

The *Pericope Adulterae* (John 7:53–8:11): Two Poetic Renderings in *Sunsong Tide Rising*

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Remember, poetry begins in the world's great Holy Books which are all books of poetry. Truly poems are a part of God's great conversation with his children. . . . We wish His blessing on the schooling of your spirit through poetry.¹

There is a popular Caribbean poetry series for high school students who are preparing for external regional examinations in the Commonwealth Caribbean. It is entitled *Sunsong*, perhaps recalling African American poet Langston Hughes's short poem, "Sun Song," or Jamaican Dennis Scott's "Son Song."² Composed of four books of graduated difficulty, the collection's last book is *Sunsong Tide Rising*,³ which expands on the three previous books while including a variety of poems from the Caribbean and the rest of the world.

Curated by two experienced teachers of English who are themselves poets,⁴ *Sunsong Tide Rising* is divided into eleven themes intended to show students that "poems are easy to understand and can help [them] deal with the whole complex business and circumstance of [their] life: the beauty and ugliness of the world; the wealth and poverty of the human situation; the kindness and cruelty of our interaction with one another."⁵ As with the previous three books, the editors draw from a variety of sources, including the Bible (and poetry inspired by the Bible), the Shakespearean canon, limericks, and popular songs:

These poems come from all over the world and are of many different kinds: some are from the Bible, some are ballads (songs that tell a story), some are work songs, some are humorous, some are sad, some are dialect poems—we could go on and on.⁶

In *Sunsong Tide Rising*, I came across two poems that drew me in immediately and called to mind the taken-for-granted presence of the Bible in everyday life in the Caribbean. The poems are: "A Stone's Throw"⁷ by Scottish librarian, journalist, and broadcaster Elma Mitchell (1919–2000); and "John viii, 2–11, First Person Account" by Jamaican A. L. (Arthur Lemaire) Hendriks (1922–1992). Hendriks—a poet and writer, known as "Micky" Hendriks in his broadcasting career—was the son of a Jamaican father and a French mother. Both poems treat the *pericope adulterae* (PA), the story of a woman caught in adultery and taken before Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees (Jn 7:53–8:11). In several translations of the NT, it is bracketed or footnoted since many scholars consider it to be a later addition to John's Gospel.

Perhaps influenced by the popularity of this story, the imagery of throwing stones has entered the vernacular of Caribbean people. It is possible to call this story to mind simply by mentioning "adultery" or "adulteress" along with "stones," or "rock stones" as Caribbean people say. Of course, this popularity, along with its well-known title of "The Woman Caught in Adultery," "establishes the unlawful sexuality⁸ of the woman as the heart of the text. Such a narrowing of the text is not a neutral act but a decisive reshaping of the text."⁹

This discussion briefly introduces the PA before placing it in conversation with the Mitchell and Hendriks poems to show how the poems speak to the often-unjust, violence-prone circumstance of living together in the Caribbean today. This is an exercise in inter(con)textual reading, as defined by African American Womanist biblical scholar Mitzi J. Smith, for it places ancient (con)texts in conversation with contemporary experiences, traditions, and voices.¹⁰ The poems serve both mediating and creating roles, as they broaden and deepen the texts through which the sacred is made present.

Both poems treat the *pericope adulterae* (PA), the story of a woman caught in adultery and taken before Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees (Jn 7:53–8:11).

Introducing the *Pericope Adulterae*

Contemporary Christians faced with modern translations of the Bible often do not appreciate the complex history of the biblical texts, particularly the fact that texts, even sacred texts, are never fixed. Likewise, meaning and interpretation of sacred texts are never fixed, but shift and continue to shift according to the concerns of those reading them.¹¹ Jennifer W. Knust argues that this is readily demonstrated in the complex history of the PA.¹² The PA is missing from early Greek manuscripts of the NT. In manuscripts where it does appear, its primary location is John 7:53–8:11, although it was also placed after John 8:36 or 8:44 or at the end of the Gospel. In addition, some scholars argue that the language used is not consistent with that of John.¹³ Others argue for a Lukan origin,¹⁴ and it has been located in some manuscripts after Luke 21:38.¹⁵ "These factors have led some scholars to describe the passage as a pericope seeking a resting place."¹⁶ Scholarly consensus is that the PA was not originally part of the Gospel of John.¹⁷

The PA also exhibits an unusually high number of textual variants, which Gail O'Day maintains "are the first evidences of interpretive reshaping."¹⁸ Indeed, O'Day argues that the PA is particularly vulnerable to interpretation and has been read contrary to its rhetorical shape, as demonstrated throughout its history of interpretation.¹⁹ Furthermore, Knust maintains that "the presumed meaning of the *pericope adulterae* has been as fluid as its text. Multiple meanings have been imputed into this story from the moment it first appeared until today."²⁰

The instability of the PA was recognised and acknowledged by Christians in late antiquity.²¹ This, however, did not lead to its

exclusion from the Christian tradition, where it was recognised as gospel (teaching by and about Jesus). It was, therefore, in some instances, included in the manuscripts of the Gospels. Indeed, the *PA* demonstrates the continued fluidity of Gospel texts well into the fourth and fifth centuries. However, it was not until the twentieth century that concerns with getting back to the primitive text using modern principles of textual reconstruction led to the *PA* being bracketed or otherwise marked to indicate that it was not original to John's Gospel.

Chris Keith maintains that the *PA* is a specific example of the academic preoccupation with "an original text."²² Believers in the existence of one, single authoritative text generally ignore this academic preoccupation. Given the process by which the Gospel of John was compiled, the modern preoccupation with a definitive primitive original misses the earlier comfort with the fluidity of gospel (message about/of Jesus) and Gospel (written texts).²³ Nonetheless, for many pastors today, questions often revolve around how to introduce the *PA* to their congregations. Should it be preached or skipped over? Does the congregation need a lesson in textual criticism explaining the formation of the scriptural text? How can believers be assured of the veracity of the Word of God when the translation being used brackets the text or relegates it to a footnote?²⁴

Responding to the dilemma faced by preachers when dealing with the *PA*, Steven Grabiner reminds that it is important to recognise the historical nature of the *PA*, its impact on the life of the church, and its transformative power in the lives of many Christians.²⁵ For that reason, the pastor should "proclaim the truth that the story unfolds. [For,] '[n]either do I condemn you, go and sin no more' is a message that needs to be continually repeated, despite the fact that all of the issues related to the account are not fully resolved."²⁶

Furthermore, NT scholar Peter J. Gurry notes that no Christian doctrine or ethical practice whether major or minor has been based on a textually difficult passage such as John 7:53–8:11.²⁷ The reason for this is that Christian theology is built on a web of biblical evidence. So, for example, the story of the woman caught in adultery is not the only place in the Gospels where Jesus is shown being merciful. This is not to say that the *PA* has had no effect on theology or Christian living. It certainly has influenced what we think about the truth, how we apply it and how we teach it.²⁸ This is demonstrated in the two poems being analysed.

Elma Mitchell's "A Stone's Throw"

*We shouted out
"We've got her! Here she is!
It's her alright."
We caught her.
There she was—*

*A decent-looking woman you'd have said,
(They often are)
Beautiful, but dead scared,
Tousled—we roughed her up
A little, nothing much*

And not the first time

*By any means
She'd felt men's hands
Greedy over her body—
But ours were virtuous,
Of course.*

*And if our fingers
Bruised her shuddering skin,
These were love-bites, compared
To the hail of kisses of stone,
The last assault
And battery, frigid rape,
To come
Of right.*

*For justice must be done
Specially when
It tastes so good.*

*And then—this guru,
Preacher, God-merchant, God-knows-what—
Spoilt the whole thing,
Speaking to her
(Should never speak to them)
Squatting on the ground—her level,
Writing in the dust
Something we couldn't read.
And saw in her
Something we couldn't see
At least until
He turned his eyes on us,
Her eyes on us,
Our eyes upon ourselves.*

*We walked away
Still holding stones
That we may throw
Another day
Given the urge.*

The section of *Sunsong Tide Rising* that features "A Stone's Throw" is titled "Life's Ironies," and its starting page displays a black and white drawing of a dreadlocked Jesus protectively resting his hands on the shoulders of a woman who has fallen. The ground before them is littered with stones as the all-male crowd looks on. One man gesticulates, perhaps angrily, as another appears to let a stone fall from his hand. Indecipherable letters are traced on the ground in front of "Rasta Jesus," a popular image in Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean, where the Rastafari movement was birthed. This unnamed artist's rendering of the *PA* adds depth to the interpretation of *PA* presented by Mitchell in her poem, "A Stone's Throw." The artist suggests that Jesus stops a stoning, mid-way, unlike Mitchell and Hendrik, who stick more closely to the *PA* in modern translations, where Jesus short-circuits the stoning.

Mitchell's naming of the poem is instructive. As the editors, Mordecai and Gordon Walker, remind students in their introduction to *Sunsong Tide Rising*, a poem's title does not necessarily define its content or subject matter. They give the example of "A Stone's

Throw,” saying it is not about a stone thrown “but about hypocrisy, forgiveness, compassion, self-delusion, self-knowledge, the capacity for violence in human nature, *inter alia*.”²⁹ In addition, the title of the poem functions on two levels. It indicates both a short distance and refers to the stoning being aborted. In the latter instance, the woman’s execution is interrupted at the point when it had come within a literal stone’s throw.

“A Stone’s Throw” focuses on verses 8:3–11 in the *PA* and speaks from the perspective of one of the nameless woman’s male accusers who appears to have chased and caught her, declaring triumphantly: “We’ve got her! Here she is!” (line 2). The focus on the woman

naturally raises important interpretive questions, most obviously, where is the man? Adultery requires at least two people, but the woman is alone, why? As a follow up to this obvious question, readers have wondered if the absence of a guilty man is significant to the story’s interpretation. While most readers have interpreted the story as an illustration of Jesus’ profoundly merciful nature, others have read the story as the account of Jesus standing up to the unjust victimization of a vulnerable woman.³⁰

In “A Stone’s Throw,” the male accuser relates the tale of the “almost-stoning” with irony and sarcasm; he lacks awareness of how much of himself and his co-accusers is revealed by justifying their actions in terms “Of right./For justice must be done/Specially when/it tastes so good” (lines 24–27). They are interrupted in their “virtuous” quest of “assault/And battery, frigid rape” (lines 21–22) by “this guru,/Preacher, God-merchant, God-knows-what” (lines 28–29). The male accuser unintentionally reveals the perverse and lascivious pleasure he and his companions take in roughing up the hapless woman; in so doing, they demonstrate their morally disengaged stance in how they reframe their wrongdoing as “a little, nothing much/And not the first time/By any means/she’d felt men’s hands/Greedy over her body—/But ours were virtuous/of course” (lines 10–16).³¹

Intertextual and Contextual Connections

The unnamed woman’s accusers clearly constitute a “moral force” within the community, having the duty to preside over and arbitrate on legal and moral matters.³² Yet, their motives are entangled with exploitative sexual desire disguised as righteous pursuit of the law. The poet’s description of the immoral motives of the unnamed woman’s accusers recalls the deuterocanonical story of Susannah in the book of Daniel. Susannah is likewise accused of adultery by powerful men within her community, who had tried to force themselves on her. Her refusal leads to a public accusation of adultery, shaming her husband, and apparent certain death for Susannah. She is rescued by the wise Daniel in a similar fashion to Jesus’s intervention on behalf of the woman in *PA*.

In “A Stone’s Throw,” the unnamed Preacher (Jesus), who interrupted their violent sport of manhandling the woman, saw something in the accused woman her accusers did not. The Preacher saw her humanity, her dignity, her experience of oppression at the hands of men, including her erstwhile lover. As a result, together, the Preacher and the woman turned the tables on her accusers—

the accusers become the accused. The Preacher and the woman turned their eyes upon her accusers in judgment, causing them to see themselves anew. They were forced to see the reality of their sinfulness. Yet, even so, they walked away “still holding stones/that we can throw/another day” (lines 42–45).

Through Mitchell’s poignant retelling of the unnamed woman’s story, we are reminded starkly that violence against women is but a stone’s throw away even today, in a Caribbean where public figures are credibly accused, for example, of the rape of a young woman (by a Guyanese member of parliament) or unwanted touching (by the former premier of Cayman Islands). Among the accused are ministers of the cloth, policemen, and ordinary men, who commit intimate partner violence or even murder the women in their lives.³³

A. L. Hendriks introduces similar themes as he likewise undertakes an inter(con)textual reading, by placing the biblical *PA* (con)texts in conversation with contemporary experiences, traditions, and voices, especially those of vulnerable women.

A. L. Hendriks’s “John viii, 2–11, First Person Account”

*We must be discreet he had said
hurt no one a quiet room
in a small hotel suddenly boom
all of them standing round the bed
with hot sticky eyes
saying your husband knows all
then that bastard starts to crawl
mumbling the usual lies
didn't know that she was married
this thing was quite unplanned
as men you'll understand
and away he bloody scurried
the performance in the temple
another bit of farce
that fooled no one take me for an ass
im really not that simple
stoning for adultery hasn't been on for years
they'dve emptied every quarry
no it wasn't me my dears
you were after it was him
o he really got among them with his crack
the one who doesn't sin
start throwing you could've heard a pin
drop then the whole pack shuffled off
never again he said don't worry friend
ive gone off men after this right off
men are the living end
good as divorced probably pregnant
always the woman's worry
we have to carry
the can and the bloody infant
but wouldn't that be just
my kind of luck if I have that problem
ill get back in touch with him*

he looked the sort of chap a girl might trust.

“First Person Account” is told from the perspective of the unnamed and voiceless woman, who “that bastard” leaves to her fate at the hands of her lascivious accusers (as does the lover of the anonymous woman in “A Stone’s Throw”). It is a striking single sentence poem made up of thirty-six lines without punctuation, apart from the beginning capital and the closing full stop. It has a mainly an A B B’ A’ rhyming pattern, although from lines 17–28 there is a change to A B A’ B’ and A A’ B B’. This gives the poem an intensity and a fast-paced movement, reflecting the wry, sarcastic, bitter mood of the woman. The Temple is made the setting, appropriate for a group that intends to catch Jesus on the back foot. The woman is naught but a convenient (though aware) pawn in their game of entrapment.

Jesus, in the *PA*, seems to naturally assume the woman’s guilt.³⁴ She is a willing participant in the act of dishonouring herself, her husband, her household, the Jewish community and, most importantly, YHWH. This is, perhaps, because she has been accused by two or more males, witnesses to her transgression, as the Law required. Once accused, she must appear before YHWH, and the priests and judges.³⁵ Interestingly, versions of the story in early Christian antiquity did not always assume this.³⁶ Hendriks’s female is “guilty,” as she all but admits to falling; she’s fallen prey to a “sweet mouth” Caribbean man, who was out for one thing, “this thing [that] was quite unplanned” and intended to “hurt no one.”

Liturgical Con(texts)

The unnamed woman in “First Person Account” is caught in the act and is left to face her accusers, as her partner in adultery “bloody scurried” away. As discussed in the analysis of “A Stone’s Throw,” there are parallels between the stories of the unnamed woman and Susannah in the Book of Daniel. Unlike some contemporary Christian traditions, the Roman Catholic Church maintains the canonicity of the *PA* and so it is read and preached in the liturgical life of the Church. In the Roman Rite, therefore, the *PA* is usually paired with the deuterocanonical story of Susannah during the third week of Lent. They are linked not only by the motif of women accused of adultery but also text-critically. Both stories are known to be later additions to their current books but have been accepted as canonical by the Roman Catholic Church.³⁷ Susannah is accused of committing adultery with a young man who conveniently escapes as does the unknown woman’s paramour in *PA*. Susannah also narrowly escapes capital punishment with the intervention of a young judge, Daniel, who proves her innocence and the corruption of her accusers, who have a history of sexually violating “the daughters of Israel” (vv. 49–59). Jesus’s intervention is not to prove the unnamed woman’s innocence but to spotlight the guilt of her accusers. In the Roman Catholic liturgy both women represent the Church: Susannah is the symbol of the Church in her fidelity to Christ, while the unnamed woman is the Church redeemed by Christ when she has been unfaithful.³⁸

The Susannah story and the *PA* illustrate well what is at stake in a woman engaging in adultery. In Susannah’s case, the reputation of the Jewish community, Daniel, and her husband Joakim rest on her “innocence or guilt, sexual purity or promiscuity, and fidelity or infidelity to the Lord in heaven or to the Lord of her household.”³⁹ Likewise for the unnamed woman in the *PA*, everyone’s reputation is at stake, particularly that of her husband.

Paradoxically, the subordination of both these women to the men in their life makes them vulnerable, but, to some degree, the men in their life can be made vulnerable by the conduct of these women in patriarchal contexts.⁴⁰ Being the wife of a wealthy man does not protect Susannah from patriarchal violence, rape, or even sexual harassment. “Women who do not pass the test of respectability politics may be easier prey for men of power and authority who want to sexually violate women, but any woman is vulnerable to men who rape.”⁴¹

The dishonour of her husband and its consequences for her are central in the mind of the unnamed woman in “First Person Account.” She fears the outcomes of her actions: “as good as divorced probably pregnant/always the womans worry/we have to carry/the can and the bloody infant” (lines 29–32). Accusations of infidelity or promiscuity are enough to ruin a woman’s reputation, while bolstering a man’s reputation in many instances, including in the Caribbean where ideas of masculinity are often tied up with promiscuous sexuality.⁴² The more honoured a status held by the husband or partner, the more is at stake for him if his wife is accused or proven guilty of infidelity. When men want to violate women and preserve their reputation, they often accuse them of being willing participants or wanting it more than they did,⁴³ and Hendriks captures this well with his unnamed woman’s ironic musings on “carrying the can and the bloody infant.”

Towards a Conclusion

The conventional readings of the story in John 7:53–8:11 place the focus on the woman, her sin, and her rescue from stoning. Indeed, the very naming of the pericope centres her as sinner, having sinned in a most egregious fashion against herself, the Lord of the house (her husband) on whom she depends for her material sustenance and, of course, YHWH God.

The woman remains voiceless even as she is rescued by Jesus, who deftly escapes from the trap set for him by his enemies. As is typical in John’s Gospel, reality is upended and the accusers become the accused, forced to slink away one after the other, without throwing a stone (yet). The two retellings of the *PA* in “A Stone’s Throw” and “First Person Account” present us with inter(con)textual readings that both bring the story to life in our contemporary circumstance while arguably broadening and deepening the sacred text available for teaching and reflection in the church. Even in churches where the canonicity of the *PA* is questioned and the issues related to the account are not fully resolved, it can serve as a vessel to proclaim the truth that the story unveils: forgiveness is available to the worst sinner and care must be taken in passing judgment given the blindness caused by sin. In addition, it has a peculiar resonance around the violence unleashed in condemnation of others, especially the most vulnerable. The metaphor of throwing stones captures this violent response tellingly.

Women in the Caribbean continue to fear metaphorical stoning in the form of gender-based violence and other forms of gendered oppression, which forestall and limit their full flourishing as human persons. In too many instances they are silenced for fear that speaking out will be further detrimental to them and their children. Any suggestion of infidelity on the part of a woman can

**Forgiveness is available to the worst sinner
and care must be taken in passing judgment
given the blindness caused by sin.**

lead to violence and even death for the perceived dishonour and disrespect to the male partner. Creative interpretations such as “A Stone’s Throw” call into question the motives of many who stand in judgment, especially when women are the victims of violence, falsely believing and teaching that women bring it on themselves by a word, a look, or a style of dressing. A key example of this is the oft-repeated question when a woman is sexually assaulted: What was she wearing? “First Person Account,” in laying bare the agency of women even in the face of potential violence, opens up the possibility for women to speak up for themselves, no longer fearing stones.

Notes

1. Pamela Mordecai and Grace Walker Gordon, “Introduction,” in *Sunsong Tide Rising*, ed. Pamela Mordecai and Grace Walker Gordon (Longman, 1994) xv.
2. Sun and softness,/Sun and the beaten hardness of the earth,/Sun and the song of all the sun-stars/Gathered together—/Dark ones of Africa,/I bring you my songs/To sing on the Georgia roads. (Sun Song by Langston Hughes, <https://poetrynook.com/poem/sun-song>). Dennis Scott, “Son Song,” in Mordecai and Walker Gordon, *Sunsong*, 152, speaks of the light that goes out when a son has lost his father.
3. Mordecai and Walker Gordon, “Introduction,” in *Sunsong Tide Rising*. “Tide Rising” is the name of a poem in the book *Madonna of the Unknown Nation* (London: Workshop Press, 1974) by A. L. Hendriks, which speaks to the effects of the tides on Caribbean life, while recalling the power of the creative imagination. Hendriks was a prolific writer of short stories and poems; his work appears in several media, including the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Jamaica Gleaner*, and several other anthologies. He is published several times in the *Sunsong* series. His poem, “The Baptist,” was published in *Bite In 2* by Cecil Gray, another poetry collection for secondary students in the Caribbean.
4. Both Mordecai and Walker Gordon’s works are included in the *Sunsong* books.
5. Mordecai and Walker Gordon, “Introduction,” in *Sunsong*, xi.
6. Pamela Mordecai and Grace Walker Gordon, eds., *Sunsong 1* (Longman Caribbean, 1987) v.
7. “A Stone’s Throw” is back on the English B June 2023–January 2027 list of Poems, Novels, and Short Stories for CXC.
8. Stoning is a literal response to acts of unlawful sexuality in the Caribbean, as captured in “Going Up, Going Down,” by Loretta Collins Klobah: “This poem is an eye-witness./That’s why this poem has to be clandestine -/It is in danger of being stoned – Nuh fling rockstone. Kei Miller, *New Caribbean Poetry: An Anthology* (Carcanet, 2007) 63.
9. Gail R. O’Day, “John 7:53–8:11: A Study in Misreading,” *JBL* 111/4 (Winter 1992) 631; see also Amy Smith Carman, “The Abusive Religious Leaders of John 8: How a Misnamed Story Can Help Religious Institutions Deal with Sexual Assault,” *Priscilla Papers* 33/3 (Sum 2019) 8–11.
10. Mitzi J. Smith, *Womanist Sass and Talk Back: Social (In)Justice, Intersectionality and Biblical Interpretation* (Cascade, 2018) 10.
11. Jennifer W. Knust, “Early Christian Re-Writing and the History of the Pericope Adulterae,” *JECS* 14/4 (2006) 485–536.

12. Knust, “Early Christian Re-Writing,” 485.
13. Alan Watson, “Jesus and the Adulteress,” *Bib* 80/1 (1999) 100–8.
14. Kyle R. Hughes, “The Lukan Special Material and the Tradition History of the ‘Pericope Adulterae,’” *NovT* 55/3 (2013) 232–51.
15. See Knust for a contrary argument.
16. Steven Grabiner, “Pericope Adulterae: A Most Perplexing Passage,” *AUSS* 56/1 (2018) 81–114.
17. Hughes, “The Lukan Special Material,” 232–51.
18. O’Day, “John 7:53–8:11,” 639.
19. O’Day, “John 7:53–8:11,” 639.
20. Knust, “Early Christian Re-Writing,” 532.
21. Knust, “Early Christian Re-Writing,” 533.
22. Chris Keith, “A Performance of the Text: The Adulteress’s Entrance into John’s Gospel,” in *The Fourth Gospel in First-Century Media Culture*, ed. Anthony Le Donne and Tom Thatcher (T&T Clark, 2011) 50.
23. Knust, “Early Christian Re-Writing,” 533.
24. Grabiner, “Pericope Adulterae,” 83.
25. Grabiner, “Pericope Adulterae,” 83.
26. Grabiner, “Pericope Adulterae,” 114.
27. Peter J. Gurry, “Why Most Variants are Insignificant and Why Some Can’t be Ignored,” in *Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism*, ed. Elijah Hixson and Peter J. Gurry (IVP Academic, 2019) 191–20.
28. Gurry, “Why Most Variants,” 121.
29. Mordecai and Walker Gordon, “Introduction,” in *Sunsong*, xiii.
30. Thomas E. Phillips, “A Woman Caught in Adultery? Or A Wandering Teacher Trapped Between Roman and Jewish Law? John 7:53–8:11 in Light of Quintilian and Seneca,” in *Greco-Roman and Jewish Tributaries to the New Testament: Festschrift in Honor of Gregory J. Riley*, ed. Christopher S. Crawford (Claremont, 2019) 71–81.
31. Anna Kasafi Perkins, *Is Moral Dis-Ease Making Jamaica Ill? Revisiting the Conversation on Morality* (Kingston, Jamaica: Grace Kennedy Foundation, 2013).
32. Smith, *Womanist Sass*, 10.
33. Anna Kasafi Perkins, “Christian Norms and Intimate Male Partner Violence: Lessons from a Jamaica Women’s Health Survey,” in *The Holy Spirit and Social Justice Interdisciplinary Global Perspectives: History, Race & Culture*, ed. Antipas L. Harris and Michael D. Palmer (Seymour) 240–67.
34. Watson, “Jesus and the Adulteress,” 110.
35. Smith, *Womanist Sass*, 12.
36. Knust, “Early Christian Re-Writing,” 234.
37. Gregory DiPippo, “The Woman Caught in Adultery in the Liturgy of Lent,” *New Liturgical Movement* (March 18, 2023) <https://newliturgicalmovement.org/>.
38. DiPippo, “The Woman Caught.”
39. Smith, *Womanist Sass*, 124.
40. Smith, *Womanist Sass*, 124.
41. Smith, *Womanist Sass*, 125.
42. Anna Kasafi Perkins, “‘Oh, Daddy, That’s My G-spot’: Women and Sexual Pleasure in Jamaican Dancehall Music,” in *Handbook on Sexuality: Perspectives, Issues and Role in Society*, ed. Nicholas E. Peterson and Whitney Campbell (Nova Science, 2012) 137–52.
43. Smith, *Womanist Sass*, 126.



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