
HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

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NEWS AND NOTES

CONFERENCE '95

A program committee has been formed to review proposals for papers to be given at the third triennial conference on the history of women religious, scheduled to convene June 18, 1995, at Cardinal Stritch College. Composed of Florence Deacon, OSF, as chair, and Grace McDonald, FSPA, Barbara Misner, SCSC, and Jane Schulenburg, the committee will begin its review shortly after the October 15 deadline for proposals. These should be sent to Florence at Department of History, Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, WI 53217.

We have been receiving a few requests for help with international travel expenses. To the extent that our funds permit, the Conference will give partial scholarships to offset international travel costs. Please forward your travel budget to Florence Deacon if you think you may be eligible for this assistance.

The triennial Conference is the occasion for a business meeting of the Ad hoc HWR Conference Committee. Its chief responsibilities are to evaluate Conference goals and activities, to approve the Conference budget, and to determine the site of the triennial conference. Members are listed on the back page of the newsletter. Please consider your own interest in being an Ad hoc Committee member. You can offer your services, or address any questions regarding the Conference, to the *HWR News and Notes* editor who also serves as coordinator between meetings. New members will be appointed at the time of the 1995 gathering.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS, TALKS

WOMEN AND MISSIONS: PAST AND PRESENT ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES, edited by Fiona Boure and others (Berg Publishers: 1993), includes several chapters on Roman Catholic religious sisters as missionaries.

George W. Stewart offers a comprehensive narrative of American women religious from 1727 to 1990 in *MARVELS OF CHARITY: HISTORY OF AMERICAN SISTERS AND NUNS* (Our Sunday Visitor Books, 1994). To order, write 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750; or call 1-800-348-2440, ext. 318.

Martha Smith, CSJ and Carol Coburn had their paper, "*Pray for your Wanderers: Women Religious on the Colorado Mining Frontier, 1877-1917*," accepted for publication in *FRONTIERS: A JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S STUDIES* (early 1995, special issue on women's history). They will also be participants in a panel entitled "From the Sanctuary to the Public Arena: Education, the Patriarchal Church and the Expansion of Women's Roles, 1870-1930," at the annual meeting of the History of Education Society. The meeting is November 3-6, 1994, at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Panel chair and commentator is Nancy Hewitt from Duke. The Smith-Coburn paper is "*Spirited Lives: The Religious Community as Educator of American Women, 1870-1918*."

Margaret Smith, OP, reported on the history of Dominican women in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region since the late sixteenth century, at a two-day conference on the "History of Women Religious" held in Sydney last summer.

The National Education Center for Women in Business at Seton Hill College has founded a periodical, *ENTRE VISION: THE BUSINESS OF GENDER AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP*. The first issue, Spring, 1994, includes a short article on the foundress of the Sisters of Charity in the U.S., Elizabeth Bayley Seton, an entrepreneurial role model. For the complete manuscript, write the NECWB Women in History Project, Seton Hill College Folk Life Documentation Center for Gender Studies, Seton Hill Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601.

The recently published *WOMEN EDUCATORS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1820-1993: A BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCEBOOK*, edited by Maxine Schwartz (Greenwood Press, 1994) includes two articles by Mary J. Oates, CSJ, on women religious: "Mother Mary Regis Casserly" (pp.95-102), and "Mother Mary Katharine Drexel" (pp. 209-217).

Miriam Schmitt, OSB and Linda Kulzer, OSB have edited a book due out this fall by Liturgical Press. It features nineteen medieval Benedictine women of importance, their lives, works, and significance for present-day Benedictine monastics.

Current statistics: the 50,000-word working paper released this summer by the Vatican Synod of Bishops Secretariat in preparation for the forthcoming synod, "The Consecrated Life and Its Role in the Church and in the World," notes that there are approximately 1,423 institutes of women religious of pontifical right and 1,550 of diocesan right in the world today. The men's figures are 250 of pontifical right and 242 of diocesan right.

After six years in the making, *They Came to Teach* is on the brink of publication. Research for the book was carried out by the Shared Story Project, a collaborative endeavor involving representatives of nine Minnesota-based communities of women religious. Co-authors, Ann Marie Biermaier, OSB, and Annabelle Raiche, CSJ,

wove the strands from individual communities into one story of sisters who contributed to the establishment and growth of parochial schools throughout the state of Minnesota. North Star Press of St. Cloud, Inc. will have the book ready for distribution and marketing by late October, 1994. Questions about the publication can be addressed to either of the co-authors: Ann Marie Biermaier, OSB, College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN 56374 or Annabelle Raiche, CSJ, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN 55105.

The manuscript for *Your Will Be Done: A Biography of Sister Mary Samuel Coughlin*, by Alice O'Rourke, OP, is in the hands of Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company of Dubuque, Iowa, with a projected publishing date of November, 1994. For further information, contact Alice at the Sinsinawa Dominican Motherhouse, Sinsinawa, WI 53824.

John Baptist Scalabrini and Italian Migration: A Socio-Pastoral Project is a study of the documents available on the origins of the Sisters of Saint Charles--Scalabrinians. Author Lice Maria Signor brings together three people: John Baptist Scalabrini, who organized missionaries to minister to Italian immigrants in their new homes; Giuseppe Marchetti, who brought together a community of women religious for the Italian immigrant apostolate in Brazil; and Giuseppe's sister, Assunta, who was one of the first members of the new community, and who gave it stability and shaped its identity. These individual efforts are linked to the economic, social, political, and pastoral situations in Brazil and in Italy in which the three pioneers operated. The book, translated from Portuguese to English by Margaret Kocher, OP, and enhanced with vintage photographs, is available in paperback for \$14.50 from Center for Migration Studies, 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, New York 10304. Telephone (714)351-8800; FAX (718) 667-4598. or e-mail lftoc@csiunx.it.csi.cuny.edu.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Mary Dumonceaux is conducting research for a dissertation on Maude Petre whose life includes 17 years in a religious community. Mary recently lived with an Anglican sisterhood in London for a comparison experience. Her own affiliation is a Franciscan sisterhood of the Roman branch, but with a foundress who was a convert to Roman Catholicism from Anglicanism. Mary can be contacted at 3825 West Pine, St. Louis, MO 63108.

Cynthia Cupples is writing a dissertation on Catholic visionaries, both lay and religious, in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France. For a chapter on Marie Teyssonier (1576-1648), a laywoman involved in founding the Visitation of Valence in southeastern France, she is seeking a work cited in 1896 as "*Année sainte des religieuses de la Visitation de Sainte Marie.*" If you have any clues, Cynthia can be contacted at the Department of History, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544.

Alcina Forero-Peña's research focus is on religious women in the Christian tradition as educators of women in developing countries. She is particularly concerned with the areas of South Asia and Latin America. Alcina can be contacted at The Graduate School of the City University of New York, 134 Haven Ave. 3F, New York, NY 10032.

Suzy Farren, editor of the *CATHOLIC HEALTH WORLD*, is involved in a year-long effort to document the contribution of Catholic women religious to the health of the United States population. She hopes to produce an hour-long documentary to air on national television. Congregational archivists should have received a memorandum from her in June in which she seeks photographs, letters, stories, books, and related memorabilia. For more information, contact her at 4455 Woodson Road, St. Louis, MO 63134; or (314) 427-2500.

Else-Britt Nilsen shares a prospectus of her current research which we cite at length because

of its importance: "The work performed by women in church and society has generally been overlooked. This is particularly true in the case of Catholic sisters or 'nuns'. And these women have not fled the world. When the Catholic Church returned to Norway in the past century, they acted as founders of parishes together with priests. Besides, their disinterested work contributed to these small parishes' material security. Through teaching and nursing, sisters provided a meeting-place between the Catholic Church and Norwegian society; they did indeed create such meetings. Thus their function involved 'connection-making.' [My] project aim is to cast light on the history of sisters in Norway up to our day, including future prospects. It will not be a history of hospitals and schools; the angle is that of women's history and church history. The project will explore all aspects of the sisters' lives, including the 'spiritual'--the specifically religious. This is a side of women's history that is more hidden than other dimensions. It also says something about the life and situation of a minority church. Sisters deserve a place in Norwegian women's and church history. But more important still, that history will be incomplete as long as they are absent from it..." Else-Britt is a senior research officer with the faculty of theology at the University of Oslo. She can be contacted at the University, P.O. Box 1023 Blindern, N-0315 Oslo, Norway.

Catherine Ann Curry, PBVM, is working on an article about Irish immigrants in San Francisco and social action in the nineteenth century. Catherine, who is currently in a part-time capacity at the University of San Francisco and the Archdiocese of San Francisco Archives, can be contacted at 2340 Turk Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94118.

Beth Lynn, ASC, claims the thirteenth century as her field and is working on a paper titled "*Clare of Assisi with Gregory IX and Innocent IV: a Case of Religious Disobedience in the Thirteenth Century.*" Beth can be contacted at the Monastery of St. Clare, 8650 Russell Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55431.

A major grant from the Pew Charitable Trust has enabled Angelyn Dries, OSF to take a sabbatical this year to complete the research for a book on the American foundations for Catholic missions overseas. While the book will not examine every Congregation or group who sent missionaries overseas, the work will narrate major developments in the understanding and practice of mission. While men slightly outnumbered women missionaries, there are considerable differences in the approach and perspective which these groups embodied. Women were especially active in the Catholic Students Mission Crusade.

In addition to examining the twelve boxes of material sent by Congregation archivists to Thomas Stransky, CSP in 1988, Angelyn has contacted several archivists for relevant material on particular women religious missionaries. Fall archival trips will include Washington, D.C., Baltimore, New York, and Boston. Spring trips will include St. Louis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, South Bend, and Chicago.

If you know of an American woman from a religious congregation whom you think is an important figure for this mission history, please get in touch with Angelyn at:

Cardinal Stritch College
6801 Yates Road
Milwaukee, WI 53217
(414) 352-5400 Ext. 335

BOOK REVIEW

OTHER WATERS: A HISTORY OF THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, by Mary Cecilia Murray, O.P. (Brookville Books: Old Brookville, New York, 1993) 401 pp.

The symbol of ever-changing river currents informs Cecilia Murray's history of the Newburgh, New York Dominicans. The Danube, the East River, the Passaic, the Chehalis, and most of all the Hudson, become in her work "a commentary on the essentially pilgrim nature of Dominican life...as women descended from a long line of river people, change was always a built in factor" (p.350). This sense of change is apparent in

Murray's chronological organization, focusing on the progression of Newburgh superiors from 1959 to the present (1992). Whether intended or not, *OTHER WATERS* seems to divide naturally into three sections: the first part, almost one third of the work, describes the early growth of the Congregation including the history of the five daughter houses which will become independent communities; the second section chronicles the long middle period of stabilization and expansion extending from 1898 to 1965; and finally, concluding chapters recount the years of renewal and transformation.

Newburgh traces its origins to Holy Cross Monastery in Ratisbon, Germany through the four women from that community who arrive in New York in 1853 to work among German speaking Catholics. They settled in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn and in 1859 established a second foundation in Manhattan under the leadership of Mother Augustine Neuhierl. The Manhattan house, which became autonomous in 1869, is the beginning of the Newburgh community. The first forty years were characterized by rapid growth in New York, New Jersey, and Michigan, but at the same time, led inevitably to the organization of five independent congregations stemming from the daughter house: Caldwell, Blauvelt, Grand Rapids, Edmonds, Washington; and Adrian. One of the strengths of Murray's narrative is her overview of the origins of each of these congregations. Although distance played a role in the forces for separation, as in the case of the Michigan houses and Washington, along with tensions arising from the Americanization of the sisters, clerical interference from pastors and bishops was an equally important factor underlying the pull to separation. Bishops Richter of Grand Rapids and Wigger of Newark were particularly determined to control the direction of the houses within their jurisdiction.

Murray's description of the long period from 1898 to 1965 begins with the relocation of the novitiate and motherhouse to Newburgh in 1898 and then traces the founding of new missions through the 1960s. This detailed chronicle of growth will no doubt be of greatest interest to the Newburgh sisters in its recall of familiar names and places. The detail also raises questions for new research

agendas. What is the significance, for example, in the movement from the brownstones of New York City to the convents of Larchmont and Parsippany? In one way or another most communities have experienced the suburbanization of the Church in the 1950s and 1960s. *OTHER WATERS* points to the need for extended analysis of the impact of this phenomenon, not only for Newburgh but for all communities.

In her concluding chapters, Murray explores the impact of the renewal on the Newburgh Dominicans and in so doing provides a model of candor and openness that could be emulated by any who attempt to interpret this period. Reading these pages is to relive the cycle of renewal chapters, accepting new decision-making processes and then gradually recognizing that these processes of change will not end but generate new understanding and ultimately, new meaning. For the sisters of Newburgh, these changes could very well lead to some affiliation with the Dominican congregations in Ossining and in Fall River, carrying them once again through the currents of change and transformation.

Mary Hayes, SND
Trinity College, Washington, D.C.

ELECTRONIC NETWORKING

SISTER-L is a new electronic discussion group focusing on the history and contemporary concerns of women religious. Its originators, Margaret Susan Thompson and Ritamary Bradley, SFCC, envision an agenda relating to research on the history and contemporary dimensions of religious life (discussion of projects underway, requests for bibliographic, methodological, and other research assistance); methodology and theory relevant to the study of sisters and religious life; the theology, spirituality, and ecclesiology of religious life; future directions for religious life; and other more action-oriented communication (responses to Vatican statements or policies directed to religious communities, actions by Sisters' Councils and other groups focused on the interests of women religious, ideas for liturgies suitable for community gatherings, etc.). Scholars, practitioners and others

interested in these and similar topics are invited to subscribe by sending an electronic message to: listserv@suvn.syr.edu (leave the "subject" line blank; in the "message" area, write only "subscribe SISTER-L" followed by your full name).

For further information, contact one of the list's co-owners:

Margaret Susan Thompson (Syracuse University) thompson@maxwell.syr.edu; or Ritamary Bradley, SFCC (St. Ambrose University) rbradley@saunix.sau.edu.

OPPORTUNITIES

The annual award process at the Abigail Quigley McCarthy Center for Women's Research, Resources and Scholarship, located at the College of St. Catherine, concluded in June with two awards in the category of research on the development of self-esteem in women and girls; and two in the category of research on the contribution of women in the Catholic tradition to public policy and/or service. Awards ranged from \$500 to \$2,500. Now is the time to consider applying next year. The application deadline is April 24, 1995. For guidelines and application materials, write or call Sharon Doherty, Director; The Abigail Quigley McCarthy Center for Women; 2004 Randolph Ave., St. Paul, MN 55205. Telephone: (612) 690-6736 or -6783.

The Coordinating Committee on Women in the Historical Profession, the Conference Group on Women's History, and the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians announce the annual competition for a \$500 Graduate Student Award to assist in thesis work. Applicants must be women graduate students in U.S. institutions, but may be in any field of history. For applications, write Professor Peggy Pascoe, Award Committee, Dept. of History, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

Manuscripts on all aspects of communalism are solicited for the interdisciplinary journal, *COMMUNAL SOCIETIES*. Submit two copies prepared according to *A MANUAL OF STYLE* to Dr.

Michael Barkun, editor, *Communal Societies*, Dept. of Political Science, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244. Telephone: (315) 443-9339. HWR member, Regina Siegfried, ASC, is active in this association and eager for more women religious to become aware of it, and for the association to become more aware of women religious. Its purpose, "to encourage the restoration, preservation and public interpretation of the communitarian heritage and the study of intentional communities, past and present," encompasses religious communities even though the original inspiration grew out of contact with the Shakers.

The periodical *WOMEN AND LANGUAGE* invites submissions for a special Spring, 1996 issue on "*Women and Storytelling*." The issue, edited by Jo Radner, will focus on women, communication, language and gender in storytelling. The editor encourages those interested in submitting scholarly articles to contact her to discuss their ideas. Send three copies of submission by June 15, 1995, to Professor Jo Radner, Dept. of Literature, American University, Washington, D.C. 20016. Telephone: (202) 885-2982, fax (202) 885-2938, or e-mail JRADNER@AMERICAN.EDU.

Editors of the *BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF MODERN AMERICAN EDUCATORS* are seeking suggestions of persons whose biographies might be included. The greatest interest is in educators born during the years 1915-1934, whose accomplishments came in the years following the Second World War. Younger persons are not being considered, except in a few cases where an individual achieved a great deal at a relatively early age and is now deceased. If you can recommend someone who took a lead in the development of a new field of knowledge, founded a distinctive type of institution, established a new school of educational thought, refashioned fundamental features of school finance or administration, stirred debate on an educational issue, was recognized as an authority on vital questions about pedagogy, or changed educational policy or practice, contact

Shirley M. Ohles at Greenwood Press, 1583 Chadwick Drive, Kent, OH 44240. She will send you the one-page form to be used for submissions.

MISCELLANEOUS

We occasionally receive requests from publishing firms for our HWR News and Notes subscription list. To date, we have not shared the list, but we propose to do so in future for a fee. Please inform the newsletter editor if you wish your name removed from the list for any such sharing purposes.

Please direct books for review to our book review editor, Mary Hayes, SND, Trinity College, Franklin & Michigan Ave., NE, Washington, D.C. 20017. Also, let Mary know if you are interested in writing reviews and if so, your field of expertise.

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Kaye Ashe, OP; Florence Deacon, OSF;
Mary Ewens, OP; JoAnn McNamara; Mary J. Oates, CSJ; Judith Sutera, OSB; Peg Thompson.