving behind a legacy of hard work. She, like her siblings, overcame great odds to achieve success, and it is this dedication to hard work and service that characterizes Norman’s vision of his mother.

“I imagine my mother is sitting at the table after Thanksgiving dinner and talking about life. That’s where life lessons were shared and how she and her siblings each survived the struggles of poverty, racism, and the challenging environment that they all grew up in. Through those experiences, they learned what gives them strength, what gives them the capacity to survive and forgive, and how to be happy. While she was often perceived as a society conscious person, given the boards she gave her time to, she did not need all of that to be happy. She could be happy just being with friends sharing something as simple as a cup of coffee,” he said.

The Williams’ legacy shows that devotion to theological education is not always—and does not have to be—a straight path. It illustrates that dedication to education and community empowers people to build their own lives and connect with others. Teena and Norman began their journey at CTS together and Norman carries the torch of his mother’s legacy through his dedication to community, faith, and CTS to this very day.

In Memoriam

THE REV. DR. KATHLEEN CONNOR (MDiv 1986, DMin 1993) died May 20, 2015. Rev. Connor served churches in several cities from Burlington, Wisconsin and Maui, Hawaii to West Gloucester and Saugus, Massachusetts.

THE REV. DR. EVELYN DICKERSON (MDiv 1976, DMin 1992) died August 19, 2015. After graduation, Rev. Dickerson was named minister of Christian Education and Children at Union Church of Hinsdale, Illinois. She served there until she was called as the head pastor of the United Church of Christ in Shabbona, Illinois. Rev. Dickerson served terms as the vice president and president of the Illinois Conference of the UCC.

MR. ROGER GOODMAN (MDiv 1988) died June 19, 2015. Goodman was a veteran of the Stonewall Rebellion in 1969, an international concert harpsichordist, a recording artist, and a teacher. He served as a spiritual director and is author of *Thoughts of a Tribal Elder: One Queerman's Journey from the Ashes Risen*.

DAVID B. HENRY, PHD (DMin 1978) died August 26, 2015. Dr. Henry was a professor of Health Policy and Administration at University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute for Health Research and Policy.

THE REV. BENNETT "BEN" MCNEAL (MDiv 2001) died September 27, 2015. Rev. McNeal had been serving Community Congregational UCC in Elburn, Illinois since 2012 and served eleven years at St. John's UCC in Lyons, Illinois. He was also involved in the Conference Disaster Ministry for many years.

THE REV. DR. EVERETT C. PARKER (PhD 1943) died September 17, 2015. Dr. Parker's groundbreaking and relentless work surrounding race and media bias leaves a tangible legacy both within the United Church of Christ and the political landscape of the Federal Communications Commission. Serving as director of the UCC Office of Communications until retirement in 1983, Dr. Parker used his position to successfully stage a decades-long legal challenge against the unequal—and often misrepresented—access minority communities received in the media. More than public statements, Dr. Parker and his team painstakingly gathered large sums of evidence documenting racial slurs, unequal hiring practices, and distorted airtime which they presented before legal courts, the FCC, and federal congressional hearings in order to bring about massive reform to cable and telecommunications policies. More than policy change, Dr. Parker's commitment to providing equal access to the media involved creating programs to train minority broadcasters, producing documentaries and children's shows, authoring several books, and lecturing across the country.

The Rev. Dr. Everett Parker was born January 17, 1913 in Chicago. After graduating from the University of Chicago in


1935 he became a radio producer in Washington DC and then New Orleans. He returned to Chicago, enrolling at Chicago Theological Seminary and earning a PhD in 1943. He worked for NBC and taught at Yale Divinity before creating the public relations office for the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church, which later merged and became the United Church of Christ. Even after his retirement in 1983, Dr. Parker sustained his commitment to accessibility, diversity, and social justice, continuing to be a commanding presence both within the UCC and national political landscape. The UCC has a yearly lecture in Washington DC in his honor for over 30 years. The Rev. Dr. Everett C. Parker died September 17, 2015; he was 102.

DR. ALAN I. SUGAWARA (MDiv 1964) died July 22, 2015. Sugawara became a teacher and researcher at Oregon State University, where he had received his PhD studying early childhood development.

THE REV. DR. SYNGMAN RHEE (DRel 1971) died January 14, 2015. As a young man in Korea, Rev. Rhee and his younger brother fled south as refugees during the Korean War, becoming separated from their parents and four sisters. Rev. Rhee was not able to reconnect with his family until a friend arranged an opportunity to meet with his sisters in North Korea some twenty-eight years later. The traumas of war and the resulting separation from his family, combined with the hospitality he received as a refugee fueled Rev. Rhee's lifelong passion in ministry for peace and reconciliation.


After graduating from Davis and Elkins College in Elkins, West Virginia, Rev. Rhee received degrees from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (BD, 1960) and Yale Divinity (STM, 1965) before earning a Doctorate of Religious Studies from Chicago Theological Seminary in 1971. In the early 1960s, Rev. Rhee served as the Presbyterian Campus Minister at the University of Louisville, participating in the Civil Rights Movement with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Rev. Rhee then left Louisville to serve on the national staff of the United Presbyterian Church USA, later becoming the PC(USA) in 1983. There he coordinated mission work in the Middle East and East Asia. Rev. Rhee served as president of the National Council of Churches from 1992 to 1993. He was elected as Moderator of the 212th PC(USA) General Assembly in 2000. Rev. Rhee also served as visiting professor at both Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia and Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.

THE REV. ELAINE WEIDEMANN (MDiv 1989) died September 27, 2014. After graduation, Rev. Weidemann served United Methodist Churches in Beloit and Milwaukee and served on the Board of Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice. In 2012 she was the recipient of the Perry Saito Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wisconsin United Methodist Federation for Social Action.



THE Joyce E. Skoog

MEMORIAL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP



Lee Ann Norman, Contributing Writer

When Joyce E. Skoog passed away on January 25, 2014, Chicago Theological Seminary lost a treasured friend, leader and advocate. Joyce lived a life inspired by eternal faith, service and learning. She served CTS as a respected trustee, was wholly invested in the wellbeing of our students, and remained committed to helping others heed the call of ministry. During her tenure as a trustee, Joyce chaired the board's Advancement Committee and was the inaugural chair of the Council for the Next, CTS's membership organization for donors who contribute \$1,000 or more.


To honor Joyce's life, work, and impact, her family established the Joyce E. Skoog Memorial Endowed Scholarship at CTS, to be awarded annually. The scholarship will be granted to individuals who display a commitment to public service, exhibit pride in religious leadership, and maintain a record of academic excellence.

Joyce used her skills in education and communications to engage with her community. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications and Management from DePaul University and a Master's degree in Adult Education from the University of Illinois. She held senior management positions in fundraising, community relations, and in higher education throughout her career. In 2002, she retired as Senior Vice President of Institutional Advancement for the Aspen Institute, an international organization based in Washington, DC that

fosters values-based leadership and provides non-partisan venues for addressing public policy issues. Joyce also served the Village of Hinsdale for 20 years in a variety of positions, including roles on the Planning Commission, the Village Board, Fire & Police Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals. She even made history by serving as the first female President of the Village from 1993 to 1997. In 2002, Joyce's volunteerism and community service was recognized publicly when she received the Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award from the Illinois Humanities Council.



CTS is grateful to have known Joyce's passion for our mission and vision through her life of service and enthusiastic leadership. CTS is confident that the Skoog family's generosity and Joyce's outstanding example of faith will enable students to pursue the call toward greater justice and mercy in our future generations.



“I am about to do a new thing:
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.”

ISAIAH 43:19

Joyce was fond of this passage because she believed God is doing a new thing through CTS.

A NEW WAY

Field Education at The MetroSquash Academic & Squash Center

Dean Flager, MARL Student

As part of their MDiv degree program, students engage in theological field education placements. One student, Dean Flager, MARL, shares how he was able to use his ministry training in an unexpected place.

The MetroSquash Academic & Squash Center is a community facility that provides academic, athletic, personal wellness, and mentoring support for middle school students and college-bound youth. Located in West Woodlawn, MetroSquash partners with elementary and high schools in the Chicagoland area. The racial demographic of the students MetroSquash supports is ninety-eight percent African-American. My role at the center is to assist the staff in directing personal wellness workshops, lead students in small group discussions, and participate in individual mentoring, tutoring, and ongoing professional development sessions. I have spent these first weeks at the center trying to absorb processes and protocols, establish relationships, and learn the game of squash. MetroSquash is a new Chicago Theological Seminary field education site.

With my sports background, I believe it is good fit for field placement but it requires work. Among administrative and program staff, I am at least ten years older. For many of our student constituents, I am well into the age range of their grandparents. The staff is exceptionally easy going, handling the students and each other with professional equanimity. Patience is a needed attribute when working with youth and the staff exercises that attribute flawlessly. The ability to learn, unlearn and re-learn is the new literacy in our contemporary society. I trust that this paradigm, along with much prayer, is a key component of having a successful experience while serving at MetroSquash.

Having lived in the Woodlawn community during my formative years, I am excited to see changes throughout the neighborhood. West Woodlawn is a district in transition partly as a result of the gentrifying influence of University of Chicago.

Recalling from childhood, a low rise apartment building stood on the site MetroSquash currently occupies.

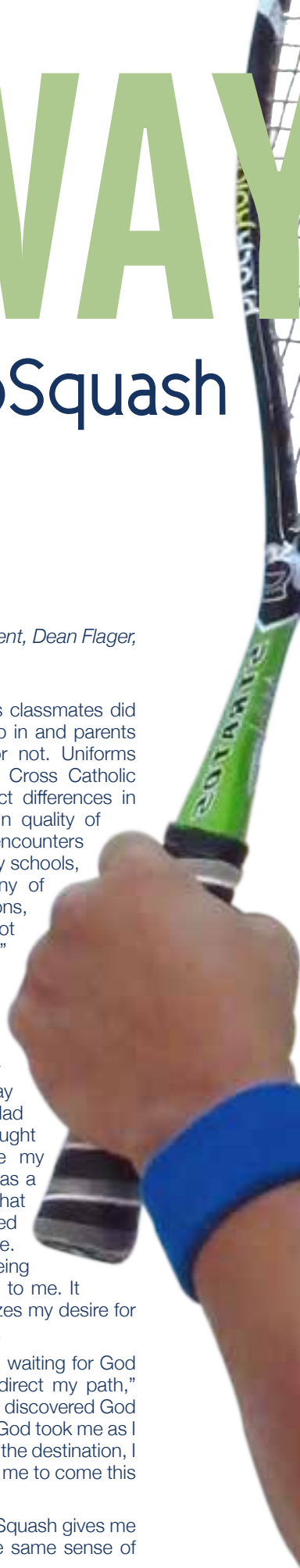
Growing up, I never realized we were considered middle class until my sister and I started school. That

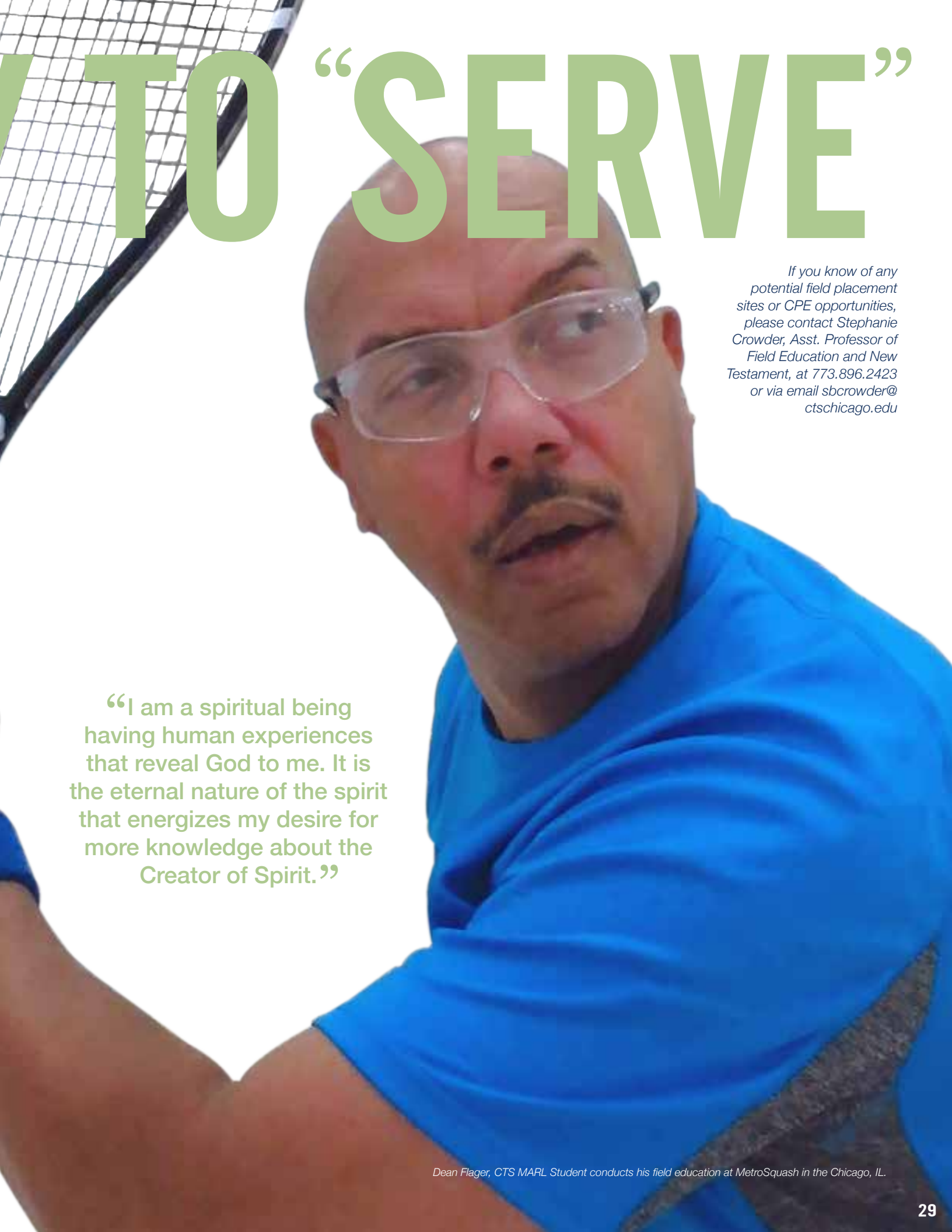
is when we could observe the possessions classmates did or did not have – fine cars to be picked up in and parents who were always impeccably dressed, or not. Uniforms were required for children attending Holy Cross Catholic Elementary School, so there was no direct differences in apparel, but there were vast differences in quality of accessories and condition of uniforms. In encounters with students from nearby public elementary schools, we noted how scruffy and unkempt many of the students appeared. These observations, combined with our parents' admonition not to "hang around with public school kids" contributed to the inception of divergent and disconnected viewpoints on class within my generation of African Americans.

My faith was inculcated in me while attending parochial schools. As an altar boy, I went to church almost every Sunday to fulfill my duties to Sunday service. My dad was in a church leadership role, and I thought going to church was important because my father went. As a youngster, I believed I was a human being having spiritual experiences that drew me closer to God, a perspective formed by drinking too much alter wine, I surmise. Today, I believe the inverse: I am a spiritual being having human experiences that reveal God to me. It is the eternal nature of the spirit that energizes my desire for more knowledge about the Creator of Spirit.

I have stood frozen in the midst of my gifts, waiting for God to "order my steps," waiting for God to "direct my path," wondering if God would do anything. Well, I discovered God was simply waiting for me to move my feet. God took me as I am but did not leave me as I was. Whatever the destination, I wholeheartedly trust that God would not tell me to come this far and abandon me.

Serving as a field placement intern at MetroSquash gives me the opportunity to use sports to impart the same sense of hope and possibility.





TO “SERVE”

If you know of any potential field placement sites or CPE opportunities, please contact Stephanie Crowder, Asst. Professor of Field Education and New Testament, at 773.896.2423 or via email sbcrowder@ctsichicago.edu

“I am a spiritual being having human experiences that reveal God to me. It is the eternal nature of the spirit that energizes my desire for more knowledge about the Creator of Spirit.”

Dean Flager, CTS MARL Student conducts his field education at MetroSquash in the Chicago, IL.

DEAL OR N

Rachel Mikva, Faculty

(Excerpt from my HuffPost Blog, August 17, 2015)

... Like other thoughtful voices, I remain concerned about what happens after 10-15 years and what Iran will do with funds that are released as sanctions are lifted. But I believe there are constructive actions we can take to address these threats.

I'm more concerned about what happens if the deal is rejected. The tough international sanctions that reduced Iran's economy by 20% and brought them to the table will collapse. Iran will be free to do what it wants, and it will get money to do it. Whatever your worst-case scenario is when the deal's restrictions expire, it begins on the day we walk away from it--without having amassed 15 years' worth of reliable information about Iran's nuclear program. There is no better deal to be negotiated.

I'm more concerned that money talks and fear sells. AIPAC is bringing over 60 members of Congress on an all-expense paid trip to Israel this month, including the vast majority of the freshman class[...]. AIPAC also helped birth "Citizens for a Nuclear Free Iran," which is blanketing the country with television ads that claim Iran gets to keep its nuclear facilities, but fail to mention that none will be able to produce weapons-grade material. They say that military sites can go uninspected, when in fact anyplace can be examined for suspected nuclear activity, with "forever" access to undeclared sites. While Iran can contest it, the accord stops endless stalling tactics by requiring resolution within 24 days -- and it is nearly impossible to hide traces of this work from close inspection. Flush with partial truths, these ads are designed to sow fear rather than rational analysis. Various conservatives ratchet up the rhetoric by comparing President Obama to Neville Chamberlain, as if diplomacy with a hostile government is always appeasement--and threaten that it leads Israel to "the ovens," even though the agreement blocks Iran's every pathway to a nuke. These attacks try to shame Americans and to scare the Jewish people by evoking the Shoah in order to promote a military strike.

I am more concerned that Netanyahu's miscalculations begin to make support for Israel a partisan issue. I'm more concerned that Israel's security will be compromised if it spends its capital fighting this accord rather than working with allies on strategic planning against Iran's continuing efforts to foment instability. With the nuclear deal concluded, the world is freer to confront Iran on all of its non-nuclear iniquity.

I am willing to argue the deal on its merits. Our rabbis taught: Any argument conducted for the sake of Heaven will bear fruit. If not for the sake of Heaven, it yields nothing (Pirkei Avot 5:20). Surely an argument about how to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, how to defend American interests without waging war, how to protect Israel from "existential threat" must be for the sake of Heaven.

-Only if it is conducted like Hillel and Shammai, the rabbis say, who embraced the other side with respect, who quoted their opponents rather than trying to silence them--confident that we get closer to the truth when we listen to each other.

This is what my colleagues and I are trying to teach. Fear-mongering and deliberate distortions will not make us safer. Outspending those of us who endorse the deal will not silence us. For the sake of Heaven, I urge you to support this historic accord.

THE DEAL

400 Rabbis Support Iran Nuclear Accord

With several colleagues, Rabbi Dr. Rachel Mikva organized a public letter eventually signed by more than 400 American rabbis who support the accord as the best option available to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear-armed state. Along with media interviews and meetings with legislators, the letter helped change the public discourse.

*Rabbi Rachel S. Mikva, PhD, serves as the Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and the Director of the Center for Jewish, Christian and Islamic Studies at Chicago Theological Seminary. The Center and the Seminary work at the leading edge of theological education, training religious leaders who build bridges across cultural and religious difference for the critical work of social transformation. Dr. Mikva is involved in a variety of social justice issues, inspired by the core values of Judaism. Her research explores the intersections of ethics, culture and biblical interpretation. She is author of *Broken Tablets* (2000), *Midrash vaYosha* (2012) and *Dangerous Religious Ideas* (forthcoming).*

**“Any argument
conducted for the sake
of Heaven will bear fruit.
If not for the sake of Heaven,
it yields nothing.”**

– Pirkei Avot 5:20



WELCOME

This Winter, I invite you to take a fresh look at CTS! We are 160 years old and still becoming! We are a theological educational institution that has deep roots in numerous social justice movements. From the very beginning, CTS has always walked its talk of ending racial, class, and sexual oppressions. We have been on the frontlines of the fights to end homophobia and promote religious understanding. While fighting for justice, we have also introduced new innovations to theological education – innovations that have made us one of the most dynamic, free-standing seminaries in the nation.



LEADING SOCIAL CHANGE

To help facilitate our learning as a community, we have declared a theme to guide our intellectual and social life –“Leaders for the Next: Leading Social Change.” There are two significant markers on Chicago Theological Seminary history. They are social justice and contextuality. Theology, as we have understood it, is always contextual. To think theologically absent a context is to think in abstractions, without praxis, which results in descriptions that are disembodied. The men and women who have lived these guiding principles have been committed to the belief that the life of the mind means nothing if you are not able to place your body in harm’s way to bring about social change. Pointing to the multiple social justice challenges we are negotiating as a nation, we will host a variety of community events, campus lectures, and classroom discussions all to provide us with multiple opportunities to reflect together on what it truly means to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly as called religious leaders.

THE DEAN’S DESK

Lee H. Butler, Faculty



I greet you on behalf the Dean’s Office and the academic programs of the Chicago Theological Seminary. To our new students, I welcome you to your new careers as students of theology and aspiring scholars. To our new faculty and staff, thank you for choosing to join CTS as we work together to educate a new generation of religious leaders. I am Lee Butler, professor of theology and psychology. I teach the basic courses in pastoral care, pastoral theology, and Africana religious studies. During Fall 2015, I served as interim academic dean while Dean Ken Stone was on sabbatical. If you would like more information about any of the academic developments at CTS this year, please feel free to contact the Assistant Dean to Academic Administration, Emily Vogt (evogt@ctschicago.edu).



FALL INSTRUCTORS

Adjunct Faculty

Jared Beverly is teaching the face-to-face section of *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible I*. He is currently a PhD student at CTS in Bible, Culture, and Hermeneutics.

Brandon Grafius is teaching two online sections of *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible I*. He is also a PhD student at CTS in Bible, Culture, and Hermeneutics.

Rev. Craig Modahl is teaching the online course, *Theology, Ministry, and Disability*. He has an MDiv from CTS and an MSW from the University of Wisconsin, and he is the owner and director of an agency called Nextbreath that supports people and organizations with disabilities.

Rev. Dr. Michael Montgomery taught our *DMin Research Methods Seminar* again this August. Dr. Montgomery received his PhD from CTS and has taught several courses here as an adjunct instructor in the DMin program.

Rev. Michael Piazza is teaching the online course, *Preaching that Grows a Church*. He is a consultant for Agile Church Consulting and is Sr. Pastor of Virginia Highland Church in Atlanta.

Sara Rosenau is teaching the online course *Theory and Theology of the Church: Feminist, Queer, and Ethnographic Approaches*. Ms. Rosenau is Assistant Minister at First Congregational UCC in Portland, OR, a PhD candidate at Drew University, and an adjunct at Iliff School of Theology.

Dr. Cynthia Stewart is teaching the online sections again this fall of *History of Christian Thought*. Her PhD is from Vanderbilt in the history of Christian thought.

Affiliated Faculty

Rev. Dr. Patrick Cheng, Affiliated Associate Professor of Theology, is teaching *Queer Theologies* online this fall. He has a PhD from Union Theological Seminary, a JD from Harvard, and was a tenured professor at Episcopal Divinity School before leaving to work full-time for the Episcopal Church in New York City.



NEW FACULTY

The Summer and Fall initiated wonderful changes as we envision new possibilities for our future.

We welcomed the **Rev. Dr. Christopher Ringer** to the faculty as Assistant Professor of Theological Ethics and Society. Dr. Ringer holds a PhD from Vanderbilt University, where he wrote his dissertation on the religious situation of mass incarceration in America. We are excited by the new theoretical approaches and discourse he brings to our community. This Fall, he is teaching face-to-face and online courses, both core requirements and electives.

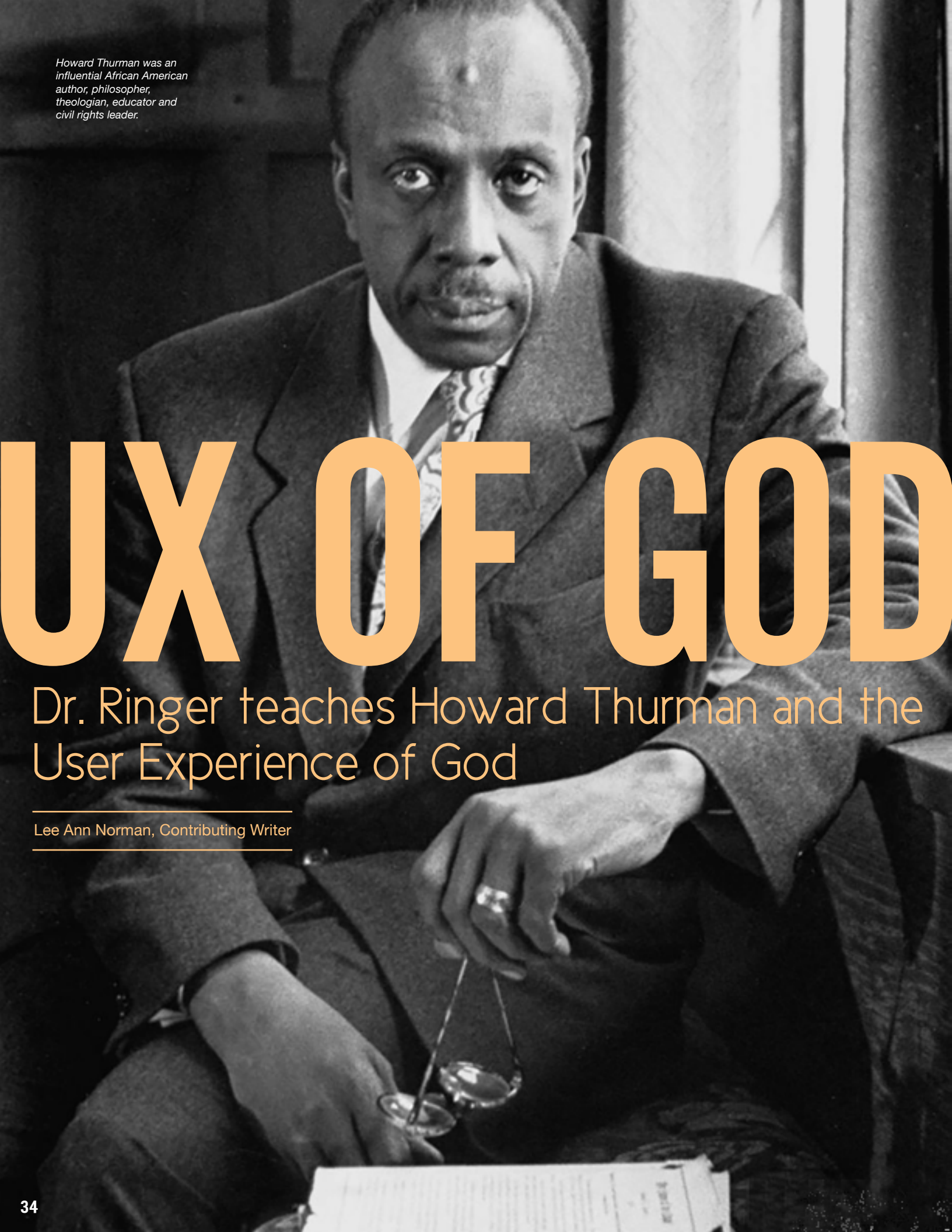
Rev. Dr. Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder, who holds a PhD in New Testament from Vanderbilt University, and served last year as director of theological field education, has been appointed Assistant Professor of Theological Field Education and New Testament, while retaining her title of Director of Theological Field Education. Her teaching integrates her talents in academic work, practical ministry, and theological education. This fall she is co-teaching both the face-to-face and hybrid sections of Leadership and Ministry in Context.



photo credit: FTE

FTE PARTNERSHIP

Keeping our programs relevant means we have to regularly review their efficacy. As a result, we are actively engaged in a process of curriculum development and program restructuring. To assist our efforts for restructuring our PhD program, we have partnered with the Forum for Theological Exploration's (formerly the Fund for Theological Education) new initiative, the Institutional Doctoral Network Partners. On behalf of CTS, and with the engaged support of Pres. Hunt, I submitted an application, and we were accepted into the initial cohort of five schools—Chicago Theological Seminary, Boston University School of Theology, Claremont School of Theology, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Wake Forest University School of Divinity. This initiative encourages the selected institutions to explore and discern how to create institutional conditions in which students and scholars of color are not only represented statistically, but thrive vocationally. Our capacity building initiatives, which focus on mentoring, will benefit students and faculty by fostering greater diversity that will make our program more robust, exciting, and cutting edge.



Howard Thurman was an influential African American author, philosopher, theologian, educator and civil rights leader.

UX OF GOD

Dr. Ringer teaches Howard Thurman and the User Experience of God

Lee Ann Norman, Contributing Writer

At Chicago Theological Seminary, students develop spiritual, intellectual, and ministerial gifts through a demanding, interdisciplinary curriculum that includes the study of ethics in contemporary culture. This fall, Dr. Christophe Ringer, newly appointed Assistant Professor of Theology, Ethics, and Society, deepened CTS' commitment to transform the world toward God's greater mercy and justice by teaching Howard Thurman and the Search for Common Ground, a new course that introduces students to an important, but under-recognized, figure in Christian theology.

By studying Thurman's unique views on religious experience, personal and societal transformation, and the ethical significance for personal and societal transformation, Dr. Ringer led students to gain new insight into addressing contemporary social issues, like interreligious engagement, activism, and the role of religion in public life. I met with Dr. Ringer to learn more about Thurman and the course.

Dr. Christophe Ringer: Howard Thurman was born in Florida, and he spent a number of years as a theological educator, pastor, and eventually served as professor of spiritual disciplines and resources at Boston School of Theology. He also served at Howard Divinity School. He started the Fellowship of All People, which was an interracial, interreligious congregation. He was known as a mystic, philosopher, theologian, and poet. What I find really interesting about Thurman is that he wanted to consider the experience of God, its relationship to social change, and who we are as individuals seriously.

Lee Ann Norman: How did you learn about Howard Thurman?

CR: I grew up in Second Baptist Church in Evanston where my stepfather at the time, Dr. Hycel B. Taylor, was pastor. Thurman was very influential in his life, so I learned about Thurman from him. Part of why I went to seminary was, while doing community development work with faith-based organizations and on my own here in Chicago, I was thinking about the role of religion or theology in movements for social change ... so I returned to Thurman in graduate school.

LAN: I was struck by how much Thurman thought about ways Black people could avoid being consumed by their rage in response to the oppression they endured. When Thurman was in Boston, he encountered Dr. King and many others who would go on

to be prominent leaders in the civil rights movement, but he himself was criticized. Because of his perceived focus on spiritual matters, he often remained in the background and not on the front lines. Can you speak a little more about the perception of his role in the movement?

CR: Part of the reason I wanted to teach the course on Thurman this semester was to recover a sense of coherence in his philosophy and practice. Since he engaged mysticism, Thurman has become overly mystified. It's easy to put him in new age spirituality and leave him there.

Thurman integrated many of the philosophical currents of his time—existentialism and insights from the social sciences and psychology—into his work. He wanted to create a theological vision that would answer the question, “What does the gospel say to those who have their backs against the wall?” That was part of his lifelong quest.

We began the course reading *Luminous Darkness*, which can be seen as Thurman's diagnosis of Jim Crow. When you read that text today, it is as if you're reading contemporary headlines regarding #BlackLivesMatter. Thurman stands within the tradition of DuBois and other Black existential thinkers who examined how patterns of oppression are reproduced in our consciousness. *Jesus and the Disinherited* reads like the answer to the problem. I think people miss the core question Thurman was interested in, which is about if religious experience can transform the relationship between Blacks and Whites. His risk of faith was thinking about the experience of God within a community so that our beliefs and nurtured patterns of behavior, what he called “ideological equipment,” could be challenged. He was criticized for not always being in front line activist mode, but I believe he was no less engaged.

LAN: The course that you're teaching now, is this the first time you've focused solely on the work and influence of Howard Thurman?

CR: This is the first time I've taught a semester-long course on him. I want to show how his thought progresses from the problem with Jim Crow, and how he uses different sources to support

that. Then we move to his interpretation of Jesus, the nature of the self, religious experience, and end with an account of his church (the Fellowship for All People) and the search for common ground. He didn't want Jim Crow to be the final word. He holds out for a vision of achieving some kind of common ground.

LAN: How are your students responding?

CR: I think most of them like the emphasis on experience, his diagnosis of the situation and how contemporary that is. I think it is more difficult for them to understand his response. Thurman always wanted to know how we avoid becoming the thing we hate, and some students are like: No, I'm not trying to hear that. We want to fight! There are wrestlings

around whether a social relationship can be brought under a moral framework in the same way our personal relationships are. (This is an ongoing debate in Christian ethics.) If you compromise who you are, it will have a negative effective on you spiritually. I think students wonder why there is so much burden on the underdog, and wonder if Thurman wasn't being realistic.

LAN: What do you hope students might take from this after the class ends?

CR: I hope they will see Thurman as a resource for a range of issues. Thurman also talks about reframing. For example, the tax collector in the gospels is a member of the community, but if you want to love the tax collector, you have to see him as a human being. Reframing is something we do in pastoral care, but I want them to think about how we do that in the social world.

I also want them to take away Thurman's process of reflective thinking. The ability to think through and understand the origins of a given problem is valuable. I've drawn on that in my own work when I think about violence. Often in the Black community, in the midst of another shooting, we immediately say that it is senseless. Thurman would say that such acts might actually be apart of another framework of meaning. When we have particular social issues, and we've been talking about them for 30-some years, it's not a crisis, but a pattern. There is meaning attached to that act now. Even in the darkest aspects of humanity, you can see the logic of seemingly senseless acts if you are willing to reflect on them. I think there is a need for that kind of reflection in a world where information travels so fast. We need to find the space to unpack some things and make new meaning.



Dr. Christophe Ringer

“His risk of faith was thinking about the experience of God within a community so that our beliefs and nurtured patterns of behavior could be challenged.”

Public Theo Goes Public

The Works of Dr. Susan B. Thistlethwaite are Published World Wide

Julianna Nunez, Staff

“Can a Nation Lose Its Soul?” Rev. Dr. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite asked that profound question in an editorial for the *Chicago Tribune* in 2004 when the pictures of torture at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq were racing around the world.

“What does it profit you to gain the whole world and lose your soul? (Luke 9:25) her editorial concluded.

As then Chicago Theological Seminary President, and now since her return to teaching as Professor of Theology, Dr. Thistlethwaite has developed the insights she gained from the significant attention that column attracted to develop a new field she calls “Public Theology.” She has written not only for the *Chicago Tribune*, but also *The Washington Post*, and she is currently a regular blogger for *The Huffington Post*.

Dr. Thistlethwaite explains, “Public theology is not merely making religious comments on public events, it is dynamically engaging what is happening in the public square with the insights of our theological doctrines to show the deeper meaning behind what is happening in our times. Public theology must also call on people of faith to act in the face of profound injustice. This is what I call doing both ‘denunciation and annunciation.’”

For Dr. Thistlethwaite, public theology also includes books, such as her most recent publication, *Women’s Bodies as Battlefield: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women* (Palgrave Macmillan 2015). The book examines the role Christian theology and philosophy play in the way society views—and polices—women’s bodies, and how these same strains view and support war.

“I would say there are streams in Christian theology and streams in philosophy that have subscribed to negative rhetoric about women’s bodies and our equality . . . There are also ideas regarding authority and male headship that say men should rule over women,” Dr. Thistlethwaite said. “Those aren’t the only ideas in Christianity; there are others, but when you see some-

body like Donald Trump [who claims Christianity as his faith] say awful things about women, it taps into that vein in Western culture that reinforces the idea that women’s bodies are somehow shameful and less valuable than men’s bodies.”

In her book, Dr. Thistlethwaite noted the attacks on women’s reproductive rights that occurred during the 2012 presidential campaign and how today, nearly four years later, politicians and their supporters are still very eager to legislate women’s bodies. “These kinds of political attacks, like attacks on Planned Parenthood, keep getting used over and over in politics because they work to get out votes. And the reason they work is because there is this heritage of negative attitudes toward women that they can tap into,” Dr. Thistlethwaite said.

The book, she explains, “tries to help us think through why, after so much effort to prevent it, there is still so much violence against women.” In addition, she points out how, while there has always been violence against women in war, including sexual violence, war today is changing so that it is more one-sided, a war on the bodies of civilians, especially the more vulnerable like women, children and the elderly. War has changed so much, in fact, that “now women’s bodies are actually ‘weaponized,’ like has been the case with extremist groups like ISIS, capturing, assaulting and then selling women. War, if it ever has been ‘just’ cannot, now, be justified.”

Dr. Thistlethwaite has developed an online class for CTS called “Public Theology” that she has taught several times. Students who take the class have to write every week on an issue in the public square, using an assigned theological doctrine: topics range from “Christology and War,” to “Racism and Theological Anthropology,” to “Eschatology and Climate Change.”

“I hear from our graduates who have taken my class that they feel very comfortable speaking in the public square,” Dr. This-

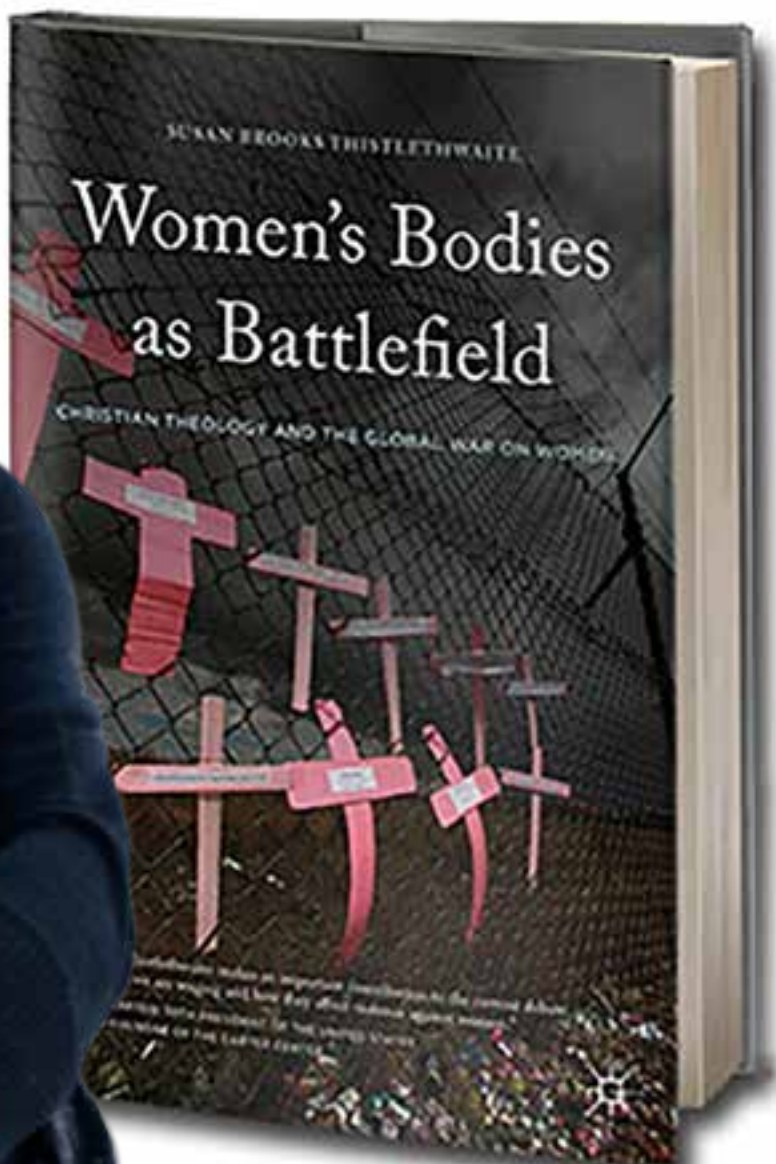
logy



thistlethwaite said. “Now what is edgy about my class is that each student has to make her or his own blog, which means they have to write in the public square, taking their work into the court of public opinion.” Students must set up a separate comments page on their blogs to “filter out the trolls, that is, people looking to cause an angry reaction for their own enjoyment.” Those type of comments, she emphasizes, should be deleted. She encourages students, however, not to delete negative comments that are serious and thoughtful. “You can’t do this work if you’re conflict-adverse. You have to be able to take the heat, but I can’t teach somebody about that, they actually have to learn how to do that for themselves.”

“Chicago Theological Seminary is the perfect institution for teaching public theology,” she concludes. “CTS itself has taken public stands based on its theological convictions for more than a century and a half.”

Women’s Bodies as Battlefield: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women is available now. Dr. Thistlethwaite’s articles can be found in the Washington Post as well as other places.



“Public theology must also call on people of faith to act in the face of profound injustice.”

Leaders for PhD Student Profiles

This fall, several Chicago Theological students and faculty presented their research at the American Association of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature (AAR/SBL) annual meeting in Atlanta, GA. Among the CTS faculty, Dr. Rachel Mikva, Dr. Seung Ai Yang, and Dr. JoAnne Marie Terrell made presentations. CTS PhD students including Jason Frey, Melanie Jones, Liz Alexander, Stephen Keating, Anthony Hoshaw, and William A. Andrews, Jr. also presented their research. Four of the PhD students shared the inspiration behind their work before they attended the meeting:

MELANIE JONES

I will present two papers from my doctoral research at CTS: “When Caged Bodies Testify: Continental and Diasporan African Women’s Memoirs as Sacred Text” in the Body and Religion group with co-presenter and CTS alumnus Liz Alexander, and “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn’ Me Round: The Politics of Embodied Protest from Selma to Ferguson” in the Ethics section (#BlackLivesMatter session). The former paper engages literary theory as a methodological source for doing womanist theological ethics and redefines what continental and diasporan African women write about their lives as sacred canon for Africana womanhood.

Continuing the conversation from the 2015 CTS Spring Conference “Selma: Still Marching,” the latter paper grapples with a Black resistance tradition and its employment of the body as a mode of social protest along a continuum from historic marches in Selma, AL, fifty years ago to more contemporary tactics of body-blocking highways and ceremonial die-ins that confront state sanctioned killing of black bodies in Ferguson, MO, and other US cities. This past year, I traveled to Selma, AL, to participate in the fifty-year commemoration of the Civil Rights events and to Ferguson, MO, to share in the National Gathering of Black Scholars at the one-year memorial of Michael Brown’s death. Through these immersion experiences, I witnessed firsthand the ongoing need for religious thinkers to contribute to the social movements that seek to transform our world. It is my hope that my doctoral research shared at AAR begins to answer this call and takes up the challenge of relevance.



TONY HOSHAW

Increasingly, my academic attention has narrowed to a study of the theo-political dimension(s) of major Freudian psychoanalytical themes, especially narcissism. I have attended the AAR for the last five of six years. As I have matured as an academic, I have come to understand the AAR as a great opportunity to learn the art of listening to and sharing ideas generously rather than defensively or suspiciously. This year I will be attempting, entirely on Freudian grounds, to argue the following: “Homosexual narcissism enables us to creatively identify with difference/the feminine as a non-threatening source of ecstatic pleasure.”

the Next.

STEPHEN KEATING

We live in financially precarious times with ever-accumulating public and private debts, anxiety around austerity in Europe, an increasing wealth gap between black and white U.S. households and globally between the 1% and the rest of us. While recent interrogations of debt have been mounted from a wide range of disciplines, this session proposes a diverse exploration of the theology of debt, especially as it has been shaped by the Christian tradition. What is the relationship of debt to theology? How have the histories of theological and economic discourses on debt been entangled and what is their relationship to the secular? And, given these entanglements, what is the role of religion in relation to the current financial crises? Examining the nature of debt in relation to theological and secular concepts, this panel will raise key questions about the role of theology, religion, and the secular in an age of indebtedness.

The secular, as a theoretical field and epistemic category, along with secularism as a political formation, have come under critical scrutiny in recent years in a number of disciplines including religious studies, theology, philosophy, and literary studies. The notion of the postsecular has emerged out of these critiques and has developed into a polymorphous theoretical concept, harboring conflicted ideological and theoretical interests. This panel is an effort to constructively recalibrate theorizations of the postsecular. It proposes to think the postsecular as more than merely a monolithic displacement of the secular—as if the postsecular named an epoch, or an episteme, that simply succeeds the secular. Rather, the chorus of perspectives on this panel suggests that we think the morphology of the postsecular as multiple, eventive, and interruptive: emerging at points of segmentation where the religious and the secular, as macrological spaces of enclosure, rupture, fracture, or split.



JASON FREY

My research invokes a queer reading of the cultural and theological tendencies to desire stability, invulnerability, and control. What I have been uncovering is that under the surface, humanity and the created world in which we inhabit are much more ambiguous, fluid, and interconnected than we might expect. I ask what happens to our ethical frameworks and moral life when we begin with the reality that we are vulnerable, and that vulnerability is inherent to creation. My research interests lie in the intersections of ethics, queer theological anthropologies, and theories of vulnerability and embodiment.



PRIVILEGE'S D



Good afternoon. It is wonderful to be with you all. Welcome to you all. And I bring a special welcome for our brand new students. And welcome back to our returning students. We all, our faculty and staff, have been working hard preparing for your arrival. We are glad you are here. I hope you all had a good and restful summer—and I hope you are now ready to go. Ready to work hard. Ready to engage with your whole self—with your thinking and doing and being—to bring about God's transformation. You are ready—we are ready—to be Leaders for God's Next...leaders ready to be about leading social change. And as we do this, let us be mindful that we are intertwined. You, and you, and you, and you, and I are intertwined, as we think, do, and be—we are intertwined as we go about this work of leading social change. I am thankful to be in this with you—each of you. And, as we begin our academic year, I would invite us all to wish our Jewish sisters and brothers Hashanah tovah, Happy New Year as your new year, (year 5776), begins this coming Sunday at sundown.

What a summer this has been. Well, really, what a year it has been given the horrors of the year, starting with August 9th last year. Michael Brown and Ferguson...Israel/Palestine...climate crises...the violent streets of Chicago...Sandra Bland...Charleston...rampant patriarchy...Bill Cosby and our rape culture...mass incarceration...Baltimore...Cleveland...New York...Syria...Hungary...the list could go on and on. And, we know deep in our hearts that all these issues intersect with each other! What a year! What a summer!

Part of life's journey is that we continually have the opportunity, and challenge, to see things in a new way. Of course, we see things that have al-

ELUSION

A CTS Community Chapel sermon given at the opening service of Fall Semester on September 9, 2015 by CTS President Alice Hunt

ways been there but, because of our current experience, opportunities, and context, we suddenly see things in a new way. Or maybe it is that we just come to a new awareness of how things have always been around us. *That* is what has happened to me in this past year, particularly this summer. What I have come to see in a new way has to do with two, related things: 1) our interconnectedness (how we are intertwined with each other and all of life) and 2) the consequences of privilege. And so today, I'd like to talk with you a few minutes about Leading Social Change out of Privilege's Delusion.

As I listened over this summer to people responding to what was happening around us and to us, I have found myself suspended in moments of incredulous disbelief. Take for example, Bill O'Reilly, who said in June of this year, that racism isn't endemic in America and exists only on the fringes. And, Bill O'Reilly is not the only one taking that stance. How is it even possible to hold that position? Or Donald Trump's attorney saying, "And, of course, understand that by the very definition, you can't rape your spouse." What? Really? We could go on and on at the incredulous things coming out of some peoples' mouths.

And...so...in the midst of that, I was reminded of a childhood story. I'm sure you know it too. It is the story about the emperor and his "new clothes." You know the one I am talking about; the emperor is naked and everyone pretended they didn't notice and finally a young child speaks up and says, "But he has no clothes." We all remember that story. What I want to talk about today is the people. You'll remember in the story, every single person saw that the emperor was naked

the only one to see his nakedness. Maybe each one thought they would be singled out, thought as stupid or that they would be shamed somehow or ostracized if they did not go along with the normative narrative. So the problem was not the naked emperor *per se*; the real problem was that they lived

“As privilege increases, compassion and empathy decrease while a sense of entitlement and notions of favor become rampant.”

their lives within that constructed, normative system. And so, I want to plant a seed today that our lives are all intertwined in the constructed narratives of a naked emperor. (And just one more point on that story—what was the constructed narrative all about? Money!)

With that in mind, let us turn to our biblical story from 1 Samuel 12:1-7a. It is a story of God, Nathan, and David. We all know David's story. David—the overlooked son of Jesse—the one chosen by God even as he was ignored by others—especially his family. Chosen because God looked not on outward appearance but on the heart. What a trajectory he had...charisma, success, husband of seven wives (that's biblical marriage for you!), material gains beyond anything thought possible, influence, and power. Wow! What a trajectory! And, somewhere along the way, something happened to the one who had been an overlooked boy-shepherd. David became something different. David constructed his own story, in his own head, and...the world around him allowed that to happen. David constructed his own narrative and, in so doing so, he forgot who he was and where he came from. He told himself, and then believed, this new story about himself. *He* earned everything he had. It was *his* accomplishments, *his* pulling himself up by his own bootstraps, that got him all his success and material gain. He was *special, unique*. *He* was entitled. He was different than everyone else—a cut above. Therefore, different rules applied to him. And so, this man, David, the one after God's own heart, had become a man with his own

cold, narcissistic heart. He had become more self-satisfied, rude, arrogant, less sensitive and empathetic, and more and more aggressively demonstrative about his success while concurrently less attuned to the many factors surrounding the circumstances of his life, more selfish, more manipulative, more insular, more separated from other humans and God's creation. He created a false consciousness about himself and the world around him so that he could "make sense" of his privileges.

Some research was published in 2013 about the game of Monopoly. Researchers at the University of California Berkley were interested in the effects of wealth. They did a study with over 200 subjects. They'd pick a random pair and put them in a room with the game of Monopoly. Again, by random choice, they'd select one of the participants to be the "rich" person and the other to be the "poor" person. The rich person received twice the starting money, double the salary when passing GO, and the ability to roll two dice while the poor person gets to roll only one. Each of the 100 pairs played for fifteen minutes while they were recorded by video. Results were consistent. In the beginning, the pair would show puzzlement about the game, glancing at each other, noting the "weirdness" of the situation. But, as the game went along, the "rich" person started acting more physically dominant, pounding their piece while counting the spaces, or raising arms in the air with each monetary success. The "rich" person invariably started talking about how they had earned so much more. The "rich" person's narrative increasingly demonstrated a newly constructed narrative, one that noted personal merit and achievement while ignoring any facts inconsistent with the newly constructed personal narrative. The conclusion of the study...as privilege increases, compassion and empathy decrease while a sense of entitlement and notions of favor become rampant. A moral code is invented to justify the privilege.

And we see this in our society today. Something about privilege has a tendency to cause people to forget where they came from and who they used to be. Privilege functions to dehumanize everyone; privilege dehumanizes those without the privilege and privilege

(cont.)

and yet they all pretended that he wasn't naked. They lived their *lives* based on the constructed narrative that the emperor was wearing lovely, brilliant clothes. Why did they do that? Maybe each one thought they were

disconnects the privileged from what makes their own selves human. So David succumbed to his privilege. He disregarded his interrelatedness with everyone else. To go from humble beginnings to then believe he could be abusive through his privilege...to go from being a rag-tag bandit to being a king who took whatever he wanted whenever he wanted...to be a country of people fleeing religious persecution to then arrive at a point where you believe that religious freedom gave you a birthright to own another human being... it is amazing how a motley crew of misfits, dismissed by the British Empire, found a way to establish their own power and privilege in the midst of their insecurity by stealing land from brown bodies, and building their society on the backs of black bodies. Privilege corrupts.

David got to a place where his privilege had so infected his spirit that he thought he could, and would, do whatever he wanted. And so he did not care about Uriah. He did not even care about Bathsheba. He just wanted to possess her. All he knew was that he wanted what he wanted. So, when it came to the point where David had Uriah killed, he was so intoxicated with his privilege that having a rational conversation with him about his abuses would have done no good. God had to reach him by way of a story, through Nathan. And as we look at the story, we see how the story worked on David's privileged-fogged mind. Nathan came to David and said, hey, listen, there was a man in your kingdom and he had...and...and... Nathan played to David's arrogance, to David's self-absorption. Nathan worked within David's warped moral code. Then David says—Who did it? I am the king. I can right this wrong. Tell me—who is the culprit? Because—that person should die today. Nathan—tell me who it is. Don't be afraid to point him out. I am the king.. .with all power and privilege. I can make all things new. I can make all things right. Cuz my privilege makes me think I can correct the world. You know...when your own home is dysfunctional... when your privilege makes you think you can be the democracy police of the world but your notion of policing needs addressing...when your privilege makes you think that you have the standard model for democracy and you want to spread it through the world but racism eats at the very core of who you are...when your privilege makes you think you can disrespect the interconnected humanity of others... And, in the midst of all that arrogance and blustering, Nathan said, David, thou...art the man.....

Seeing in new ways demands being in new ways. Seeing ourselves in our privilege, or better yet, seeing ourselves in our privileges (and make no mistake, everyone here today has some kind of privilege) calls us to live in new ways. Seeing in new ways requires being in new ways.

For me, Charleston was that culminating, crystallising moment when I knew I needed to see in new ways. I saw newly how our lives, all of our lives, are bound, intertwined. And I saw my own complicity in what happened in Charleston. We all share responsibility. That man's intention was to shoot Black people. He murdered nine people. He took the lives of Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Cynthia Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lance, DePayne Middleton; Tywanza Sanders, Myra Thompson, and Daniel Simmons. He said, "You rape our women and you're taking over our country. And you have to go." He told investigators his intention was to start a race war.

And yet, the media referred to him as "quiet" and "soft-spoken." Many speculated that he suffered from mental illness. It was often noted that he acted alone. NO! His crime was a hate crime. Terrorism. Where did he learn that hate? He is the product of our culture—your culture and mine. As CTS trustee, Rev. Michael A. Walrond, pastor of First Corinthian Baptist Church in Harlem says, Dylan Roof pulled the trigger, but...who loaded the gun? Folks, particularly my white folks, this is happening—on our watch. We are responsible!

And if we are going to turn this around, if we are going to lead social change on all the issues our world is facing, we are going to have to recognize that our lives are bound together, inextricably intertwined. Let's just take for example #BlackLivesMatter. We need to be asking, "How do black lives matter?" Black lives mattered during slavery because they were counted as wealth and status. Black lives mattered post-reconstruction as a source of exploited labor. Black lives have matter today as a profit-center for private prisons. But that is not what our faith tradition teaches is the reason black lives matter.

If we need to go to scripture, we can. We are **all** created in the image of God. Genesis 1:26 has God saying, "Let us create humankind in our own image." All of us being created in the image of God does not mean only the men or only the white people or only the straight people or only the rich people are created in God's image. Let us create humankind in our own image means ALL of us. All means all. We are all created in the image of God. As a person embodying white privilege, I and other white persons who are concerned about equal justice in our society need to make sure we are valuing black lives as much as we are valuing our own. As a person living fully in Christian privilege, I and other Christians who are concerned about equal justice in our society need to make sure we are valuing the lives of people of other faith traditions as much as we are valuing our own.

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So today, I invite us, as leaders for God's next, to live into a new prayer. And the prayer is a prayer of action. First I invite us to do hard work around recognizing our own privileges and then I invite us to live fully into our interconnectedness. In the past, I would have invited us to be allies. But, in my ever-evolving way of seeing, "ally" does not quite cut it. Allies step in and out—when it is to their own advantage. We need to do more. My friend and colleague in Hebrew Bible, Dr. Randall C. Bailey, who has served as Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Hebrew Bible at Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA, says that he is a Womanist collaborator, a womanist collaborator. I ask us to expand the use of that term. I invite all of us, each one, to be collaborators around our own privileges. So, white people, let us do the hard work around seeing, around recognizing our white privilege individually, systemically, and culturally; let us name white privilege every time we see it; and let us confront ourselves in the mirror and examine, accept and correct what we do on every front. Let us work to make sure BlackLivesMatter as much as our own. Straight people, I invite us to do the same. Be collaborators. Men, be collaborators. People of means, be collaborators. Christians, I invite us to do the same. Be collaborators. From every point of privilege, let us be collaborators. Let us be the change we want to see.



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Congratulations, Don Clark. Chicago Theological Seminary honors our former Board Chair, Don Clark, upon his retirement from the United Church of Christ.

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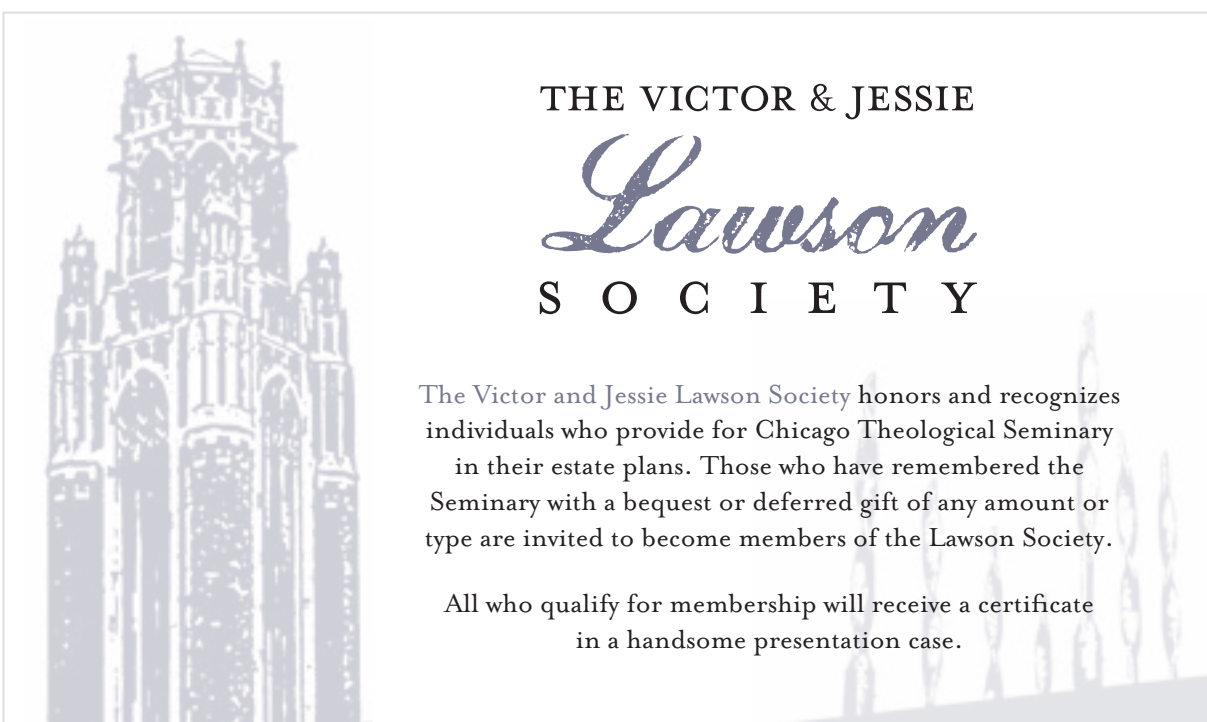
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Registered Alumnus	CONNECTS membership card, CTS custom alumnus email address, monthly e-news, access to job postings, and invitations to CTS events & lectures
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**Founders' Circle membership is a special level offered to commemorate the launch of CONNECTS Alumni Association.
This select membership level is only available through April 2016.

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Unless otherwise indicated, events will take place at CTS.

- The Rev. Dr. David M. Neff
- North Suburban Synagogue
Beth El, Highland Park, IL
- Ms. Julianna Nunez
- The Rev. Nancy H. Nyberg
and Dr. Dennis Nyberg
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AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & HERITAGE

YORUBA RELIGIONS CHAPEL & FILM SCREENING

February 3, 2016, 12 pm & 5 pm

YORUBA LECTURE & DISCUSSION

February 4, 2016, 5 pm

BLACK MUSIC WORKSHOP

February 8 & 9, 2016, 5 – 6:30 pm

BLACK LIVES MATTER: STRATEGIES FOR THE STRUGGLE PART 2

February 24, 2016, 5 – 6:30 pm
[LIVE STREAMED]

SEMINARY SUNDAY

Sunday, February 28, 2016

CTS students, alumni, and faculty will visit congregations to assist with worship. Request a seminarian for your congregation or organization! Contact Chad Schwickerath at chad.schwickerath@ctschicago.edu.

CTS GOOD FRIDAY 7 LAST WORDS OF CHRIST

Friday, March 25, 6:30 pm
[LIVE STREAMED]

7 Students from the ACTS Consortium Schools preach the 7 Last Words of Christ.

SISTERS WITH SONS CONFERENCE

Thursday, April 7 –
Saturday, April 9, 2016

At this conference Religious Studies scholars will participate in round-table discussions that address violence experienced in the African American community and provide a stage for families to reflect on mothering and mentoring.

GILBERTO CASTAÑEDA LECTURE

Thursday, May 5, 2016, 5:15 pm
Reception, 6:30 pm Lecture
[LIVE STREAMED]

CTS' annual lecture on LGBTQ issues will feature The Rev. Dr. Pamela Lightsey of Boston University School of Theology, Associate Dean for Community Life and Lifelong Learning and Clinical Assistant Professor of Contextual Theology and Practice.

COMMENCEMENT

Friday, May 13, 2016, 2:00 pm
[LIVE STREAMED]

Held at Trinity UCC, Chicago. Our 2016 honorary degree recipients are Jasiri X, Harry Belafonte & Dr. Jacquelyn Grant.

SPRING CONVOCATION I

Wednesday, February 24, 2016
12:00 pm

The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder, CTS Assistant Professor of Theological Field Education & New Testament, and Director of Theological Field Education - A Mother-Whore Is Still A Mother: A Womanist Perspective on Revelation 17-18.

RESCUING JESUS: BOOK DISCUSSION & SIGNING

Tuesday, March 1, 2016
5:15 pm – 6:30 pm

How People of Color, Women, and Queer Christians are Reclaiming Evangelicalism – with Deborah Jian Lee, award-winning journalist and radio producer.

SPRING CONVOCATION II

Wednesday, April 6, 2016
12:00 pm [LIVE STREAMED]

Dr. Ken Stone, Professor of Bible, Culture, & Hermeneutics

RIOTCON: THE FIERCE URGENCY OF NOW

Friday, April 15 –
Saturday, April 16, 2016
8:00 am – 4:00 pm

The Raging Issues of Today Conference 2016 will explore issues of race and racial equality related to the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Freedom Movement, focusing on critical action and outcomes for today. For more info visit riotcon.ctschicago.edu.

EARTH DAY JUMAA PRAYER

Friday, April 22, 2016

Join JCIS and the CTS ECommunity cohort for this Earth Day event.

ECOMMUNITY CULMINATING PROJECT

Thursday, May 5, 2016

Join JCIS and the CTS ECommunity cohort for this ECommunity Program event.

For more information on our upcoming events visit ctschicago.edu or follow us on





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