Queer Liberation Theologies
Latin American, Asian, and African Contexts

HRRS 8420 – Spring 2015
Starr King School for the Ministry
Graduate Theological Union
Instructor: Dr. Hugo Córdova Quero
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Virtual office hours: Tuesdays and Fridays 10am–2pm (PST)

Course Description

What does «liberation» mean to queer individuals and communities? How do Christian traditions worldwide relate to queer issues and queer believers? For the last twenty years queer theologians and communities have been developing contextual theologies in order to challenge and critique the ingrained heteronormativity in theological thought, spiritual practices, and institutional governance. Drawing from an interdisciplinary perspective, the course aims to examine and explore the development of queer theologies in the specific contexts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The focus of the course is intentionally non-US centered in order to offer future ministers, scholars, and activists tools to collaborate and interact with experiences, key topics, and thinkers within the complex and yet fascinating world of queer liberation theologies, thus, enriching their worldview and praxis glocally.
Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify the different situations of the emerging Queer Liberation Theologies in the contexts of Latin America, Asia, and Africa;

2. Interrelate the different aspects of Christianity with the experience of Queer theologians and believers in their own genderized/sexualized context;

3. Distinguish particular trends in Queer Liberation Theologies by comparing them with scholarly works in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

Given the time limitation of the course (one semester) it would be impossible to provide extensive insight into the complex situation of Queer Liberation Theologies in every continent. The main goal of the course is to provide the students with tools and key information that would guide them into deepening certain aspects in their own research or specific studies.

Concurrently, because Queer Liberation Theologies are an emerging field, some of the authors —whose work is studied in this course— are not Queer theologians themselves. Some of them are allies who value the important of Queer theologies while others report on this situation from their own perspective and do not necessarily uphold themselves the beliefs or positions analyzed in their work.

**Course Materials**

All the course materials will be available for access at the GTU Moodle’s course site. Due to GTU’s compliance with fair use regulations, you will not be able to download the reading materials. Audio-visual materials will be posted whenever technical means make this possible.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

In order to pass this course you are expected to fulfil the following requirements:
1. **Posting your comments** and interacting with the other students by responding to their interventions on the conversations on the Moodle’s course site. This is a way to engage in a collective processing of the topics by paying attention to what others think and to what you reflect on both the materials and your experiences. Although you are not require to always agree with your peers, respect and politeness are expected on these responses. Whenever possible, please use gender inclusive language. You are expected to interact a minimum of three times per week in the conversations in order to get your grade. You have the right to be absent three times from the class (equivalent to one week) throughout the semester. At the end of the semester, this assignment will count for thirty percent (30%) of the course grade.

2. At the end of each section, students will submit a three (3) pages reflection paper. It is a **reflection paper** and **not a summary** of class materials. In other words, this is the product of your analysis, intuitions, concerns, and/or «thirst» for knowing more on the course topics. The goal of the reflection is to encourage you to begin articulating your own discourse by expressing your own concerns, voicing your agreement or disagreement with the authors’ scholarly work, etc. Each of these assignments will count for ten percent (10%) of your final grade, that is thirty percent (30%) in total at the end of the semester.

3. During the last week of classes, you are required to **submit a final project**. The overall idea of the final project is show how you would communicate the topics studied and discussed throughout the course to an audience that is not academic (for example, by imagining how to present the class topics to your congregation, faith-based organization, place of activism, and the like). The project should make evident your own voice articulating a theological discourse by using the social science tools acquired in the course. This assignment will count for forty percent (40%) of your grade in the course.
Academic Conduct

Throughout the course you are expected and encouraged to maintain an academic spirit. Respect for the opinion and right of expression of your fellow classmates is mandatory. Inclusive and non-discriminatory language is expected in spoken and written formats whenever is possible.

Your ideas and work as well as others’ are valued in this class. Taking words, graphics, and/or ideas from any other sources without full attribution constitutes an academic offence. Proper citation must be given to all formats of production (written, visual, auditive). Many students cut-and-paste directly from the internet —when authorship, URL address and date of accessing the website is properly given—, lack of these elements also constitute plagiarism.

Whenever in doubt on how to proceed on this issue, please contact the instructor before you submit your materials through the discussion board. To learn the basis for appropriate academic conduct is an ongoing process, and as your instructor I will always be willing to assist you.

Concurrently, and related to the compliance with FERPA (see the section below), please refrain from using classmates’ comments on Moodle forums either in your papers or outside the classroom. Please respect your classmates right to keep their comments aimed only to this class.

Thank you for respecting these guidelines!

Notice to Students About Your Privacy

Starr King School for the Ministry takes maximum care to maintain safety for our students. Under FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances your records will not be released without your signed consent although certain directory information may be released without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy at http://www.sksm.edu/academics/policy-statements/ferpa-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act/.
At the same time, SKSM faculty members are encouraged to use whichever educational technologies support learning objectives, but you need to remain aware that anything that gets posted (whether assumed private or not) can always be re-posted and broadcast widely. In this course, we will be working with third party applications online (i.e. chat and internet phone systems). While GTU Moodle has built-in safeguards meant to protect you from privacy infringements, different proprietors of these external sites may or may not have privacy guarantees, nor does FERPA policy at the GTU (http://gtu.edu/academics/Registrar/policy-statements/ferpa) apply to these sites. It will be your responsibility to read the privacy documentation at each site. There are other options for protecting your information at these sites. If you have filed the paperwork and are classified as protected under the GTU FERPA qualifications, it will be acceptable for you to use an alias when using the Web 2.0 sites required for this course. If you still have concerns, please e-mail SKSM registrar Kat Croswell at kcroswell@sksm.edu as soon as possible to discuss your options.

Reading Assignments and Class Schedule

Week 1 (Feb 2-8): Queering Religion

Required materials


Córdova Quero — Queer Liberation Theologies
Optional materials


Week 2 (Feb 9-15): Religion meets Post-colonialism

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 3 (Feb 16-22): Gender and Sexuality in Latin America

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 4 (Feb 23-Mar 1): Disrupting Liberation Theologies in Latin America

Required materials


Optional materials


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**Week 5 (Mar 2-8): Queering Dogmas**

**Required materials**


**Optional materials**


✓ Fernández Martínez, Loreto. 2013. «Tortilleras, Colas, Trans: ¿Se Puede Ser Quien Se Es al Interior de las Comunidades Cristianas?» [Dykes, Butts, Trans: Can One Be Whoever One Is Amidst Christian Communities?]. In: *Teorías Queer y Teologías: Estar… En Otro Lugar* [Queer Theories and Theologies:...
Being... In Another Place], edited by Genilma Boehler, Lars Bedurke, and Silvia Regina de Lima Silva. San José, Costa Rica: Departamento Ecuménico de Investigaciones, pp. 149–160. [ISBN: 978-9977-83-178-7]. [Translation provided by the instructor].

Week 6 (Mar 9-15): Bodies and Sexuality: Religious Connections

Required materials


Optional materials


Required Assignment

✓ Submission of reflection paper #1.
Section 2: Asia

Week 7 (Mar 16-22): Gender and Sexuality in Asia

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 8 (Mar 23-29): Reading Week

Week 9 (Mar 30-Apr 5): Challenging Beliefs

Required materials


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✓ Lauterboom, Mariska. 2014. «“Queering Jesus”: A Breakthrough in Doing Theology in the Indonesian Context.» Theologia: Jurnal Teologi Interdisipliner 1. Available at: <ris.uksw.edu/download/jurnal/kode/J00854>.

Optional materials


Week 10 (Ap 6-12): Embodied Theologies

Required materials


Optional materials


Week 11 (Ap 13-19): (Re)Sexualizing Theology

Required materials


Optional materials


Required Assignment

✓ Submission of reflection paper #2.

Section 3: Africa

Week 12 (Ap 20-26): Gender and Sexuality in Africa

Required materials


Optional materials


Required materials


Optional materials


**Week 14 (May 4-10): Queer Issues: Past & Present**

**Required materials**


**Optional materials**


**Week 15 (May 11-17): Queering Hermeneutics**

**Required materials**


Optional materials


Required Assignment

✓ Submission of reflection paper #3.

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**Week 16 (May 18-22): Wrapping-up**

Required Assignment

✓ Submission of final project.