

# The 'S' Word

Jane Griffioen

**T**hey tore it down in the fall of 1981.

“There goes a piece of history,” he said. “A lot of stories.”

We were in the Monte Carlo waiting for the traffic signal, on our way to dinner. Each of us, my husband and I, my brother-in-law, and his wife, had turned to look east, staring out the passenger window cracked open a few inches to the mild autumn evening.

My brother-in-law was referring to the half-razed brick structure visible from the street corner through the grove of trees.

History, indeed. And stories. Many, many stories. Stories never told, I am sure.

The light at the corner of 68th and Division changed, and we continued on our way to our favorite Grand Rapids restaurant. While they chatted, no one seemed to notice my reticence.

I had stories about those grounds, those trees, other buildings there, and

that building being demolished.

But I hadn't told the stories. Not to anyone. And as far as I was concerned that night, I never would.

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Silence is a woman's ornament, Aristotle said. Silence is the women's best garment, Sophocles said earlier. Women should learn in silence, in subjection, according to Paul the Apostle.

My father, my church, and my school taught me the words of Saint Paul, just as my forebearers had been taught—the French Huguenots, the Dutch Calvinists, the Protestant Reformed Church (PRC), the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). Women, submit to your husbands. Women are to keep silent in church. If you have questions, you are to ask your husband when you get home. Women should not teach in the church or assume authority over a man. Because Adam was formed before Eve. Besides, wrote Paul, it was the woman who

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The men's building at Pine Rest (ca. late 1920s). Courtesy of Heritage Hall.

was deceived and transgressed. But no fear—she would be saved in child-birth.

Paul, originally Saul of Tarsus, was a Roman citizen and a Greek-speaking Jew (ca. 5-65 AD). According to tradition, Paul was beheaded at the order of Roman Emperor Nero. Beheaded. But not before he made it clear who submitted, who was silenced, who was the head of whom, and why.

Like many women by the early 1980s, I was no longer silent in the church. I taught the high school Heidelberg Catechism class in our CRC congregation and co-led the denominational Bible study “Coffee Break” for women there once a week. My husband and children were first and foremost to me. Ours was a traditional marriage. I was a wife, mother, and homemaker. So, when the first woman graduated from the CRC seminary and sought to be ordained, my thought and main concern was “Who will take care of her children?”<sup>1</sup>

Holding official offices in the Christian Reformed Church was just opening for women. I wasn’t interested in any church office. Teaching church classes and catechism was one thing. I was well-versed in our creeds and confessions and in the Scriptures, for that matter. However, holding an office of deacon and elder, let alone official ordination and actually administering the sacraments, felt inappropriate, if not pretentious, to me. I heard Marchiene Rienstra speak at a large women’s breakfast gathering one spring in the 1980s. She did not change my mind. In my eyes this whole women-in-office business seemed egotistic and brazen.

I continued to adhere to my upbringing, and I took the King James Version of Saint Paul’s instruction seriously back then. Or that which I was told was the apostle’s instruction.

Junia was a little-known apostle whom Paul praised in his letter to

the Romans. The editor, writer, and award-winning journalist Rena Pederson tells a story of her surprise when she first heard of Junia’s story during a book club discussion on women in the Bible. A book club member pointed out that Junia should be included. She said that, in later years, translators had changed the name to

doors, and a lot of jangling keys.

Pine Rest Christian Hospital was established in 1910, organized by members of the CRC and the Reformed Church of America (RCA). As a little girl, I don’t remember hearing our family say “Pine Rest.”

In *London Street: A Memoir* (2020), I tell my mother’s story. But another

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Advertisement for Coffee Break bible study from Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids (1980s). Courtesy of Heritage Hall.

Junias, a man’s name, because they didn’t believe a woman could be an apostle.

Pederson was stunned, she says. She had “spent a lifetime of Sundays in church” and never heard any story about anyone named Junia.<sup>2</sup>

Not until the late 1980s did I come to understand Paul’s teaching differently from what I had before.

It was 1957. I was five years old when my father said Mother was “in the hospital.” After several weeks of Mother’s absence, Father took me and my siblings to that hospital to visit her.

The grounds had a lot of pine trees. The building had several floors and a lot of steps. There were a lot of windows with wire mesh, a lot of locked

woman shared Mother’s dimly lit room when I visited in 1957. A woman who called in a weak voice from a bed along the wall opposite of my mother’s bed, “What beautiful children you have!” My mother answered a raspy “Thank you,” and that was the end of the conversation. I don’t know whether my mother and the woman spoke much together, before or after that day, each from their place on the bleached white sheets. Maybe they stayed pretty much strangers. But I wonder today if that woman ever wanted to tell her story and if she ever had a chance.

My first husband and I were married for nine years before we had children. During seven of those years, from 1973 to 1980, I held three

full-time positions: a secretarial job, followed by a houseparent position, followed by bookkeeping and accounting work. My hobbies back then included reading, playing the piano, gardening, and cross-stitching. One piece of stitchery I created from that time is blocked, framed, and wrapped in tissue paper, saved in an upstairs closet. It reads, "Equality of Worth does not mean Sameness of Task."

Although the saying was not my invention, the needle work was. The embroidery hung on the kitchen wall and daily reassured me that the chores I took on as a wife; a homemaker; and, eventually, a mother of our two young children were as worthwhile as any church office, political office, or other work that brought home a paycheck. I didn't rally with the more outspoken or progressive women of the 1980s. But I did pay attention to what they were saying. I hadn't swallowed the more traditional ideas regarding a woman's place hook, line, and sinker.

Work in the field of women's studies and scholarship pursued by women in the CRC, at Calvin and other Christian colleges, kept my interest, as did views from Episcopal and Presbyterian institutions. My unexpected find and the most significant to me came in the winter of 1987-1988. The translation of the Greek word for headship, *kephale*, in Paul's letters was not necessarily as I had been taught. Several studies showed the word *kephale* to mean beginning or origin or source, and rarely did it imply authority or chain of command. This was my Pederson moment.

I had already set aside a literal interpretation of the creation story in the book of Genesis a few years before this.<sup>3</sup> Now, I found my discovered translation of the Apostle Paul's words regarding headship substantial, and

I considered my new understanding logical and refreshing.

I began questioning more biases in Scripture translation. Eventually, I realized the extent of patriarchal influence in Biblical interpretation; world history; church history; U.S. history—on and on to social norms; gender roles; and particularly, the silence of women. Better late than never.

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It was 1961. I was nine years old. I heard my mother sobbing in the night. Our parents' bedroom was directly under the upstairs bedroom my sister and I shared. My sister stayed asleep, but I could hear some of the conversation coming from below us.

Between her soft cries, mother was saying, "No. I can't do it. I can't do it."

My father asked, "What do you mean?"

Mother spoke louder, like she was frustrated or angry. "You know what I mean . . ."

"What are you talking about?" Father asked. "You're being silly."

"You know very well what I'm talking about."

Father brushed it off. "It's all your imagination, Mom."

It wasn't the first time I heard my mother talk that way. Usually my father answered, "No, Mom." Or "Don't be ridiculous." Or "Bologna."

Once I heard Father say, "That's crazy."

When I came home from school a few days later, my mother was gone to the place where we had visited her years before. The place with the beds and the windows like jail and the jangling keys.

I wasn't sure of the details. When I asked my father, he only shook his head and didn't answer. But sometimes I caught him with a tear on his face, or he would swallow hard in the middle of his prayer at our evening meal. My sisters answered my questions with a simple "I don't know."

Perhaps by instinct, I kept these things a secret. I didn't hear anyone else talk about them. Not at church, not in the neighborhood, not at school. I kept quiet. I noticed that the minister did not pray for my mother during the long congregational prayer on Sundays.

When my mother came home eight weeks later, the secret stayed a secret. As a nine-year-old, my reasoning said that was what my mother wanted.

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A theory from ancient times describes the source of women's insanity being the position of her uterus. The etymology of hysteria is the Greek word for womb, *hustera* (Latin *hystericus*) of the womb. The goal of treatments was to properly balance a woman's fluids. Centuries and centuries later, treatments remained linked to the idea of the hysterical wandering womb. Sometimes women were hung upside down to shift the uterus into place. From sweet herbs to hungry leeches to mutilation, from witch-burning to the swinging chair to surprise dunks in an ice-cold bath, from confining wraps in wetted-sheets to straitjackets, the shadows of the hysterical wandering womb lingered.

In the nineteenth century, doctors continued to claim that women with irregular menstrual cycles were especially susceptible to insanity. The norm remained to view women as the weaker sex, male dependent, with child-bearing their only significant contribution to society.

A chart of supposed causes of insanity from the Illinois State Hospital of Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1860 includes Paralysis and Epilepsy, Disappointed love, Over-exertion, Hard study, and Novel reading.<sup>4</sup>

Women were easily influenced. They were not to risk their fragile minds. Or their souls. They were capable of intellectual study but had "minds of limited capacity," and



“Kidnapping Mrs. Packard.” The dialogue accompanying the image emphasizes her betrayal and the promise of her son to get her “out of prison.” Illustration from *Modern Persecution; or, Insane Asylums Unveiled* (1873), by Elizabeth P. W. Packard.

therefore developing intelligence led to overuse of their brain and mental breakdown.<sup>5</sup>

Husbands were often intimidated by intelligence. Women were to be calm and compliant. For a woman to think her own thoughts and speak her own words was dangerous, even in religious households. Maybe more so in religious households. A woman was subordinate to a man.

Insubordination was a sin.

Independence was madness.

An assertive woman was unnatural

and therefore sick. The more she protested, the more delusional she was seen to be. A woman *must* be insane not to bow to her husband. Not infrequently, a husband who wanted to keep his wife in line asserted his control and had her declared insane.

On June 18, 1860, Elizabeth Packard of Manteno, Illinois, was literally carried off to The Illinois State Hospital in Jacksonville, Illinois. Her husband, the Reverend Theophilus Packard, had labeled her insane and conveniently committed her to the asylum.

“Wronged women were not supposed

to come out fighting, or be angry, or battle for injustice to be overturned. Elizabeth’s course was unnatural in his eyes—and therefore insane.”<sup>6</sup> And the more a patient protested, the more she was viewed as sick.

All Elizabeth had to do to win her freedom was submit to her husband. Promise never to think for herself again.<sup>7</sup>

The definition of *asylum* is “sanctuary.” An institution of protection, shelter, and support. But for Elizabeth Packard and hundreds of women like

her, asylums were used instead for social control. And the standards set for society were set largely by white, Protestant, middle-class men.

It took until 1980 for the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM III) to delete hysterical neurosis.

The Traverse City State Hospital was built in 1885 and closed in 1989.<sup>8</sup> The grounds have been preserved, and dozens of the original brick buildings have been renovated. The Village at Grand Traverse Commons is now a mixed-use development that includes condominiums, apartments, restaurants, a winery, and a bakery. Behind the buildings of the complex’s main area is the small farm that once helped to self-sustain the hospital. The farm was worked by both staff and patients.

Michigan autumns are beautiful. My husband and I travel the northern lower peninsula each year and typically stop in Traverse City to walk the old hospital grounds. We enjoy a bite and a sip at one of our favorite wineries. We grab a take-out sandwich at the central Commons, a cream-colored, tall brick building. The new renovations allow visitors to see much of the original hallways, walls, and arched wooden doors.

I admit that just waiting for the nice man in the friendly deli to spread a little mayonnaise over my sourdough turkey and cheese sandwich is rather creepy. Shadows, echoes, scraping chains, and jangling keys occupy my imagination in that building until we step outside once again into the brilliant fall color of our wooded Michigan surroundings.

Tours are offered at the Village in Traverse City, including an Historic Walking Tour, a Twilight Tour, and an Asylum Flashlight Tour where anyone under age eleven is NOT permitted and those under eighteen must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Tours of brick stairways, tunnels, barred windows, and men's and women's wards do not appeal to me. I can't help but think of these jaunts as inevitably disrespectful to the men and women of the past who suffered there. I can't help but consider the untold stories of submissive women unjustly committed. Women silenced. Stories buried in ruins and renovations.

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It was 1981. I was twenty-nine years old. We were in the fourth year of a drawn-out process to adopt a child. Symptoms of a first-time serious depression haunted me. Family history of secrets, silence, suppression, and submission loomed and frightened me. I admitted myself into Pine Rest Christian Hospital. Voluntarily. Against my husband's wishes.

There is such a thing as the Right to Remain Silent. There is such a thing as a Rightful Secret.

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"Well! She's got a lot of nerve!"

I smile and remember my mother using that phrase when slighted. I've heard other women burst out the words, likely without thought to the serious, historical accusatory implications. Strong resolution, ungovernable personality, unglued, hysterical, unlady-like, a lot of nerve—these were once textbook examples of mental instability. Women controlled by a patriarchal society.

When my father used words like "Don't be silly" or "That's bologna" in answer to my mother's distress, he spoke out of fatigue and frustration. Perhaps he sounded dismissive, but he didn't act dismissively. I witnessed his concern and love for his wife and children. I vouch for both his hard-headedness and his openness of heart.

My parents had their share of disagreements. On more than one occasion in the heat of an argument, I heard Mother quip, "O, the woman



Traverse City State Hospital (n.d.)

Thou gavest me!" That wrapped things up pretty quickly. Dad would shake his head and exit the room. I consider her tactic hilarious.

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Due to our heritage of English law, "coverture" in the United States held that no female person had a legal identity. If a woman married, she took her husband's name. If a woman married, she legally owned nothing. If divorced, she had no legal right to her children.<sup>9</sup> Quotes were taken from the Bible.<sup>10</sup> "The two shall become one." Guess which one.

Bit by bit, beginning in 1839, states gradually adopted laws dismantling coverture. Yet recognizable shades of this legal practice still cloud us.

The Civil Rights Act of 1957 gave women the right to serve on federal juries, but in 1960, for example, you did not regularly see women on jury duty. It wasn't until 1973 that all fifty states passed "similar legislation."<sup>11</sup>

With the passing of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act in 1974, independent women could at last get credit cards themselves. Until then, a married, single, divorced, or widowed woman had to get a man to cosign any credit application before it would be granted.<sup>12</sup>

Marital rape wasn't a crime until the 1970s and 1980s. Consider the crimes never counted, never reported.

Women silenced by submission and fear.

In my black moleskin notebook of 2014, I jotted down an announcement from the newly appointed U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius: "Hurray! Being a woman is

no longer a pre-existing condition."

My mother never had a woman pastor. She never had a female doctor. Some physicians, families, and media still tell women they are imagining or exaggerating their symptoms.

Women's mental health continues to be used as a weapon.<sup>13</sup> Lives of submission and labels of madness still silence women.

This might be the place for me to ask who designs women's restrooms. Just a little comic relief.

An old adage we once laughed over says, "A man can rest from dusk to dawn, but a woman's work is never done." That wasn't funny anymore even before my son and daughter were born eighteen months apart in the 1980s. Women's work in our house meant day and night feedings and diaper changes and twenty-four-hour nursing of tummy aches and fevers. The majority of raising and nurturing children was women's work, which I still consider my most loved and rewarding privilege. Grocery shopping, cooking, washing dishes, housecleaning, laundry, sewing, mending, and oftentimes yard and garden maintenance were also women's work.

Even into the 1970s and 1980s in a typical traditional home, a woman considered her husband the head of their household. The husband was of-

ten the sole provider. The wife stayed home and took care of things there.

Social Security retirement payments are still based on the “traditional home” set-up. My social security statement shows “no earnings” during the time I was a stay-at-home mom, which was not news to me. When nearing age sixty-two and considering retirement, I visited the local Social Security office. It was then that I learned I was not eligible to draw on my first husband’s social security. We were married from 1973 until 1995. Twenty-two years. However, because I had remarried before the age of sixty, I no longer qualified to draw from my first husband’s earnings. Now *that* was news to me. I was fifty-two when I remarried. I’ve come to learn that this inequity is news to most women. The fact that in a “traditional marriage” a woman is *essential* to their husband’s job and success isn’t news to anyone.

A woman loses her first husband’s social security benefits if she remarries before the age of sixty. This is a federal law in the United States, which takes an act of Congress to change. I have had discussions with four different attorneys, all of whom say that this law is both out of date and unjust. I have had dozens of correspondences with my U.S. senators in this regard. No changes are yet in the making. Refusing to be silent can be exhausting.

In contrast to ancient, medieval, and early modern treatments—hanging women upside down, bleeding them out, attempts to balance a woman’s fluids, hungry leeches and mutilation, witch-burnings, swinging chairs, ice-water dunks, chains, and whippings—improved treatments of mental illness emerged in the 1820s as “Quakers demonstrated that kindness, healthy diets, ordinary comforts, and light work assignments benefited

all patients while nurturing many to recovery.”<sup>14</sup>

Dorthea L. Dix (1802–1887) was influential in inspiring an international movement for humane treatment of mental patients. Clifford Beers’s autobiography, *A Mind that Found Itself*, influenced attitudes in the United States. From 1900 to 1903, Beers himself was hospitalized in a state facility where “untrained attendants functioned more like jailors than nurses,” and his autobiography documents beatings and “assorted abuses.”<sup>15</sup>

Pine Rest Christian Hospital was established in 1910 in cooperation with the CRC and the RCA. Pine Rest followed the example of mental health hospitals in the Netherlands committed to Christian mercy. Like the model in the old world, Pine Rest trained its own nursing staff, resulting in high levels of skill and a practice of Christian sympathy for patients with mental illnesses. In other words, a sanctuary. An institution of protection, shelter, and support.

Seventy-five years later, Herbert Brinks wrote of Pine Rest as an institution of mental health services that reaches beyond the Reformed community. “Like justice, Christian mercy must be blind.”<sup>16</sup>

Perceptions, reflections, ideas, and opinions on how women’s submission, secrets, and silence are joined have been with me for a very long time. When I was a little girl, the combination was likely nothing but a speck of intuition unconsciously developing. Osmosis might explain the next stage, given my upbringing in a small Dutch enclave in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Unsophisticated notions on the relationship between submission and a man’s world grew slowly, slowly in my head. As a preteen, I wished I had been a boy, just so I could enjoy the privileges. As a teenager in the 1960s and then as a young adult, I

wrestled on and off with the question of “a woman’s place.”

Eventually, I had to choose whether or not to submit to my husband to save my marriage.

Is that even a choice?

At forty years of age, I had come to understand some of the connections between women’s submission, secrets, silence, and mental health. I sought a Bachelor of Arts degree and was accepted at Calvin College. I was a single mom with two children, ages nine and ten. It took six years before I graduated. During the time I spent at Calvin, the many options available to me as a woman never confused my goal. I didn’t care about being a pastor, a teacher, a lawyer, a doctor. I would not academically articulate how patriarchy, submission, secrets, silence, and depression are fastened together. I only wanted to tell a story. A story of a woman’s submission.

I’m fearful and keep my mouth shut when mean men throw their weight around. I get angry if male employers talk down to me. I laugh and nod in agreement with Rebecca Solnit when I read *Men Explain things to Me*. I wince when I hear famous men and men in power easily dismiss women who won’t be silent by calling them crazy.

In a conversation with the author Kate Moore, the interviewer questions why, even in today’s public discourse, denouncing opponents by calling them insane has such staying power. Moore believes the reason is that calling an opponent insane is so dismissive. “The accuser isn’t even trying to engage with or debate their opponent,” Moore points out.<sup>17</sup>

We need to recognize and acknowledge that patriarchy is still with us. The extent to which patriarchy has not been dismantled has been demonstrated, for example, during the Covid-19 pandemic. Consider

that 77 percent of hospital workers, 74 percent of school staff, and the majority of restaurant workers are/were women. Lack of childcare equals loss of jobs. While domestic violence escalated around the globe, shelters closed. We need more public education, forums, discussions, and acknowledgment of these things.<sup>18</sup>

We need to recognize the effects visited on women's children and on their children's children because of their submission. We need more safe places for women to end their silence. We need more stories, more listening, and much more empathy.

In reference to the Christian Reformed Church in particular, the church's responsibility regarding the history of women's submission, depression, denials of damage, and reputations ruined continues to be examined by people such as Larry Slings, a pastor working in the CRC Ministry of Healing for Churches. Reverend Slings informed me of the CRC Safe Church Ministry, launched in 1994.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps acknowledgments are necessary, perhaps apologies.<sup>20</sup>

Readers of the story *London Street: A Memoir* frequently contact me. Often, they are folks raised in my

neighborhood or a neighborhood like mine. Many were brought up in our Reformed churches. They tell me of similar experiences in their upbringing and their families.

Secrets, submission, silence, suppression. What are their threads? In emails and book clubs, readers of my book sometimes relay that their mothers spent time in Pine Rest. One member of a book club told me later that of ten people in their group meeting one night, eight confided that their mother had been in Pine Rest. I use the word "confided" because none of the members knew this about the other members. In one book club discussion I was invited to, a member surprised us with the same information about his mother. Another time a man disclosed information regarding his wife's hospitalization.

I have held author readings and events. I've been invited to and attended several different book clubs. I consider it a privilege to have face-to-face conversations with the readers of my story. We usually play an enjoyable round of Dutch Bingo at these gatherings. Inevitably, we talk about Pine Rest and mental illness. We talk about how, in ancient times, insanity was usually attributed to God's

displeasure. I tell readers a little more about women in my family and depression. How already needless guilt and shame multiply when, at worst, immorality is implied or, at best, a lack of faith is said to be the cause of the troubles. I've been instructed to have more faith to treat my depression. It's been said to my face.

I have lied at job interviews. I admit it to folks who participate in these discussions. I remind them that we did not have the Americans with Disability Act until 1990. "It's okay," I smile and say. "I never plan to run for public office."

I grew up with gossip and stigma. It stays with a person. Through my life's course, I've known crushing scrutiny, distrust, atrocious implications, misunderstandings, dismissiveness. These are souvenirs I'd rather not carry. Sometimes it is easier to submit. Sometimes it's better to remain silent. Sometimes we still keep the secrets.

A frequent question I'm asked is why I wrote *London Street*. My answer: "For my mother."

Sometimes I hear the comment, "Things are better now."

Well . . . yes . . . But . . . . 🌹

## Endnotes

1. In 1978, Marchiene Vroon Rienstra was the first woman to earn a M.Div. from the seminary. She applied for ordination and was denied.
2. Rena Pederson, *The Lost Apostle: Searching for the Truth About Junia* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc, 2008). Saint Paul mentions Junia in Romans 16:7, written before a planned visit to Rome around 56 or 57 AD.
3. Howard J. Van Till, *The Fourth Day* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).
4. Kate Moore, *The Woman They Could Not Silence* (Naperville, IL: Source Books, 2021), 39.
5. *ibid*, 38.
6. Moore, 368.
7. *Ibid*, 165.
8. Heidi Johnson, preface to *Angels in the Architecture: A Photographic Elegy to an American Asylum* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004). This illustrated publication contains both (1) the attempt to integrate beauty and nature into patient's care, and (2) the darkness

surrounding the care for the patients, "some truly ill and others only victims of society's ignorance and neglect."

9. Catherine Allgor, "Coverture: The Word You Probably Don't Know but Should," *National Women's History Museum*, September 4, 2014, <https://www.womenshistory.org/articles/coverture-word-you-probably-dont-know-should> (accessed 18 August 2022).
10. Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:8-10, Ephesians 5:31-32.
11. Allgor, "Coverture."
12. Moore, 461.
13. *Ibid*, xvii.
14. Herbert J. Brinks, *Pine Rest Christian Hospital: 75 Years, 1910-1985* (Grand Rapids, n.p., 1985?), 7.
15. *ibid*, 7-8. Clifford Beers, *A Mind that Found Itself* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908).
16. *ibid*, 9.
17. Moore, p. 458.
18. Eve Ensler. "Disaster Patriarchy: How the pandemic has unleashed a

war on women," *The Guardian*, June 9, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/jun/01/disaster-patriarchy-how-the-pandemic-has-unleashed-a-war-on-women> (accessed 12 September 2022).

19. The CRC has encouraged each classis to have a Safe Church Team, to provide education regarding abuse, and to provide support for those who struggle with abuse, including allegations against a church leader. See [www.crcna.org/SafeChurch](http://www.crcna.org/SafeChurch) (accessed 6 September 2022).

20. Ensler claims that the art of apology is as important as prayer. Apology "forces them to go back and examine, reevaluate . . ." Ensler reminds me to pursue questions like who it is that wields power, where women's agency is to be found, and whose stories—and when and what stories—are told.



# Origins

**Historical Magazine of the Heritage Hall Archives**

*Christian Reformed Church in North America*

*Calvin Theological Seminary*

*Calvin University*

Volume XL • Number 2 • 2022

