Chapter **13**

Queer Theory and the Study of Religion[1]

Melissa M. Wilcox

In 1991, in a special issue of the journal *differences*, Teresa de Lauretis introduced a new term into academic discourse: "queer theory."[2] "The term 'queer,'" she explained, "juxtaposed to . . . 'lesbian and gay' . . . is intended to mark a certain critical distance from the latter, by now established and often convenient, formula."[3] Drawing on the newly visible, resistant political use of the once-derogatory term "queer," de Lauretis suggested moving into a more deconstructive, critical mode of theorizing in lesbian and gay studies, as it was then known. Her proposed theoretical orientation was to have two foci: "the conceptual and speculative work involved in discourse production, and . . . the necessary critical work of deconstructing our own discourses and their constructed silences."[4] Queer theory was to address the elisions in mainstream gay studies—the experiences of those not white and male—and in so doing, would have consequences for activism as well as academics. "Racial and gender differences," de Lauretis asserted, "are a crucial area of concern for queer theory, and one where critical dialogue alone can provide a better understanding of the specificity and partiality of our respective histories as well as the stakes of some common struggles."[5]

Subsequent to de Lauretis's writing, the term "queer theory" has had a varied fate. It has developed a genealogy, beginning with works predating the *differences* issue such as Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, volume 1, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet*, Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa's *This Bridge Called My Back*, and Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble*.[6] It has been rejected by its own creator.[7] It has been maligned as too academic,

too inaccessible, too white, too male, too mainstream. And it has been used in books and essays by lesbians and gay men of color, challenged and developed by authors interested in globalization and democracy, joined with disability theory, developed and altered.[8] It has even, in small amounts, entered the hallowed halls of religious studies—though not without resistance and not in a very widespread way. This essay provides an introduction to queer theory, reviews works in religious studies that make use of queer theory, and suggests future directions for this promising but under-studied intersection of fields.

A Brief Introduction to Queer Theory

To encapsulate two decades of queer theoretical work into a mere handful of pages is a daunting task on its own, made more difficult by the fact that queer theory itself defies definition. De Lauretis never defined the term explicitly, and later authors have refused definition, claiming with David Halperin that "queer is by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers*. It is an identity without an essence."[9] Queer theory, thus, is a theoretical approach that positions itself outside of and against dominant discourses, critically examining the normative from a standpoint beyond it. Moreover, queer theory is especially concerned with queer gender and sexuality; therefore, central to the normativity against which it most often positions itself are heteronormativity and gender normativity.

Heteronormativity, discussed at length by Michael Warner in his introduction to *Fear of a Queer Planet*, refers to the social normalization of monogamous, reproductive, heterosexual, binary coupling, or, as Warner defines it, "the culture's assurance (read: insistence) that humanity and heterosexuality are synonymous."[10] It is not the normalization of all heterosexuality; some forms of heterosexuality can be non-heteronormative, or queer, as well. Some theorists argue that even non-reproductive heterosexual coupling can function as queer in a heteronormative culture; others retain the term for more explicitly non-normative heterosexualities such as polyamory or BDSM (neither of which is, of course, exclusively heterosexual). Likewise, some homosexualities can be heteronormative: for instance, the married, monogamous, gender-normative couple with children who believe in living quietly among their neighbors, whom they feel they resemble in all ways except the biological sex of their spouse. In a 2002 article, Lisa Duggan labeled this trend, and especially its political perspective, "the new homonormativity."[11]

Duggan argues that, during the 1990s, a "new neoliberal sexual politics"[12] developed in which privatization was valued in both sexual and economic

terms. Whereas queer politics, as Warner and others have defined it, carries with it an awareness of the interconnectedness of different forms of oppression, values a broad vision of social and economic justice, and supports the development of public sexual cultures, homonormativity values the privacy of the conjugal home and has little, if anything, to say about connections to social justice movements. In fact, Duggan notes of gay conservative Andrew Sullivan that "he ultimately critiques the Civil Rights movement's legacy of antidiscrimination law, particularly affirmative action, as veering too far away from the proper goals of state neutrality and private freedom of contract."[13] Homonormativity stresses free market capitalism and privatization, and critiques government involvement even in the arena of social justice. This is a far cry from the hopes held out for queer politics, and yet Duggan fears it is drawing in followers by claiming to be the moderate middle, thus casting queer politics as unreasonably radical, literally out in left field.

Yet David Halperin, who so succinctly defined "queer" in 1995, by 2003 had declared queer theory "a more trendy version of 'liberal.'"[14] Indeed, many activists have complained that the term "queer" has lost its radical implications, becoming instead simply a way of saying "LGBT" or even "gay and lesbian" while using fewer syllables. Halperin argues that queer theory has suffered from its own popularity: "as queer theory becomes more widely diffused throughout the disciplines, it becomes harder to figure out what's so very queer about it."[15] Has queer theory lost its edge, or is it redeemable? Before considering that question, I want to go back to the beginning.

Queer theory has its roots in the work of Michel Foucault, who famously made a case for the social construction of sexuality.[16] Though same-sex eroticism has existed throughout Western history, Foucault argued that it came to take a particular form in the nineteenth century West, when the term "homosexual" was first coined. In this era of categorization and the rise of what Foucault calls "bio-power"—that is, power controlling forms of life—sexologists distinguished a particular type of human as the "sexual invert"—one whose gender identity and consequently sexual attraction were "inverted" from those considered "normal" for that sex. Thus, the female "invert" was masculine and attracted to women, while the male "invert" was feminine and attracted to men.[17] Sexual inversion was generally considered to be a permanent trait, and one that fundamentally defined the life and personhood of the invert. For many centuries prior to the nineteenth, Western cultures regarded same-sex eroticism as deviant, but not as indicative of a fundamental difference in the practitioner. The development of the concept of the invert marks the invention of the contemporary Western concept of sexual orientation. Foucault's history has since been critiqued—among others, by scholars working in countries

outside the West, who argue that Western cultures do not have sole claim to the concept of sexual orientation as an innate and fundamental difference.[18] However, the concept of the social construction of sexuality remains a powerful one, especially for queer theorists.

Published in 1990, shortly before de Lauretis's *differences* article, Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* drew on Foucault's social constructionist perspectives to argue that not only is gender socially constructed (an idea already well developed in some branches of feminist thought), but sex itself is as well, through the performative subjectification of the self. The self as subject—meaning both that which acts and that which is subjected to power—is brought into being, Butler argues, through actions that simultaneously perform gender and inscribe genderedness on the body. Thus, even a simple act such as walking can inscribe gender: one walks "like a woman" or "like a man" (note that there are no other choices here—the system is binary), and in that act enforces not only others' perceptions of oneself but also one's own sense of inhabiting a gendered body and a gendered reality. Our gendered actions, Butler argues, are learned and are powerfully and sometimes violently enforced by those around us. In an argument that has influenced performance activists such as Queer Nation, Butler suggests that resistant performances are one key to subverting the gender system.

Such ideas formed the base upon which de Lauretis built when she coined the term "queer theory" in 1991.[19] Fundamental to the growing body of theory were a concept of both gender and sexual orientation as social constructs, a Foucauldian understanding of power as something mobilized by various groups and individuals rather than something held by one group or individual over another, and a concern with the practical, political implications of theoretical work, especially for lesbian, gay, and eventually bisexual and transgender communities.

Yet, bisexuals and transgender people have had little voice in queer theory. In queer theoretical works, bisexuality appears most often in the form of historic individuals from the nineteenth or early twentieth century who were known to sleep with both men and women. All too quickly, these figures fade as the text in question focuses in on same-sex attraction and allows different-sex attraction to fade into the background. Transgender people, who were coining the concept of transgender as queer theory was developing, produced a number of important works in the 1990s. In queer theory, however, they appeared until 1998 only as examples in books that otherwise addressed those who were cisgender (non-transgender). In 1998, Judith Halberstam published her much-lauded work *Female Masculinity*. In it, she argued that masculinity among those assigned female at birth has a great deal

to tell us about masculinity in general, because "widespread indifference to female masculinity . . . has clearly ideological motivations and has sustained the complex social structures that wed masculinity to maleness and to power and domination."[20] Exploring Western female masculinities from the nineteenth-century "invert" through the twentieth-century "stone butch" lesbian, the "border wars" between butch lesbians and FTMs (female-to-male transgender people), and drag kings, Halberstam suggests that in order to understand female masculinities we need to conceive of identity as a process rather than a status. Furthermore, "to understand such a process . . . we would need . . . to think in fractal terms and about gender geometries."[21]

In her more recent work, Halberstam continues her attention on nonnormative genders by developing the concepts of "queer time" and "queer place."[22] Perhaps the opposite of Duggan's "homonormativity," Halberstam's "queer time" refers to a concept of time developed in the contexts of queer lives: the fleeting temporality associated with living with HIV during the height of the epidemic, and the organization of life courses when there are no expectations of a timely marriage, childbearing, child rearing, and so on. Likewise, the production of queer time necessitates thinking as well about queer place—the ways in which queer subjects construct a sense of place, and in fact construct places themselves, differ from the ways in which place is constructed in the heteronormative world, and this has consequences not only for queer communities and individuals but potentially for activism as well.

Unlike much of queer theory, Halberstam goes beyond literary and film criticism to engage what she calls a "queer methodology." Employing the tools of a number of different disciplines and "refus[ing] the academic compulsion toward disciplinary coherence," Halberstam defines a queer methodology as that which "collect[s] and produce[s] information on subjects who have been deliberately or accidentally excluded from traditional studies of human behavior."[23] Such collection and production, though carried out in a much more (ethnographically) disciplinary manner, is also the goal of David Valentine's recent study, *Imagining Transgender*.[24]

Having begun his work as an ethnographic study of transgender communities in New York City, Valentine was struck almost immediately by the discrepancies in the ways his study participants identified. While transgender activists—often white and from middle-class backgrounds—proudly claimed their identity as transgender, others—often working class or working poor and people of color—had other names for themselves and refused the transgender designation. Valentine's study became an ethnography of the term "transgender." With a strong commitment to the importance ethnography can hold for activists, Valentine suggests that, rather than assume the automatic

separability of sexuality and gender, we should instead "ask other kinds of questions, such as: 'For whom is this the case? Where? When? With what effects? From whose perspective?'" and so on.[25] Answers to such questions, he argues, will help activists to determine how best to serve gender-variant populations.

Despite Halperin's challenge that queer theory has become "a more trendy version of 'liberal,'" in studies of gender variance, at least, it has maintained or even further developed its activist orientation. Yet queer theory has also been charged with being predominantly male and predominantly white. While several of the currently prominent names in queer theory—Judith Butler, Lisa Duggan, Gayatri Gopinath—are female, it is true that queer theory has been dominated by men, and a number of works in queer theory focus specifically on (cisgender) men. Likewise, although queer theory has always had a thread of concern with race, interrogating whiteness has not been on the queer theoretical radar. There, has, however, been an upswing in queer writings by people of color. Especially since the 1999 publication of José Esteban Muñoz's oft-cited book *Disidentifications*, a number of queer theoretical works have appeared dealing with the experiences of people of color, those of people from non-Western countries, and queer theoretical approaches to globalization.

Pointing out that "the field of queer theory . . . is . . . a place where a scholar of color can easily be lost in an immersion of vanilla while her or his critical faculties can be frozen by an avalanche of snow," Muñoz seeks "to contribute to an understanding of the ways in which queers of color identify with ethnos or queerness despite the phobic charges in both fields."[26] Drawing on the work of Michel Pêcheux, Muñoz develops the concept of "disidentification" as "a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology" and "tries to transform a cultural logic from within."[27] Contrary to identification with a cultural norm—going along with it—or counteridentification—directly opposing it—disidentification makes use of parody, play, and performativity to subvert that norm. Offering examples from art, film, and performance art, Muñoz explores the ways in which queer people of color disidentify with whiteness and heteronormativity.

As Siobhan Somerville demonstrated in 2000, the invention of sexual orientation and the increasingly insistent cultural efforts to police it—to distinguish clearly between the heterosexual and the homosexual—paralleled and intertwined with the nineteenth-century social construction of race as it is known today in the United States, and the often violent efforts to divide black clearly from white.[28] Thus, attempts to theorize queerness can never be complete without simultaneous attention to race, something Robert Reid-Pharr

demonstrates elegantly in his collection of essays, *Black Gay Man*.[29] This is not to say that Reid-Pharr focuses on identity politics; where he does, it is in order to critically question such politics even as he sometimes acknowledges a need for them. His explorations of race, gender, and sexuality serve a larger goal of developing an effective coalition on the political left, while at the same time remaining deeply personal.

Likewise, Roderick Ferguson explicitly offers a "queer of color critique" in his *Aberrations in Black*, in part as "another step in the move beyond identity politics" and toward coalitional politics.[30] Drawing on Karl Marx's historical materialism yet finding it silent on issues of gender, race, and sexuality, Ferguson proposes disidentifying with this theoretical perspective, inhabiting it in order simultaneously to make use of and alter it. Further, he uses this approach to critique the traditional discipline of sociology, reading African American culture through the form of the novel and through an intersectional analysis that takes into account race, sexuality, class, and gender.

In addition to the increasing attention paid to U.S. racial dynamics in queer theory, since 2000 there has been a steady increase in the number of works offering global queer perspectives. These works rightly take existing queer theory to task for its focus on the West and especially the United States, arguing that valuable theoretical perspectives can come from other areas of the globe as well. Perhaps the earliest of these works to be influential among queer theorists was José Quiroga's *Tropics of Desire*, which utilizes literary, film, and cultural analysis to critique the monolithic representations of Latin American queer cultures in queer theory and LGBT studies. Also of interest are several collections, two of which fruitfully explore the intersections of postcolonial and queer theory and one of which focuses more broadly on the intersections of globalization, queer theory, and postcolonial/neo-colonial international relations.[31]

Two more recent works helpfully bring in the concept of diaspora, addressing globalization directly through the lives of those who live in transit, either literally through trips between a sending country and a receiving one, or figuratively through telephone, computer, and commercial connections between the two. Martin Manalansan describes the "new queer studies," of which he considers himself a part, by quoting fellow "new queer" scholar Gayatri Gopinath: "a more nuanced understanding of the traffic and travel of competing systems of desire in a transnational frame . . . and of how colonial structures of knowing and seeing remain in place within a discourse of an 'international' lesbian and gay movement."[32] Both Manalansan and Gopinath grapple with these overlapping dimensions of travel, desire, and transnationalism, the former in the context of Filipino gay men and the latter in her study of what

she terms "queer female diasporic subjectivity" in the context of South Asia and South Asian diasporas.[33] While the former study is primarily anthropological and the latter leans more in the direction of cultural studies, both works stress the importance of diaspora studies for queer studies as well as the impact that queer studies can have on diaspora studies. Gopinath explains: "queerness is to heterosexuality as diaspora is to nation. . . . If 'diaspora' needs 'queerness' in order to rescue it from its genealogical implications, 'queerness' also needs 'diaspora' in order to make it more supple in relation to questions of race, colonialism, migration and globalization."[34]

Another point of agreement in works that bring queer theory together with the study of globalization is the fact that queer cultures are deeply affected by global politics and the spread of global capitalism. Jasbir Puar's recent *Terrorist Assemblages* makes this connection especially clear in her exploration of the relationships between homonormativity and the state-sponsored terrorism known as the War on Terror.[35] Puar posits a new form of homonormativity in the United States, "homonationalism," that casts certain homonormative gay men and lesbians as "proper" national (and capitalist) subjects; she offers as an example an advertisement for Gay.com that pictures two apparently naked white men wrapped together in an American flag. In turn, just as a small group of gay men and lesbians are coming to be defined as proper citizens, their sexuality acceptably normative, sexuality continues to be used, along with race, class, gender, and nationality, to construct national Others as fundamentalist—and fundamentally—sexual perverts. The concept of "assemblages," Puar argues, can help us to see these connections in all their fluidity, as it moves beyond the static nature of intersectional analysis. Understanding assemblages as events implies that as

> opposed to an intersectional model of identity, which presumes that components—race class, gender, sexuality, nation, age, religion—are separable analytics and can thus be disassembled, an assemblage is more attuned to interwoven forces that merge and dissipate time, space, and body against linearity, coherency, and permanency.[36]

The terrorist, like the queer, is an assemblage that carries with it a particular ontology and affect, and thus has particular effects on global politics and economics.

Another relatively new development in queer theory, and one that is still in the developing stages, is the intersection of queer theory with disability theory. The leader in this arena to date is Robert McRuer, whose book *Crip Theory* appeared in 2006. As McRuer and Abby Wilkerson point out in the introduction to a 2003 special issue of the journal *GLQ*, queer and disabled

populations have in common that they are defined by and read through their bodies.[37] Both types of bodies are seen as monstrous, perverted, and in some way sexually deviant: either over-sexed (queer bodies) or sexless (disabled bodies). And both have developed their own movements that claim difference as a virtue, a position from which to critique larger structures of power, especially neo-liberalism and global capitalism. Pairing a theory of "compulsory able-bodiedness" with Adrienne Rich's "compulsory heterosexuality,"[38] McRuer argues, like Puar, that neo-liberalism is built, in part, upon the tolerance of a limited range of queer and disabled bodies, thus creating an able-bodied heterosexuality that is "more 'flexible' . . . than either queer theory or disability studies has fully acknowledged."[39] Exploring the ways in which able-bodiedness relies on the existence of disability, as heterosexuality relies on the existence of queerness, crip theory offers yet more new directions for queer interventions, both theoretical and activist.

Queer Theory and Religious Studies

Notably absent in this admittedly brief survey of queer theoretical writing is the topic of religion. Some coverage appears in Manalansan's work on Filipino gay men, as a chapter of the book describes a cross-dressed version of a traditional Filipino ritual that has Catholic roots. Yet, aside from discussing how seriously (or not) people participated in the ritual aspects of the performance, Manalansan pays little attention to its religious roots in his analysis, preferring to focus on identity, performance, and the queer diasporic significance of the event. Though queer theorists have been reluctant so far to engage religion, within the field of religious studies, there have been some very productive appropriations of queer theory, especially in the fields of Jewish studies, Christian theology, biblical studies, and Christian history.

Defining "queer religious studies" for the purposes of this essay is challenging, because many works in the field term themselves "queer." Often, however, this terminology reflects the use of "queer" as an umbrella term for "LGBT," and the works so named have little if anything to do with queer theory. Yet some works that cite little queer theory remain close kin to those discussed in the preceding section. If "queer" is, as Halperin says, "an identity without an essence,"[40] then what criteria do we have by which to distinguish queer theoretical approaches to religion from others? Perhaps Halperin's word "essence" is the key. Much of what is written about religion in LGBT communities takes identity *as* essence, and even uses that essence as a basis from which to rethink and re-enact religion. Queer work in religion, on the other hand, to return to de Lauretis's original vision, might concern "the conceptual and

speculative work involved in [religious] discourse production, and . . . the necessary critical work of deconstructing our own [religious] discourses and their constructed silences."[41] It would be, as I wrote above, "a theoretical approach that positions itself outside of and against dominant [religious/religious studies] discourses, critically examining the normative [in religion and religious studies] from a standpoint beyond it." Though much of the work in queer religious studies draws explicitly on queer theory, some comes to fit this definition through reliance on forerunners of queer theory such as Foucault and psychoanalytic theory.

Perhaps the earliest queer theoretical work in religious studies is Howard Eilberg-Schwartz's innovative book *God's Phallus*.[42] Beginning by asking why Judaism prohibits representations of God, Eilberg-Schwartz suggests that "it is 'male-morphism,' rather than anthropomorphism, about which [ancient] Jews felt ambivalent."[43] He offers several reasons for this ambivalence, the most striking being the implicit homoeroticism in an arrangement where a people (Israel) is seen as the bride of a male deity, and the male representatives of that people (priests) interact most closely with the deity. How to avoid thinking about a homoerotic encounter with the divine? Studiously ignore the body of the divine, and especially his loins. Eilberg-Schwartz offers a number of intriguing biblical examples wherein parts of the divine body become visible but the viewer's gaze never reaches the genital area.[44] Furthermore, he suggests, the marital imagery used to describe the relationship between God and Israel raised the specter of feminization for Jewish men, possibly contributing to the misogyny pointed out by many feminist scholars of the Bible and the Talmud.

The feminization of Jewish men, at least in the eyes of Western European, Christian cultures, has been the topic of much work by Talmud scholar Daniel Boyarin. In *Unheroic Conduct*, Boyarin traces what he calls the "femminization" (from "femme") of the Jewish man in Ashkenazi (northern European) Jewish culture.[45] Beginning with Talmudic texts, Boyarin analyzes the development of this masculine ideal through stories of the early rabbis that explicitly and favorably compare the femminized rabbis (one even has a lance that wilts in his hand) to the boorish and hyper-masculine *goyim*. Like Eilberg-Schwartz, Boyarin sees connections between the femminization and homosociality of the rabbis, on the one hand, and rabbinic misogyny, on the other. Yet, as he notes in the introduction, Boyarin wishes to reclaim this model of masculinity, shorn of its misogyny, for the late twentieth-century feminist man.[46] In the second half of *Unheroic Conduct*, Boyarin traces the effects on Ashkenazi masculinity of the nineteenth-century partial integration of Jews into mainstream, Northern European cultures. Focusing his attention on

Sigmund Freud, Zionism, and feminist Bertha Pappenheim (the "Anna O." of psychoanalytic fame), he argues that traditional Ashkenazi gender roles directly conflicted with mainstream European gender roles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and that one can trace the effects of these conflicts in Freud's ambivalence toward Judaism, in the hyper-masculinity of Zionism ("Jews in colonial drag"[47]), and in the "hysterical" reactions of an activist to confinement within middle-class Victorian femininity.

Following these two striking works was a collection of queer studies in Judaism, edited by Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Iskovitz, and Ann Pellegrini.[48] Excerpts from the work of Marjorie Garber and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick open the volume, and are followed by Janet Jakobsen's characteristically intricate musings on the connections and disconnections between Judaism and queerness. Other articles range from an examination of antisemitism and homophobia in an early twentieth-century murder trial, through an exploration of the links between queer theory and postcolonial theory in the context of Jewish cultural studies, to literary and cultural analyses of Geoffrey Chaucer, Charles Dickens, Yiddish theater, filmmaker Jean Cocteau, and others. Finally, this stellar collection closes with Judith Butler's thought-provoking reflections on feminism, homophobia, racism, and the legacy of National Socialism in contemporary Germany. After this collection and the important contributions by Eilberg-Schwartz and Boyarin, the field is left to await the next exciting work in queer Jewish studies.

In the meantime, the related field of biblical studies has also made important strides in the application of queer theory. A key figure here has been Ken Stone, who in 2001 edited a collection of queer commentaries on the Hebrew Bible.[49] Stone notes that

> "queer commentary on the Bible" might be . . . understood . . . as a range of approaches to biblical interpretation that take as their point of departure a critical interrogation and active contestation of the many ways in which the Bible is and has been read to support heteronormative and normalizing configurations of sexual practices and sexual identities.[50]

There is, indeed, a range of hermeneutical approaches here, from those that mine the biblical text for resources for LGBT communities to those that truly queer the text and offer new perspectives on the roles of sexuality in the Hebrew Bible. Mona West, for example, suggests reading the book of Lamentations as a resource for responding to AIDS. A thoughtful and important contribution, this chapter does not engage in the kind of "critical interrogation" that Stone and other queer theorists indicate is central to the practice of queer theory. At the other end of the spectrum, however, is Roland Boer's

vision of a queer gathering atop Mount Sinai that includes such figures as the Marquis de Sade, Sigmund Freud, and Moses, and that casts Yahweh as a fussy interior decorator, obsessing over the finest details of his tabernacle.

Ken Stone's contribution to this collection is drawn from what was at the time a work in progress, later published as *Practicing Safer Texts*.[51] Stone argues that advocates of safer sex practices walk a middle road between throwing caution to the wind and abstaining from all sexual practices out of concern for safety. So, too, he suggests, should queer biblical commentators walk a middle road. Acknowledging that biblical texts have proved dangerous for LGBTIQ people, and that one must handle them cautiously, at the same time he does not advocate removing oneself entirely from engagement with the Bible; thus, queer readers of the Bible should practice "safer text." Stone puts his own recommendations into practice by examining the roles of food and sex in a number of biblical settings, ranging from the obvious—the Garden of Eden and the Song of Songs—to the less evident, such as the wisdom literature.

Less exciting than Stone's collection, though nonetheless an impressive and groundbreaking work, is *The Queer Bible Commentary*, a systematic collection of reflections from LGBT authors on every book of the Hebrew Bible and the Christian New Testament.[52] The commentaries range in style, from formal structures that outline and then explain the book in question to more loosely structured essays that focus only on particular sections of a book. Much of this collection falls closer to LGBT studies than to queer theory: authors explore the relevance of each book for same-sex attracted readers (and occasionally for gender-variant readers as well), noting places where the books speak to LGBT experiences but not deeply interrogating the text. A few truly queer contributions spice up this collection, however. Elizabeth Stuart, for example, draws on Butler's exploration of the melancholy subject in *Undoing Gender* in order to explore the irruption of the feminine and the consequent queering of the divine through the figure of Wisdom in the book of Proverbs. And the late Marcella Althaus-Reid, known like Stuart for producing deeply queer readings of Christian tradition, provocatively compares the crucifixion of Jesus to the murder of a transvestite prostitute on a street in Buenos Aires.

Stuart and Althaus-Reid are both best known not for biblical commentary but for queer theology, and it is here that the intersection of queer theory and religion has been the most fruitful. In her helpful introduction to gay, lesbian, and queer theologies, Stuart draws a clear distinction between "gay and lesbian theology" and "queer theology": "In gay and lesbian theology sexuality interrogated theology; in queer theology, theology interrogates sexuality but from a different place than modern theology has traditionally done."[53] Stuart argues that not only are Christian theology and queer theory compatible, but

the former can enhance the latter as well. "Queer theory," she argues, "needs disruption from the transcendent to save it from hopeless idealism and nihilism. For there is only one community charged with being queer and that is the Church and it is so charged for a purpose: the preparation of the kingdom of heaven."[54] Here, in this relatively early articulation of queer theology, Christian triumphalism seems to grate against the social radicalism of queer theory. Other queer theologians, however, manage to avoid this problem.

Queer theology burst into the theological scene with Althaus-Reid's *Indecent Theology*, published in 2000.[55] Combining Latin American liberation theology and feminist theology with a concern for taking sexuality seriously, Althaus-Reid defines indecent theology as "a theology which problematizes and undresses the mythical layers of multiple oppression in Latin America, a theology which, finding its point of departure at the crossroads of Liberation Theology and Queer Thinking, will reflect on economic and theological oppression with passion and imprudence."[56] Insisting that a theology with a "preferential option for the poor" should include the voices of all of the poor, including the sexually and gender-diverse poor and those whose religious festivals play with gender, Althaus-Reid critiques both liberation theology and feminist theology for their inattentiveness to the sexual body. To demonstrate the alternatives to these desexualized meditations on theology, she suggests "per/verting" Mary ("allowing [her] fixed identities to be . . . more imprecise and mutable"[57]); imaging Christ as bisexual (the "Bi/Christ"[58]); and rethinking soteriology through the lens of sexual fetishism. She concludes with reflections on the Christian role in neo-colonialism and economic globalization.

Working in conversation with Althaus-Reid is Robert Goss, whose *Queering Christ* marked his transition from gay and lesbian theology to queer theology.[59] As Althaus-Reid conceives of Christ as the Bi/Christ in order to stress the sexual fluidity of the Christ figure, so Goss pushes the concept further by suggesting a "Transvestite/Christ"[60] or simply a "Queer Christ" to encompass gender as well as sexual diversity in the divine figure. Althaus-Reid followed this in 2003 with an argument for queering God.[61] Her aim in this densely written and often convoluted book is first to describe and then to practice queer theology as she envisions it: as a radical rethinking, or perhaps re-embodying, of God, hermeneutics, and the theologian herself. Moreover, for Althaus-Reid, theology cannot be truly queer unless it attends to more than just sexual margins: following in the tradition of liberation theology, which is, in fact, the taproot of queer theology, Althaus-Reid insists that queer theologians look as well to the experiences of those marginalized by class and by colonization. Drawing on people, locations, history, and literature from her native Argentina as well as from other parts of South and Central America, Althaus-Reid unrelentingly

pulls together feminist, queer, and postcolonial perspectives in order to present such provocative concepts as God the Sodomite; Rahab the co-opted, colonized subject; and Lot's wife the protester against (divine) fascism, the biblical parallel to the mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.

The denial of tenure to Goss in 2003 and the passing of Althaus-Reid in 2009 left a significant gap in the development of queer theology; however, one of those who has kept the field alive and on the cutting edge is Gerard Loughlin. His engrossing 2004 work, *Alien Sex*, uses film analysis as a lens through which to construct theology. Loughlin suggests a "theology of the cinema," which is "a discerning of lights, of screen-visions," adding that such a theology is closely connected with a theology of the body and of sexuality: "for it is from desire that we learn of divine eros, the love that comes to us in the flesh so that we might enter into the triune mystery, the embrace of God, and with our bodies see the beatific vision."[62] Exploring images of the sacred and of sexuality in film, Loughlin uses these images as a tool for unpacking the connections between the sacred and sexuality in theology itself.

The newest indication of developments in queer theology is an excellent collection recently edited by Loughlin, who argues insightfully in the introduction that "gay sexuality is not marginal to Christian thought and culture, but oddly central. It [is] the disavowed but necessary condition for the Christian symbolic."[63] Such challenging observations abound in this group of essays written by a range of prominent queer scholars, some of whom are theologians but many of whom work in other areas relevant to theology. As with other collections, this one too is somewhat uneven in its relationship to queer theory; a few of the chapters are better termed gay and lesbian theology than queer theology. Overall, however, *Queer Theology* offers a thought-provoking introduction to queer work in Judaism and (mostly) Christianity.

Readers familiar with the literature will notice that I have neglected to mention Mark Jordan's work in the above discussion. This is because Jordan's unique work deserves treatment on its own. By far the most prolific writer in queer studies in religion, Jordan produces essays that offer a brilliant interweaving of theology, history, Foucauldian analysis, and queer theory. Among his works published in the past decade, perhaps the best known is the earliest: *The Silence of Sodom*.[64] Written like Jordan's other works in a conversational style, this book is especially indebted to Walter Benjamin's Arcades Project, which Benjamin envisioned as a "literary montage." Jordan explains:

> I am convinced that the homosexuality of modern Catholicism can't be written about except by "constellating" moral theology, church history, queer theory, the novel of manners, and utopian reveries. By gathering scraps from these

kinds of texts, I hope to demonstrate both the inadequacy of official Catholic speeches about homosexuality and how challenging it will be to create more adequate ones.[65]

The Silence of Sodom applies this "montage" approach to the study of official Roman Catholic speech about homosexuality, to the lives of gay men in the Church (his chapter "Clerical Camp" is especially delightful), and to rethinking the place of homosexuality, and especially gay men, in the Church.

Although in *The Ethics of Sex* Jordan's signature method is more muted, it is fruitfully present in *Telling Truths in Church* and in *Blessing Same-Sex Unions*.[66] The former of these two is a lecture series first given in Boston in 2002, just as the pedophilia scandals were beginning in the U.S. Catholic churches. Picking up on themes raised in *The Silence of Sodom*, Jordan explores the power of the Church to silence what he calls "truth-telling" through "broadcasting the kind of scandal that sounds so harshly around us right now." The Church broadcasts scandal "by pretending to make claims: that the truth-telling is *angry*, that it is *anti-Catholic prejudice*, and that it has *no proof*."[67] The book goes on to explore efforts at truth-telling and churchly efforts at silencing in the context of same-sex marriage, God, and Jesus.

The theme of same-sex marriage returns in full in Jordan's most recent book, *Blessing Same-Sex Unions*. True to his inimitable style, Jordan notes at the outset that "the reader who likes to tally disciplines will find pages that look like cultural criticism, qualitative sociology, narrative history, literary criticism, and amateur satire."[68] Interweaving these diverse approaches, Jordan comments upon both male same-sex bonding (in its many different forms) and Christian marriage, and he explores the possible outcomes of an intersection of the two. Some of the tenor of the book can be found in Jordan's closing line: "In the end, will queers get married in a real church with a real minister? Just like everyone else—unless they are very careful."[69]

Like Jordan, Virginia Burrus has become a leading queer theorist on the topic of Christianity; unlike Jordan, she works in the context of early Christian history. In *The Sex Lives of Saints*, Burrus explores representations and intimations of the erotic in early Christian hagiography. She offers a queer reading of the saints' lives of Jerome; explores sexualized masochism in the lives of virgin martyrs ("A 'woman,' it seems," she quips, "must die in order to get a Life"[70]); enacts a queer, postcolonial reading of Sulpicius's *Life of Martin*; and discusses the role of seduction in the hagiographies of prostitutes-turned-saints. A historian rather than a theologian, Burrus nevertheless concludes her work with the significance of these undercurrents of eroticism for the lives of Christians today.

Likewise, Burrus's recent study of shame in early Christianity concludes with reflections on the role of shame in contemporary U.S. society.[71] The book as a whole, though, concentrates on the various ways in which shame appears in a variety of early Christian texts. Martyrs, for instance, experienced in their enforced shaming a route to the glory of God. Ascetics sought out shame as part of their self-abasement before God, and Jesus—God in the flesh, or perhaps flesh itself—was shamed on the cross. Burrus's final chapter focuses on the roles of shame and shamelessness in confession, especially in the work of Augustine. Like *The Sex Lives of Saints*, *Saving Shame* is clever and insightful, offering queerly new perspectives on the early history of Christianity. Worth noting, as well, is that Burrus has begun to have some company in her work on queer readings of early Christianity: a recently published article in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* explores homoeroticism and restrictions placed on the bodies of boys in the writings of early Egyptian monks.[72]

Other queer innovations in the study of religion range from a comparison of queer and Catholic passing (and attendant anxieties among heterosexual Protestants) in the nineteenth-century United States,[73] to an intriguing edited collection on the intersections of Jewish, Christian, and/or queer identities.[74] In the latter work, a few of the contributors focus on Jewish/Christian intersections, but most offer queer readings of some aspect of Judaism, Christianity, or both. Notably, this book was published as part of the new series, "Queer Interventions," edited by well-known queer scholars Noreen Giffney and Michael O'Rourke. This is only the second text to perform such a publishing crossover: a queer study of religion being published as part of a larger queer studies publishing project. The first was Janet Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini's well-known book, *Love the Sin*, which appeared as part of the "Sexual Cultures" series that has included a number of prominent works in queer theory.[75]

Love the Sin is also one of the few books in queer religious studies to reach out beyond the study of religion itself and engage topics of concern to queer theory more broadly. Arguing that tolerance and equal rights are inadequate goals for the gay and lesbian movement, Jakobsen and Pellegrini suggest instead turning to the First Amendment for guidance. Tolerance, they suggest, is inadequate because one can claim to be tolerant of a group while still considering the members of that group to be inferior. Furthermore, the rhetoric of tolerance casts all political activists as "extremists" and thus "has important [negative] implications for participatory democracy."[76] Advocating what they call "the free exercise of sex,"[77] Jakobsen and Pellegrini suggest that sexual practices should be treated like religious practices—that, in fact, the choice of sexual practices *is* in part a freedom-of-religion issue because laws controlling how and with whom people have sex in the United States impose the ethics

of a particular branch of Christianity on everyone in the country. Ultimately, Jakobsen and Pellegrini argue for "a public that allows for robust contestation and radical pluralism, rather than one split by divisions between those who are the same and those who are different."[78]

Taking Stock: The Future of Queer Theory in Religious Studies

Queer theoretical work in the field of religious studies has expanded significantly over the past decade, but it is really still in its infancy. In Christian theology and in biblical studies, it is developing steadily, although the passing of Marcella Althaus-Reid marks a tremendous loss to the field and Bob Goss's departure from academia likewise struck a blow. Queer Jewish studies holds a great deal of promise, although it too has been hurt by the disdain that tenure committees apparently hold for queer theory in religion: its earliest proponent, Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, was denied tenure and subsequently left the academic world. Further developments from those scholars who are able to continue doing queer work in Jewish studies would be most welcome. In the areas of queer Christian commentary and queer studies of Christian history, Mark Jordan and Virginia Burrus stand somewhat alone, and more work like theirs is greatly needed.

In all of these areas there is a great deal of space for further inquiry; many opportunities exist for new scholars to gain a foothold while relying on the work of those who have gone before them for inspiration and support. Both in Christian theology and in biblical studies, there is also a need to continue working to distinguish between lesbian and gay work, on the one hand, and queer work, on the other. This is not to say that lesbian and gay theology and biblical studies are not useful; there is a real need for such work in communities of faith. However, at the more theoretical level, lesbian and gay theology and biblical studies tend toward the homonormative and can fail to be as radically inclusive in their thinking as queer theory strives to be.

It is also critical for queer theory in religion to branch out beyond the study of Judaism and Christianity. But is queer theory relevant beyond these areas? The study of religion has been critiqued as a colonial enterprise based on a Western construct; given the vulnerability of queer theory to the same claim, should queer theorists really want to associate with the study of religion, especially outside of Western cultures? These are questions that deserve serious thought, and that have been addressed by some of the recent work in queer theory as well as in religion. Certainly one must be aware of neocolonial dynamics in extending either queer theory or the study of religion to cultures outside of their own origins; but as both fields have made such extensions

with appropriate caution, it seems logical for them to work together in some of these areas.

Why, for instance, does Manalansan's study of Filipino gay men not consider religion in any depth, despite the fact that he covers a drag enactment of a popular Filipino religious ritual? Parody constructs an interesting relationship to religion that could be plumbed in more depth. Relatedly, why does Gopinath not discuss religion in her work on South Asian diasporas? Surely it is not because no queer South Asians are involved in religions. Is it because religion is less relevant to sexuality in the context of South Asia, or is this neglect of religion part of a larger resistance on the part of queer theorists to considering religion as a valid topic of inquiry?

Furthermore, it would be interesting to see queer theory applied to the field of religious studies itself. What would it mean to queer the field? It might mean, for starters, unearthing and questioning the hetero- and gender-normativity of classical studies of religion. It might mean asking what studies of queer phenomena in religion can tell us about the field as a whole—what does the ritual in Manalansan's work tell us about ritual itself, and how often does ritual studies consider drag? What does the ritual tell us about Catholicism and Catholic practice, or about the religious practices of the excluded? And it might mean asking queer questions of any new research—where is sexuality, where gender, in studies appearing today? Are they only in the form of dominant narratives? What lies beneath the surface of these narratives? Who is silenced in order to produce the picture painted by scholars?

Queer theory in religion, even in those areas where it is developing well, also needs to push beyond the isolated study of sexuality to take on the broader concern for justice articulated by de Lauretis and carried out especially in the work of queer theorists of color. How do sexuality and gender, or gender variance, intersect in religion? What about race, class, or global capitalism—areas sorely under-studied by religionists in general, and certainly by those interested in queer theory?[79] In some ways, queer theory in religion stands now where queer theory as a whole stood in the mid-1990s: surrounded by a great deal of enthusiasm but lacking in the radicalism hoped for by de Lauretis when she coined the term. It is dominated by white, gay, middle-class, cisgendered men who write from, and often solely about, their own experiences and the experiences of people like them. Althaus-Reid has blazed the trail to another approach to queerly studying religion; hopefully the field will follow her and develop in the ways that queer theory has developed in the first decade of the new millennium.

In a response to Ken Stone's collection, *Queer Commentary and the Hebrew Bible*, Tat-siong Benny Liew wrote that "as biblical scholars, we must not

only read the Bible with the help of queer theory, but we must also use our reading of the Bible to interrogate, or even transform queer theory."[80] As he notes, until now religious studies has made use of queer theory, has applied it, without reciprocal attention from queer theorists. But *can* there be a useful, bi- or even multi-directional conversation between religious studies and queer theory? Is Liew right that religious studies can even transform queer theory? Further, has the current failure of religious studies to gain the attention of queer theorists resulted from a weakness in queer studies in religion or a cynicism on the part of queer theorists about religion as a whole? The answer may be some of both.

Roden's *Jewish/Christian/Queer* and Jakobsen and Pellegrini's *Love the Sin* both attracted enough attention to be published as part of a series on queer theory. Interestingly, although these scholars are interested in religion, none of the three and very few of Roden's contributors are actually employed in religious studies departments. Is this because of the discomfort that religious studies has shown toward queer studies in general, or because religious studies scholars are ill-equipped to study queer theory? Again, the answer may be both. We have a queer studies that is largely cynical about religion, though willing to consider it in studies countering fundamentalism or studies of identity undertaken by literature scholars; a religious studies wary enough of things queer to occasionally deny tenure to and sometimes refuse to hire scholars who work in the area; queer studies scholars untrained in the study of religion; and religious studies scholars untrained in queer studies—the latter two as a result of the former. This, at least, must change. Religious studies scholars must show how our work can contribute to the development of queer theory—in its fullest, most justice-oriented sense, and not in the guise of Christian supremacism—and queer theorists must consider whether a serious look at religion might not be in the interest of their ultimate goals.

What would a study look like that contributed equally to the development of queer theory and to the study of religion? It could be a study of religious parody, as seen in Manalansan's work or in the infamous Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The Sisters, who take their name from the medieval practice of selling indulgences that would exonerate one of one's sins, offer a "perpetual indulgence" to those whose identities or practices have been declared sinful by traditional religions—especially LGBT communities. They are a charity organization that raises money for a wide variety of causes and promotes safer sex practices, and they consider themselves to be nuns who serve their community much in the way that Catholic nuns do. They are best known, however, for their parody of Catholic nuns through the use of whiteface and drag. Most (though certainly not all) of the Sisters are gay men; when in their

formal dress, they wear full nuns' habits, but most of the time the U.S. Sisters can be found in wimples, veils, and outrageous drag.

Cathy Glenn, one of the very few scholars to have written on the Sisters, argues that the Sisters "set into motion a mimetic identification with their own adaptation of 'nun'"; in being nuns, they re-signify the concept of "nun," thus contributing to a changing perception of nuns in the twenty-first century.[81] Glenn takes seriously the concept of the sacred in evaluating the symbolic significance of the Sisters and the vituperative reactions of some Catholics to the presence of the Sisters. For some Catholics, she explains, "the move to bring the mundane into the temple, to sanctify the queer bodies and politics of SPI, constitutes profanity."[82] Without these key concepts from the study of religion—sacred and profane—Glenn would have been unable to adequately evaluate the relationship between the Sisters and the Roman Catholic Church. And yet, there is much more to be said about this relationship. Certainly the Sisters' efforts to sacralize queer bodies are part of their "profanity," and certainly an even more significant aspect is their representation of queer bodies as Catholic nuns. Yet others dress as nuns without such violent responses; is it the organized aspect of the Sisters that sparks outrage, or is it something about the queerness of the bodies they sacralize? I would argue the latter.

But this is about more than queerness. Queer bodies are fundamentally sexual in the rhetoric of the Roman Catholic Church: homosexuality (under which are subsumed bisexuality and transgender identities) is "intrinsically disordered." To bring queer bodies into sacred roles is to bring sexuality into the Church. To bring predominantly *male* queer bodies into the Church is to draw attention to the rampant presence of homoeroticism within the culture of the Church, to boisterously shatter the glass closet the Church has been trying so hard to paint over in the past decade, especially in its ban on admitting gay men to seminary. In extending Glenn's analysis, religious studies offers queer theory concerted attention to the interconnections and tensions between the sacred and sexuality.

Religious studies also offers the perspective that religion is a fundamental part of culture; yet cultural studies, in which queer theory plays a major part, attends only rarely to religion, and then often only in passing. What would it mean to consider religion through a cultural studies lens, and what would this add to queer theory? Certainly religion is a source of both heteronormativity and homonormativity, but as the Sisters demonstrate, it can also be a force of subversion. Queer theory is currently missing religion's role on both sides of this dynamic, and therefore, its grasp of heteronormativity, homonormativity, and subversion is incomplete.

Finally, religious studies offers a unique approach to religion as a *sui generis* phenomenon. Although we disagree vociferously on the definition of religion, religious studies scholars generally agree in refusing to reduce the phenomenon of religion to other causes, such as psychological functions or the effects of narcotics (real or metaphorical). Taking religion seriously in this way allows us to comprehend more fully the influence of religion on people's lives and on their understanding of themselves and of the world around them. Religion is a powerful force in subjectification, and it can also be a powerful form of resistance. To deny this power through ignoring religion or approaching it from a reductionist perspective is to miss an important social and cultural dynamic.

So religious studies can contribute to queer theory, just as queer theory has contributed to religious studies. As the field expands and grows, this is an important direction to develop in order for queer theory in religion to reach maturity. Still in its first decade of real growth, queer theory in religion has developed rapidly in some areas and more slowly in others. It offers sophisticated analyses in some areas, while others are sorely in need of scholarly attention. The field is wide open for new and established scholars alike to join in the conversation and add new perspectives that will benefit the larger fields of both religious studies and queer theory.

Notes

1. Thanks to Beth Currans for recommending works in queer theory, and to Janet Mallen for thought-provoking discussions on the contributions of religious studies to queer theory. A sabbatical leave from Whitman College enabled the production of this essay.
2. Teresa de Lauretis, "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities: An Introduction," *differences* 3:2 (1991): iii–xviii.
3. Ibid., iv.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., xi.
6. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1990); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (New York: Kitchen Table Press, 1983); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
7. "As for 'queer theory,' . . . [it] has quickly become a conceptually vacuous creature of the publishing industry" (Teresa de Lauretis, "Habit Changes," *differences* 6:2–3 [1994]: 297).

8. For a good overview of more recent developments in queer theory, see David L. Eng, Judith Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz, eds., "What's Queer about Queer Studies Now?" *Social Text* 23:3–4 (2005).
9. David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 62, emphasis in original.
10. Michael Warner, ed., *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xxii.
11. Lisa Duggan, "The New Homonormativity: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism," in *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics*, ed. Russ Castronovo and Dana D. Nelson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 175–94.
12. Ibid., 179.
13. Ibid., 186.
14. David Halperin, "The Normalization of Queer Theory," *Journal of Homosexuality* 45:2–4 (2003): 341.
15. Ibid., 342.
16. See Foucault, *History of Sexuality*.
17. As Lisa Duggan points out, this theory created an odd paradox, for inverts were believed to be attracted to "normal" members of their own sex. What, then, did that make the "normal" partner of an invert? In the case of a woman, she was simply considered wild or loose. See Lisa Duggan, *Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence, and American Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).
18. Cf. Ruth Vanita, "Introduction," in *Queering India: Same-Sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society*, ed. Ruth Vanita (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1–11.
19. Among other influential precursors were de Lauretis's *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); and Diana Fuss, ed., *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
20. Judith Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 2.
21. Ibid., 21.
22. Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
23. Ibid., 13.
24. David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
25. Ibid., 250.
26. José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 11.
27. Ibid.
28. Siobhan B. Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

29. Robert F. Reid-Pharr, *Black Gay Man: Essays* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).
30. Roderick A. Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 29. See p. 149 for a definition of "queer of color analysis."
31. Jose Quiroga, *Tropics of Desire: Interventions from Queer Latino America* (New York: New York University Press, 2000). John C. Hawley, ed., *Postcolonial and Queer Theories: Intersections and Essays* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001); John C. Hawley, ed., *Postcolonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001); Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin F. Manalansan IV, eds., *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).
32. Gayatri Gopinath, "Homo Economics: Queer Sexualities in a Transnational Frame," in *Burning Down the House: Recycling Domesticity*, ed. Rosemary Marangoly George (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 117, quoted in Martin F. Manalansan IV, *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 6.
33. Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 15.
34. Ibid., 11.
35. Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
36. Ibid., 212.
37. Robert McRuer and Abby L. Wilkerson, "Introduction," *GLQ* 9:1–2 (2003): 1–23.
38. Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose 1978–1985* (New York: Norton, 1986).
39. Robert McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 3.
40. Halperin, *Saint Foucault*, 62.
41. de Lauretis, "Queer Theory," iv.
42. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *God's Phallus and Other Problems for Men and Monotheism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994).
43. Ibid., 9.
44. See ibid., Part 2.
45. Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
46. See ibid., xvii.
47. Ibid., 309.
48. Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Iskovitz, and Ann Pellegrini, eds., *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).
49. Ken Stone, ed., *Queer Commentary and the Hebrew Bible* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2001). In recent years, The Pilgrim Press has played an important role in publishing LGBT and queer work in Christian theology.

50. Ibid., 33.
51. Ken Stone, *Practicing Safer Texts: Food, Sex, and the Bible in Queer Perspective* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004).
52. Deryn Guest, Robert E. Goss, Mona West, and Thomas Bohache, eds., *The Queer Bible Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 2006).
53. Elizabeth Stuart, *Gay and Lesbian Theologies: Repetitions with Critical Difference* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 102.
54. Ibid., 106.
55. Marcella Althaus-Reid, *Indecent Theology: Theological Perversions in Sex, Gender, and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
56. Ibid., 2.
57. Ibid., 69–70.
58. Ibid., 112–20.
59. Robert E. Goss, *Queering Christ: Beyond Jesus Acted Up* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2002).
60. Ibid., 182.
61. Marcella Althaus-Reid, *The Queer God* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
62. Gerard Loughlin, *Alien Sex: The Body and Desire in Cinema and Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 95.
63. Gerard Loughlin, ed., *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 9.
64. Mark D. Jordan, *The Silence of Sodom: Homosexuality in Modern Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
65. Ibid., 15.
66. Mark D. Jordan, *The Ethics of Sex* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002); idem, *Telling Truths in Church: Scandal, Flesh, and Christian Speech* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003); idem, *Blessing Same-Sex Unions: The Perils of Queer Romance and the Confusions of Christian Marriage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
67. Jordan, *Telling Truths*, 19, emphasis in original.
68. Jordan, *Blessing*, 19.
69. Ibid., 207.
70. Virginia Burrus, *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 12.
71. Virginia Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
72. Caroline T. Schroeder, "Queer Eye for the Ascetic Guy? Homoeroticism, Children, and the Making of Monks in Late Antique Egypt," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77:2 (2009): 333–47.
73. Patrick R. O'Malley, "'The Church's Closet': Confessionals, Victorian Catholicism, and the Crisis of Identification," in *Passing: Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race, and Religion*, ed. María Carla Sánchez and Linda Schlossberg (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 228–59.

74. Frederick Roden, ed., *Jewish/Christian/Queer: Crossroads and Identities* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).
75. Janet R. Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini, eds., *Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).
76. Ibid., 58.
77. Ibid., chap. 4.
78. Ibid., 149.
79. An important development in this area took place at the 2009 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, which hosted a panel session on the topic "Hidden and Invisible in Plain Sight: Queer and Lesbian in the Black Church and Community." Well attended and very well received, this panel demonstrated the promise inherent in combining Womanist and queer work in religion.
80. Tat-siong Benny Liew, "(Cor)Responding: A Letter to the Editor," in *Queer Commentary and the Hebrew Bible*, 185.
81. Cathy B. Glenn, "Queering the (Sacred) Body Politic: Considering the Performative Cultural Politics of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence," *Theory & Event* 7:1 (2003): par. 37.
82. Ibid., par. 54.

This page intentionally left blank

Index