

CURE4157 Religion, Gender, and Sexuality (BA) 宗教與性（別）

Wednesdays 02:30PM - 05:15PM

Venue: LDS_218

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Office: KKB 213

Office hour: tbc

Description

Are religion and sex always at odds? Do gods have genders? How can political leaders be celebrated as supreme dads? What can we learn from Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, Antonio Gramsci's prison writings, and Weber, Mahmood, Sedgwick...?

This course examines religion, gender and sexuality as crucial systems of power that shape our world. Students will develop an understanding of religion and gender as both subjects and as categories of analysis. As categories of analysis, students will use gender and religion to interrogate cultural production and social systems, paying close attention to how gender and religion intersect with other categories of social difference. Students will connect the assigned academic readings to "real-life" examples in the news, media, and their own lives, thereby producing new theoretical understandings of gender, religion, and sexuality in the contexts of Hong Kong, Asia, and the world.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:

1. Identify key scholars in the field and their theories, both classic and emerging
2. Describe and interpret in depth knowledge of religion and gender as intersectional categories of analysis
3. Actively reflect upon ordinary/accepted modes of thinking about gender, sexuality and religion, create new modes of thinking oriented toward change
4. Apply a critical, intersectional awareness of gender and religion in the social and cultural contexts of Hong Kong, Asia, and the world
5. Develop critical reading skills of academic literature on religion and gender, including reading, analysing, and summarising the argument of secondary literature; selecting and analysing primary materials including visual contents
6. Develop communication skills through class discussion and writing assignments
7. Develop research skills
8. Develop transferrable skills

Teaching Method

This course will consist of required readings, lectures, tutorials, presentations, and exam. PDFs of the readings will be posted. Required videos, websites, and other materials will also be posted.

Excused absences for religious holidays, illness, family or personal emergencies will be accommodated, and arrangements can be made to make up any missed work. Please inform Dr. Guo at the beginning of the semester of any expected absences.

Student Contribution and Evaluation

Type of Assessment	Weighting	CILOs to be addressed	Description of Assessment Tasks
Attendance and Engagement	10%	1, 3	So that the students will acquire skills of analysis that you may apply to other academic classes and in everyday life and gain confidence in expressing yourself orally through classroom discussions and presentations.
Mid-term Survey	30%	1,2,3,4,5,7	To check if students are able to understand and analyse the core concepts of this course in required texts. The questions will help students prepare the final assignment, the social media project.
Presentation (social media project)	60%	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	To assess how well students have read selected readings, identified a specific issue and present their ideas and viewpoints in the presentation. The social media project aims to assess major learning outcomes achieved by students upon the completion of the course.

Active Participation and attendance 10%

- Participation (some examples of how your participation performance will be evaluated in the class, e.g. Class Discussion, Feedback to the Class Presentation etc) in lectures (10%)
- Participation in tutorials 15% e.g. critical feedback to the class presentation/ critical discussion in tutorials

Mid-term Survey (30%)

- Students will be asked to answer a few short questions (~2-3 questions) in a written form, with each response expected to be around ~100-300 words in length.
- The questions will be designed to cover a range of topics, from identifying authors, explaining simple concepts to addressing open-ended questions.
- You may answer in either English or Chinese.

Social Media Project 60 %

- 2-3 students in a group to give a 15-min presentation.
- Choose a concept introduced in this course (either the main module theory or mentioned in lecture) and try to apply it in a case study.
- The case study can be from real life, literature, social media, or popular culture (film, TV, music etc).
- Design an Instagram post composed of more than one image to explain a concept, or apply a concept to advocate a campaign or event, or highlight a news story etc related to religion, gender, and sexuality.

- During the presentation, first tell us how you understand the concept learnt in the class (10%).
- The concepts and how you **analyse** the event/story must be inspired by what we have learned in class (20%).
- And then tell us how you **apply** the concept i.e., how the case study helps illustrate the concept 30%).
- Examples could be found on Rainlily: <https://www.instagram.com/acsvaw/>, BMCC: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CnVp5fZpGfx/>, https://www.instagram.com/funglau_mag/, <https://www.instagram.com/tehk.ig/>;
- Present the posts like an IG post even though for technical reasons we can only use PowerPoints to present.
- If teams agree, the posts will be featured on the programme IG account.

Language

Lectures will be conducted in English. Students may conduct small group discussions, tutorials, or group work in their preferred language, if all members agree and the choice of language (and the process of choosing a language) is inclusive. Assigned readings are in mostly English, but students who find reading in translation helpful, may read translated works. I hope one day you'd consider translating texts that have never been translated into Chinese (for instance, Eve Segwick, Saba Mahmood etc).

Extra Credit

Students can earn extra credit toward their participation grade by attending department academic events (0.5 for each event, no cap). Please email our TA beforehand if you plan to attend an event. In the case of no sign-up sheets at the event, please email our TAs your notes from the event; students must attend the full event to receive extra credit.

Recommended Resources:

- [The Religious Studies Project](#)
- [Keeping it 101: A Killjoy's introduction to Religion Podcast](#)
- [New Books Network: Religion](#)
- <https://shicha.buzzsprout.com/1171871/6139246-07-queer-theory-affect-transgender-politics>

Week 1 Intro 8/1



Source: Amazon



Source: MP Weekly, <https://www.mpweekly.com/culture/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/h161126yan025.jpg>

Are religion and gender/sexuality always at odds? What can a gender perspective tell us about religion, culture, history, and our future?

Part I USEFUL CONCEPTS

Week 2 Foucault on *sexuality and confession* 15/1

Foucault, Michel. 2016. “Scientia Sexualis.” In *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion, Sexuality, and Gender*.

Week 3 Max Weber on *charismatic authority* 22/1

Weber, Max. 2020. “The Three Types of Legitimate Domination.” *Essays in Economic Sociology*. Princeton University Press.

Week 4 Antonio Gramsci on *hegemony* 5/2

Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 97–191.

Connell, R. W. and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept.” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 6, pp. 829–859.

Week 5 Janet Gyatso and Miranda Shaw on *sex* 12/2



Source: Wikipedia.

Readings:

Gyatso, Janet. 2019. “Sex.” In *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion, Sexuality, and Gender*.

Shaw, Miranda. 1994. “Chapter 1.” In *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism*, 3–19. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Week 6 Saba Mahmood on *agency* 19/2

Readings:

Mahmood, Saba. 2012. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton University Press. Preface to the 2012 edition.

Further reading:

《东方学》与中东女性主义研究：一份综述。结绳志，2023。

Guo, Ting. 2024. “Saba Mahmood: 伊斯蘭，信仰，她者的自由”，*Initium Media* 端傳媒 <https://theinitium.com/article/20240711-opinion-her-country-saba-mahmood-freedom>

Week 7 Eve Sedgwick on *affect* 26/2

Sedgwick, Eve. 2003. Pedagogy of Buddhism. In *Touching Feeling*.

Bao, Hongwei. In Memory of Eve Sedgwick 紀念賽菊蔻: <https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/in-memory-of-eve-sedgwick-in-defence-of-sissy-boys/>

Week 8 Midterm Survey 12/3

Park II FROM CONCEPTS TO QUESTIONS

Week 9 Beyond #MeToo and Netflix: Religion and Sexual/Gender Violence 19/3

Lucia, Amanda. “Guru Sex: Charisma, Proxemic Desire, and the Haptic Logics of the Guru-Disciple Relationship.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 86.4 (2018): 953–988.

Further reading:

Huang, Chang-Ling. 2021. “#MeToo in East Asia: The Politics of Speaking Out.” *Politics & Gender* 17(3): 483–490.

Week 10 Religion and Feminism 26/3

Leslie Dorrough Smith, “Conservative religions oppress women (while liberal religions don't).” in *Stereotyping Religion II*, edited by Brad Stoddard and Craig Martin.

Week 11 Religion and LGBTQ+ 2/4

Marry My Dead Body 關於我和鬼變成家人的那件事, 2023.

Crossley, James. “‘All Religions Are against LGBTQ Rights’.” In *Stereotyping Religion II*, edited by Brad Stoddard and Craig Martin, 33–48.

Week 12 Guest speaker: Rev. 卜莎崙 Grace BOK 9/4

Week 13 Presentations 16/4

Rubrics

A:

- Shows an exceptional degree of insight and critical and independent thought.
- Demonstrates true flair in tackling issues.
- Outstanding quality, in terms of scholarship and originality.

- Often faultless.
- The work is well beyond that expected at the appropriate level of study.

B:

- A very good answer that shows qualities.
- Addresses the question directly and fully, showing clear focus on the subject with only trivial deviation.
- Exhibits a clear and coherent structure, showing logical, ordered thought and clear presentation.
- Exhibits knowledge of a very good range of theories, perhaps with some gaps, but handled in a professional way.
- Displays understanding and handling of key concepts: shows a firm grasp of the subject and current theory (but there may be gaps).
- Shows initiative, the ability to think clearly, to critically evaluate ideas, to bring different ideas together, and to draw sound conclusions.
- Displays evidence of further reading and appropriate use of examples and diagrams.
- Contain no significant errors of fact or interpretation.
- Develops a coherent analysis/argument proceeding to a convincing conclusion.
- Without major blemish in the quality of the writing and presentation.

C:

- A good answer with elements of the routine and predictable.
- Sound knowledge, although limited.
- May contain occasional factual errors and misunderstandings of concepts but this should not be a dominant impression.
- Generally accurate - inaccuracies, if any, should be moderate. Show understanding and handling of key concepts.
- There may not be a firm grasp and depth of understanding of all the key concepts.
- Focused on the subject, with relatively little irrelevant material. Exhibit a limited degree of critical analysis and evaluation.
- Structured in a reasonably clear and coherent manner, generally presenting ideas and information in a logical way and often with some examples.
- Generally shows a good quality of writing and presentation.

D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.

F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.