



Rima Vesely-Flad Receives 2023 Educational Resource Prize

The LGBTQ Religious Archives Network (LGBTQ-RAN) honors Rima Vesely-Flad, Ph.D. with the [2023 LGBTQ-RAN Educational Resource Prize](#) for the course syllabus for: “Buddhism, Race, Gender, and Sexuality.”

Rima Vesely-Flad, Ph.D. is the Visiting Professor of Buddhism and Black Studies at Union Theological Seminary. She is the author of *Black Buddhists and the Black Radical Tradition: The Practice of Stillness in the Movement for Liberation* (NYU Press, 2022) and *Racial Purity and Dangerous Bodies: Moral Pollution, Black Lives, and the Struggle for Justice* (Fortress Press, 2017). She is currently at work on a new manuscript, *The Fire Inside: The Dharma of James Baldwin and Audre Lorde* (Forthcoming, Harper Wave, 2025).

The Prize-winning “Buddhism, Race, Gender, and Sexuality” syllabus centers the voices of Buddhist practitioners whose voices have been institutionally marginalized yet who articulate the critical necessity of acknowledging race, gender, sexuality, and class in predominantly-white Buddhist institutions in the U.S. In contesting prevailing notions of power—in the spirit of Black, queer ancestors James Baldwin and Audre Lorde—the syllabus privileges an intersectional approach to honoring embodied identities and differences within Buddhist communities in the U.S. Dr. Vesely-Flad taught the “Buddhism, Race, Gender, and Sexuality” course at Union Theological Seminary (New York) in spring 2023.

In awarding the Prize, one of the jury members observed: “This syllabus is masterful in its organization and in its scope. It is no small feat to teach a transnationally focused course, while critically thinking about the lived experiences, practices, communities and doctrines of a faith. The course at once invites students to learn about dominant stereotypes about Buddhists and thus complicates their understanding of what Buddhism looks like (racially and in practice). I am very impressed by the array of topics and the material. And I wish I could take the course! Because of its clear presentation and its breadth, the syllabus offers specialists and non-specialists alike a mode to learn more about LGBTQ (and straight) histories and theologies informing Buddhism in the Americas.

The Prize-winning syllabus is [posted at this link](#) on the LGBTQ-RAN website.

Vesely-Flad’s submission was one of six received for the [2023 Educational Resource Prize](#). Vesely-Flad is the third recipient of the Prize which LGBTQ-RAN initiated in 2021 to honor scholars and teachers who develop curricular and instructional materials for the teaching of LGBTQ+ religious history at all levels of education from primary to higher education, as well as in congregational or community settings. The Prize is intended to support and amplify the development of these educational resources and to make excellent resources available by publishing them on the LGBTQ-RAN website. Submissions for next year’s LGBTQ-RAN Educational Resource Prize must be

postmarked or received electronically by June 30, 2024. Complete information on submission guidelines for the Prize can be found here: www.lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/educational-resource-prize-guidelines

The [LGBTQ Religious Archives Network](https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/) is a ground-breaking venture to preserve the history of LGBTQ religious movements around the world. It has three primary purposes: a) to assist LGBTQ religious leaders and groups in determining how best to preserve their records and papers in appropriate repositories; b) to provide an electronic information clearinghouse for these archival collections and other historical data about LGBTQ religious history; and c) to encourage research and study of LGBTQ religious history. Learn more about LGBTQ-RAN at its website: <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/>

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