

Hedgerow Seminar Fall 2018
Wounds and Words: Body, Race, and Being

What marks our bodies? What sets us apart, discloses us, scars us? Race, sex and gender, sexuality, culture make each human individual, particular, different, but also mark us and make visible and invisible who we are. Marks exclude and include.

The black, violated, opaque body enfleshes freedom as many of the violated testify in their own voices in Shawn Copeland's book. Bias affects who we see in our horizon. The raced, gendered, sexed, enculturated body of Jesus Christ mediates God's presence among us in his lifetime. His love calls us today to "imagine and grasp and realize ourselves as his own flesh, the body of Christ." Women's studies professor Pamela Fletcher explores books and blues that embody African American experiences and inspire struggle against violence and racism.

Sexual abuse marks Rebecca Parker's body and disrupts her relationships as PTSD does in the lives of soldiers in her congregation. Rita Nakashima Brock finds two cultures struggling within her—Japanese and American. Their stories create embodied theologies of hope. Education professor Dawn Quigley expresses in poetry her Native American experience of growing up in Minnesota.

Theologian Mary Bednarowski looks back on the 25 years since the first Reimagining Conference that brought together feminist, womanist, *mujerista*, and Asian theologians to reimagine a church and world in which women are equal. Women's Center Director Sharon Doherty reflects on what builds community among us who live raced, gendered, sexed, enculturated lives today.

The course invites participants to reflect on what marks their bodies and cultivates communion in our world.

Texts: *Enfleshing Freedom, Body, Race, and Being*, Shawn Copeland (Fortress 2010). *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and The Search for What Saves Us*, Rita Nakashima Brock, Rebecca Ann Parker (Beacon, 2001).

Instructors: Andrea Tande, MA; Mary Kaye Medinger, MA; Sharon Doherty, PhD, Women Studies and Director of the Abigail Quigley McCarthy Women Center, St. Catherine University; Pamela Fletcher, MA, Women's Studies, St. Catherine University; Rev. Barbara Lund, Director, Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality; Mary Bednarowski, PhD, United Theological Seminary; Dawn Quigley, PhD, Education, St. Catherine University; Joan Mitchell, PhD

Sept 17 Topic: "*Enfleshing Freedom*, "Body, Race, and Being," Chapter 1
TED Talk, Kimberlé Crenshaw, "The Urgency of Intersectionality"
Living a Feminist Life, Sara Ahmed, (Duke University Press, 2017)

Pre-reading is not necessary. The first chapter is more difficult than the others, so we will go over it as a group that night. Books available that night.

Sept 24 Read: *Enfleshing Freedom*, "Enfleshing Freedom," Chapter 2.
Instructor: Joan Mitchell.

Use the questions below for reflection and as reading guides.

1. What makes black women's bodies a site of revelation and sacrament?
2. How do the slave narratives speak to you? What is the power of these voices for you?
3. "Slavery was a business, a way of life, but most basically, it was a lie." Whose lie?
4. What do you learn about black women's bodies as objects 1) of property, 2) of production, 3) of reproduction, 4) of sexual violence?
5. What did slaves need to be free?
6. What dimensions of human life does being free open us?
7. What is the power of hope?

- Oct 1** Read *Enfleshing Freedom*, “Marking the Body of Jesus, the Body of Christ,” Chapter 3.
Instructor: Joan Mitchell.
Use questions, raise your own, prepare your insights.
1. What does it mean, “the body is a contested site?”
 2. Who is Jesus in the context of empire? How does he change village life?
 3. What is the difference between sex and sexuality? How do you experience the power of eros? What is Jesus’ way of being human?
 4. How are race and gender re-racializing in our global world (66-73)?
 5. How does color-blind racism work?
 6. What is transformative about Jesus’ acceptance of us as we are? How can the queer flesh of Christ re-mark the flesh of the Church?
 7. How does a queer Christ transform the entanglement of sexual desire and desire for God?
- Oct 4, 5, 6** Shawn Copeland, Myser Lecture & Wisdom Ways Soul Conference
- Oct 8** Read: *Enfleshing Freedom*, “Turning the Subject,” Chapter 4.
Instructor: Barbara Lund.
- Oct 15** Read: *Enfleshing Freedom*, “Eucharist, Racism, and Black Bodies,” Chapter 5.
Presentation: *Blues Visions* (“Strange Fruit;” Morrison, *Beloved*)
Instructor: Pamela Fletcher
- Oct 22** Read: *Proverbs of Ashes*, “Lent, A Season of Ashes,” Chapters 1-2.
Instructor: Andrea Tande
- Oct 29** Read: *Proverbs of Ashes*, “Pentecost: A Season of Fire,” Chapter 3-4.
Instructor: Andrea Tande
- Nov 5** Read: *Proverbs of Ashes*, “Epiphany: A Season of Illumination,” Chapters 5-6
Instructor: Andrea Tande
- Nov 12** Topic: Retrospective on Reimagining.
Instructor: Mary Bednarowski
- Nov 19** Topic: “Killjoy Manifesto,” *Living a Feminist Life*, Sara Ahmed.
Instructor: Sharon Doherty
- Nov 26** Topic: Poetry from a Lakota Perspective, Dawn Quigley, “Markers, Barriers, Frontiers,”
On Being Unfinished, Anne Patrick.
Instructor: Mary Kaye Medinger
- Dec 3** Presentations by Participants