

Rev. Karin A. Craven
Luther Seminary
kcraven@luthersem.edu
2015 REA Annual Meeting, November 6-8

“Multiple Self: The Relational Body and Imagination”

Abstract: Personhood understood as the multiple self roots the conversation about imagination fully in the sensate, relational body. The multiple self understood from different vantage points -- through learning and postcolonial theories, psychoanalytic and trauma theories, feminist and womanist theologies, and interpersonal neurobiology -- grounds the understanding of the *play* of imagination, inter-psychically and inter-relationally, and therefore creates a learning and living environment capable of exploring and negotiating differences of race, gender and class.

Methodology: Interdisciplinary theoretical analysis draws upon qualitative research that is grounded in the phenomenological exploration of community from one pastor’s experience of *koinonia* in the congregation.

I. Multiple Self: Definitions

- A. Psychoanalytic and trauma: splitting.
- B. Postcolonial: hybrid identity.
- C. Womanist: bodily lived experience of racism, sexism, and class.
- D. Feminist: discourse theory and subjectivities.
- E. Interpersonal Neurobiology: attachment theory, emotion and shifting mental states.
- F. Integration of Multiple Self: narrative re-authoring of attachment histories.

II. Relational Body: Emergent and Complex

- A. Stance of the relational body: curious, open, accepting, loving.
- B. Alterity and bodily sensations: the play of anxiety and desire.
- C. Making Meaning: images, feelings and thoughts.

III. Classroom: Space of Imaginative Play with Self and Other

- A. Transitional Space that is “safe enough”: liminal, interstitial, and 3rd space.
 - 1. Dynamics of recognition and misrecognition.
 - 2. Trinity and Table as biblical images of hospitality.
- B. Emotional vulnerability of self: enlivening and deadening emotions.
- C. Play: engages images and acknowledges plural paths of knowing and participating.

IV. Spirit: Energy of Intra- and Inter-relational Embodied Space

- A. Desire as embodied yearning that connects, disrupts, transforms and, at the same time, is not satisfied.
- B. Immanent and transcendent power of God is simultaneously flattened and stirred up.
- C. Psychic reality of love and hatred in projection: role of denial and repression in shaping desire.

V. New Creation: Desire in the Relational Body of the Multiple Self

- A. Integration: movement and joy.
- B. Practices: mindful awareness and iconic play.

Rev. Karin A. Craven
Luther Seminary
kcraven@luthersem.edu
2015 REA Annual Meeting, November 6-8

Bibliography

- Cooper-White, Pamela. *Braided Selves: Collected Essays on Multiplicity, God, and Persons*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011.
- . "Shared Wisdom: Use of the Self in Pastoral Care and Counseling." In *Person, Culture, and Religion Group*, American Academy of Religion, 233-241: Pastoral Psychology, 2004.
- Dube, Musa W. "Postcoloniality, Feminist Spaces, and Religion." In *Postcolonialism, Feminism and Religious Discourse*, edited by Laura E. Donaldson and Kwok Pui-lan. New York, NY: Routledge, 2002.
- Dunlap, Susan J. "Discourse Theology and Pastoral Theology." In *Feminist and Womanist Pastoral Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore and Brita L. Gill-Austern. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
- Fulkerson, Mary McClintock. "Theological Reflection and Theories of Practice: Rethinking Normative Memory as If Bodies Matter." In *Pastoral Bearings: Lived Religion and Pastoral Theology*, edited by Jane F. Maynard, Leonard Hummel and Mary Clark Moschella. New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2010.
- hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Kolk, Bessel A. van der. *The Body Keeps Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York, NY: Viking, 2014.
- Kwon, Heejung. "Toward a Theological Anthropology of Resistance: Korean American Women's Ambivalent Subjectivity, "Third Space," and Religious Education." Emory University, 2011.
- Nausner, Michael. "Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity." In *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, edited by Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner and Mayra Rivera. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004.
- Pui-lan, Kwok. "Geopolitical Hermeneutics." In *Soundings in Cultural Criticism: Perspectives and Methods in Culture, Power, and Identity in the New Testament*, edited by Francisco Lozada Jr. and Greg Carey. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.
- Sharp, Melinda A. McGarrah. *Misunderstanding Stories: Toward a Postcolonial Pastoral Theology*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013.
- Siegel, Daniel J. *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*. 2nd ed. New York: The Guilford Press, 2012.
- Ulanov, Ann Belford. *Finding Space: Winnicott, God, and Psychic Reality*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.
- Wenger, Etienne. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Rev. Karin A. Craven
Luther Seminary
kcraven@luthersem.edu
2015 REA Annual Meeting, November 6-8