QUEERING RELIGION

Queen's University ■ RELS 314/814 ■ Fall 2024 ■ KINES & HLTH RM107 ■ MONDAYS ■ 08.30-11.30A ■

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the complex intersection of gender, sexuality, and religion and the ways in which religious traditions have shaped and continue to shape complex notions of gender and sexuality in the modern era. The course provides a review of feminisms, womanisms, gender studies, and queer theories, thereafter we apply these concepts to case studies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To gain a familiarity with feminisms, womanisms, gender studies, and queer theories as they relate to religious studies.
- To define, identify, articulate, and analyze a robust concept of religion.
- To define, identify, articulate, and analyze queer theories.
- To engage a variety of interdisciplinary literatures.
- To develop creative and integrative research skills to study texts, resources, and concepts addressing the intersection of religion and sexuality.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **COMPLETION OF READING ASSIGNMENTS PRIOR TO THE CLASS MEETING OF THE WEEK FOR WHICH THE READINGS ARE ASSIGNED.**
- **ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND PUNCTUAL ATTENDANCE FOR THE CLASS SESSIONS.**
- **DISCUSSION PARAGRAPHS.** Prepare for class discussion each week with a paragraph articulating: (1) the thesis of the assigned chapter from the Wilcox text in your own words, (2) one point made in the readings that sparks your curiosity and why, (3) one point made in the readings which concerns you and why, (4) a supplemental reading you have read in addition to the guiding chapter from those recommended at the end of the chapter – and how it intersects with your curiosities or concerns, (5) a question *you* hope we will discuss further in class. **DUE WEEKLY ON THURSDAYS by 11.59 PM EST of Weeks 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, & 9 for the texts addressed in the following Monday's classes. 400-500 words.**
- **FILM/BOOK REVIEW.** Select a film/book referenced in the Wilcox book. Write a film/book review on the film/book you select. The review should: (1) summarize the film/book; (2) relate the film to queer theory, religious studies, and gender studies; (3) critique an element of the film; (4) affirm an element of the film. **DUE MONDAY OF WEEK 9. 400-500 words.**
- **CONVERSATIONS.** Have a conversation with an individual who is part of the LGBTQ community – primarily inquiring about the individual's experience of religion – especially as it relates to their sexuality. These conversations should (1) reflect in-class training on qualitative analysis, (2) provide your conversation partner's consent, (3) specify why this conversation partner was selected, and (4) substantively respond to the prompt. **DUE MONDAY OF WEEK 6.**
- **QUEER WORLD REVIEW.** Select ten countries. Provide a description of that country with respect to religious, sexual, and political demographics: (1) what are the predominant religious traditions (50-100 words); (2) which laws address religion (50-100 words); (3) which laws address sexuality (50-100 words); (4) how involved are religious communities in sexual politics (50-100 words); (5) how involved are governments in policing religion and sexuality (50-100 words); (6) are LGBTQ people and/or practices criminalized and, if so, what are the formal and informal penalties (50-100 words); and (7) provide your sources in the Chicago Manual of Style notes format. *In week two you will be able to sign up for countries so there are no duplications among students.* **DUE FRIDAY OF WEEK 10.**
- **LEARNING LETTER.** Write a letter to someone in your family – or a religious leader – telling them what you have learned in this class. **DUE FRIDAY OF WEEK 11.**

EVALUATION

You will be graded according to Queen's standards according to the following distribution:

- Preparedness, Participation, Attendance: 24%
- Discussions: 18%
- Film/Book Review: 14%
- Conversations: 14%
- Queer World Review: 20%
- Learning Letter: 10%

OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS

- **DO NOT plagiarize!** If you have any questions about whether or not what you are doing is plagiarism, go to www.queensu.ca. If you are still unsure, ask before submitting your work.
- If you are unable to complete the assignments due to physical or mental health reasons, please notify me.
- Use the Chicago Manual of Style for proper citations.
- Assignments are due on the dates specified in this document. Late submissions will be deducted a point per day and will not be accepted after three days past the due date unless there are extenuating circumstances for which proper documentation is provided. The decision to accept late assignments is at the instructor's discretion.
- Credit will be reduced for submissions outside of assignment word ranges.

COURSE TEXTS

Abdou, Mohamed. *Islam and Anarchism: Relationships and Resonances*. Pluto Press, 2022.

Campos, M.S., Quero, H.C., Goh, J.N., Leung, E., Siew, M., Yip, L.S. "Desire, Nation, and Faith: A Roundtable among Emerging Queer Asian/Pacific Islander Religion Scholars" In *Queering Migrations Towards, From, and Beyond Asia*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Cherniak, Misha, Olga Gerassimenko, and Michael Brinkschroeder, eds. *"For I Am Wonderfully Made": Texts on Eastern Orthodoxy and LGBT Inclusion*. Esuberanza, 2017.

Cordova Quero, Hugo. "Saintly Journeys: Intersections of Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Faith in Alejandro Springall's Santitos," *In God's Image 34, No. 2 (December): Pp. 71-82*, 2015.

Driskill, Qwo-Li, et. al., eds., *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literature*. University of Arizona Press, 2011.

Jagiella, Leyla. *Among the Eunuchs: A Muslim Transgender Journey*. Hurst, 2022.

Nyeck, S. N. *African(a) Queer Presence: Ethics and Politics of Negotiation*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

Schulman, Sarah. *Israel/Palestine and the Queer International*. Duke University Press Books, 2012.

Strongman, Roberto. *Queering Black Atlantic Religions: Transcorporeality in Candomblé, Santería, and Vodou*. Duke University Press Books, 2019.

Wilcox, Melissa M. *Queer Religiosities: An Introduction to Queer and Transgender Studies in Religion*. Annotated edition. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2020.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 **~ 9 September 2024 ~**	**Introductions**
Week 2 **~ 16 September 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Introduction** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter. www.VoiceThread.com
Week 3 **~ 23 September 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Stories** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter.
Week 4 **~ 01 October 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Conversations** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter.
Week 5 **~ 07 October 2024 ~**	**Queering Religion in Music** **~Cherniak and Campos Excerpts~**
READING WEEK	
Week 6 **~ 21 October 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Practices** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter. www.VoiceThread.com
Week 7 **~ 28 October 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Identities** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter.
Week 8 **~ 4 November 2024 ~**	**Queering Religion in Film** **~Abdou, Cordova Quero, Nyeck, and Schulman Excerpts~**
Week 9 **~ 11 November 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Communities** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter.
Week 10 **~ 18 November 2024 ~**	**Wilcox, Politics and Power & Conclusion** Select and read one of the readings in the "Recommendations for Further Reading" section at the end of the chapter.
Week 11 **~ 25 November 2024 ~**	**Queering Religion in Arts** **~Driskell and Strongman Excerpts~** www.VoiceThread.com
Week 12 **~ 02 December 2024 ~**	**Queer World Review**