

LGBT Religious History: Queering the Spirit

Professor: Elizabeth Pérez

[Abridged for use as LGBTQ-RAN Educational Resource]

Course description and objectives

This course offers the opportunity to examine religion as experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender/transsexual people. It adopts a comparative historical perspective in considering the multiplicity of LGBTQIA+ religious identities that have existed and continue to thrive around the world. It also traces the emergence of gender categories and norms in a range of different societies (beginning with our own, in the unit “Inventing Sexuality”). Course readings include autobiographical, anthropological, sociological, and theological sources so as to paint most vibrant picture possible of LGBTQIA+ religious life. Special analytical attention is paid to traditions in which lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender/transsexual people have been privileged as ritual specialists (such as healers and trance mediums) and community leaders.

By the end of the quarter, I hope that you will have gained some appreciation for 1) the diversity of LGBTQIA+ peoples’ religious commitments and practices; 2) the dynamic relationship between scriptural texts and their human interpreters; 3) the role that ritual plays in mediating between sexually minoritized groups and the institutions to which they belong; 4) the way that authoritative religious narratives and performances combine to naturalize gendered behavior; and 5) the significance of sacred spaces as sites of resistance. I also hope that you will have had fun, and found a space for intellectual exploration in our classroom.

Requirements

1. You are expected to **attend regularly** and **finish assigned readings *before class***.
2. You must **obtain reading assignments** via Gauchospace (and print them out, if possible). You should **bring the reading for the day with you to class in hard copy or on a flat tablet device**.
3. I ask that you **inform me beforehand of any absences**; more than 2 unexcused absences will result in the loss of a 3rd of a letter grade for every additional class missed.

4. You are urged to **contribute to class discussions**. Come prepared to share your impressions of the material. The quality of your contribution overall will be determined by:

- a) Frequency and relevance of your verbal comments.
- b) Preparation for class, as expressed in knowledgeable references made to the contents of assigned readings.
- c) Ability to comprehend, communicate, and critically reflect on the themes and theses of the assigned readings.
- d) Punctuality. (Snooze=lose.)

5. You must agree to complete the following assignments:

- 1) **Four** discussion questions or blog-like posts about the readings, to be posted in the Gauchospace Forum [20% of grade]
- 2) One **midterm assignment**, due at the midpoint of the quarter [20% of grade]
- 3) **Four** short writing exercises *of the six* posted on Gauchospace, due by the beginning of class time on specific dates [20% of grade]
- 4) One **creative “unessay”**: a poem (ode or song lyrics) or other art project (such as a painting, sculpture, collage, comic strip, or game) inspired by the class materials (adapted from Emily Suzanne Clark’s “Unessay” project, with instructions to follow), **due at the end of the quarter** [20% of grade]

Your final grade will be decided according to the following components:

Attendance/participation: 20%

Discussion questions, midterm assignment, writing exercises,

& creative “unessay”: 80%

If you have any issues—*ranging from shyness/introversion or speaking in front of a group to a disability*—that could prevent you from achieving your desired grade in the course based on the grading components above, please make an appointment to see me at the start of the quarter. We can create a plan then to ensure your success.

Diversity & Inclusion Statement[*]

I would like to create a learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors students' identities (including race/ethnicity, class, gender/sexuality, religion, and dis/ability). To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official school records, please let me know!
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please speak with me about this during office hours. I want to be a resource for you.

I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. Some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions. Please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own.

Student Needs

Students who may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to talk with me before the third week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Disabled Students Program (DSP) office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

1. Religious Observances: Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that fall during the term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with participation in the course, please come speak with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations.

2. Food Security and Calfresh: If you are facing any challenges securing food or housing, and believe this may affect your performance in the class, you are urged to meet with a Food Security and Calfresh Advocate, who is aware of the broad variety of resources that UCSB has to offer (see their drop-in hours at food.ucsb.edu).

3. Statement on sexual harassment: UCSB does not tolerate sexual harassment/sexual violence, which is prohibited by University policy and state and federal law. The Title IX Compliance and Sexual Harassment Policy Compliance Office (TIX/SHPC) provides

assistance in preventing and resolving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment/sexual violence and gender discrimination. (<https://oeosh.ucsb.edu/titleix/>)

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I want to ensure that students feel they can speak to me, but I also want students to be informed that I have a **mandatory reporting responsibility** related to my role as a professor. I am **required** to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on UCSB's campus or in the community.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is when a writer deliberately passes off another's words or ideas without acknowledging their source. For example, turning another's work as your own is plagiarism. Plagiarized assignments (including copying of a friend's homework) will receive a grade of 0 and may result in additional disciplinary action. You can view the university's policy on student conduct at http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/Regulations/student_conduct.aspx.

Land Acknowledgment

I would like to respectfully acknowledge that UCSB is on the traditional homelands of their original and current caretakers: the Chumash and Shmuwich (Barbareño).

Schedule of Required Readings, Videos, & Optional Materials[†]

Mon. 3/28 **No class**

Wed. 3/30 **Introduction:** Meet & greet, syllabus overview

Discussion of Peppermint and Cazwell video for [“BLEND”](#)

Mon. 4/4 **What is Religion?**

Bruce Lincoln, "[Theses on Method.](#)" *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 17 (2005): 8–10.

Russell T. McCutcheon, "[Religion: Overview](#)"

Claudia Schippert, "[Queer Theory and the Study of Religion.](#)" *Rever* 5, no. 4 (2005): 90–99.

Wed. 4/6 **Inventing Sexuality**

Emily Martin, "[The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles.](#)" *Signs* 16, no. 3 (1991): 485–501.

Paolo Frassanito & Benedetta Pettorini, "[Pink and Blue: The Color of Gender.](#)" *Child's Nervous System* 24, no. 8 (2008): 881–82.

[Optional] Gayle Rubin, "[Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality](#)"

[Optional] Gayle Rubin, "[Blood under the Bridge: Reflections on 'Thinking Sex'](#)"

PBS Origins video: "[Why was Pink for Boys and Blue for Girls?](#)"

[NOTE: STARTING TODAY, YOU WILL SEE OPTIONAL READINGS & VIDEOS POSTED ON THE GAUCHOSPACE WEBSITE FOR EVERY CLASS SESSION—FOR ADDITIONAL CONTEXT & ENRICHMENT—IN ADDITION TO THE VIDEOS SHOWN DURING LECTURES]

Mon. 4/11 **Taste the Rainbow: What is LGBT (& MOGII & Queer)?**

Loraine Hutchins, "[Making Bisexuals Visible.](#)" *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*, ed. Megan Springate (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2016), 1–33.

Kara Thompson, "[Transsexuals, Transvestites, Transgender People, and Cross-Dressers.](#)" *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History in America*, ed. Marc Stein, vol. 3 (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004), 203–8.

Anastassia Walker, [“The Word ‘Cisgender’: An Unlikely Semantic Revolutionary”](#) at huffingtonpost.com (10 July 2016)

[“The Alphabet Soup of Identity from LGBTIQAP to XYZ”](#)

iHeart Media: [“5 LGBTQ Riots Before Stonewall”](#)

Clip from Susan Stryker’s 2005 documentary, [“Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton’s Cafeteria”](#)

“Screaming Queens” [full documentary](#) (34:24 to 36:50, 42:38 to 46:40 most relevant to class)

[LGBT+ History by the Decades: Stonewall](#)

[Trans Oral History Project: Miss Major on Stonewall](#)

Christianity

Wed. 4/13 **Here & “Queer” Way Back When**

Judith M. Bennett, [“‘Lesbian-Like’ and the Social History of Lesbianisms,”](#) *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9, no. 1/2 (2000): 1–24.

[Optional] Martha Vicinus, [“‘They Wonder to Which Sex I Belong’: The Historical Roots of the Modern Lesbian Identity,”](#) *Feminist Studies* 18, no. 3 (1992): 467–97.

[Optional] YouTube video: [“Being Gay the Medieval Way! | Homosexuality During the Middle Ages...”](#) with Dr. James Wade, Girton College, University of Cambridge

[Optional] Audre Lorde, [“The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,”](#) in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Freedom, CA: Crossing, 1984).

Mon. 4/18 **How “the West” Went Straight**

Deborah Miranda, [“Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish California,”](#) *GLQ* 16, nos. 1/2 (2010): 253–84.

Robert Beachy, [“The German Invention of Homosexuality.”](#) *Journal of Modern History* 82, no. 4 (2010): 801–38.

[L. Frank Manriquez Oral History](#)

[L Frank Manriquez – WisdomVR](#)

{clip about on Paragraph 175 shown in class} [“The Story of the Gay Holocaust”](#) (documentary)

[Optional] Jane Ward, [“Dude-Sex: White Masculinity and ‘Authentic’ Heterosexuality Among Dudes Who Have Sex with Dudes.”](#) *Sexualities* 11 (2008): 414–34.

[Optional] Enze Han and Joseph O’Mahoney, [“The British colonial origins of anti-gay laws.”](#) *The Washington Post*, October 30, 2014

[Optional] Edward Carpenter, [The Intermediate Sex: A Study of Some Transitional Types of Men and Women](#) (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1908), 39 (“The Homogenic Attachment”) to 53; 107 (“The Place of the Uranian in Society”) to 124.

[Optional] [Video story](#) by Annikki Heinemann, Anna Piltz, and Julia Wilczok on the Albanian “burneshas,” “sworn virgins” who take a vow of chastity and wear masculine clothing in order to live as men.

Wed. 4/20

Pre- & Ex-Gay: Praying It Away[‡]

Michelle A. Abate, [“Learning How to Be the Boy or Girl You Are’: Me Tarzan, You Jane, the Crusade to ‘Cure’ Pre-Homosexual Children, and the New Face of the Ex-Gay Movement in the United States.”](#) *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 7, no. 3 (2014): 534–55.

Tanya Erzen, [“Sexual Healing: Self–help and Therapeutic Christianity in the Ex-Gay Movement,”](#) in Linda L. Barnes, and Susan Starr Sered, eds., *Religion and Healing in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 265–80.

“[Queering the Map](#): a community generated counter-mapping platform for digitally archiving LGBTQ2IA+ experience in relation to physical space. The platform provides an interface to collaboratively record the cartography of queer life...”

That Theology Teacher: [“Queer Theory & Gender Roles in Early Christianity”](#)

VICE Asia: [“Why Some Countries Still Punish Gay People”](#) {shown from .41 in class}

[Optional] Jeff Sharlet, [“Straight Man’s Burden: The American Roots of Uganda’s Anti-Gay Persecutions.”](#) *Harper’s Magazine* (September 2010): 36–48.

[Optional] Miriam Berger, [“British Colonial Era Anti-Sodomy Laws Still Reign Around the World.”](#) *Buzzfeed News*, December 11, 2013

[Optional] [“Pink for Girls, Blue for Boys - why do we gender toys?”](#) | BBC Ideas

Judaism

Mon. 4/25 Trans-formative & Intersex Experience

Rabbi Elliot Kukla, [“Terms for Gender Diversity in Classical Jewish Texts.”](#) 2006; Rabbi Elliot Kukla, [“A Created Being of Its Own: Toward a Jewish Liberation Theology for Men, Women and Everyone Else.”](#) 1–9; and Rabbi Elliot Rose Kukla and Reuben Zellman, [“Created by the Hand of Heaven: Making Space for Intersex Jews.”](#) 1–4 [posted as one PDF].

Joy Ladin, [“Torah in Transition.”](#) 1–9.

{Trigger warning for description of self-harm} Abby Stein, [“Ultra-Orthodox and Trans: ‘I Prayed to God to Make Me a Girl.’”](#) *BBC News*, April 26, 2020

POPSUGAR video: [“Meet Abby Stein, the First Out Transgender Woman Who Grew Up Hasidic”](#)

TODAY Show interview video: [“Transgender Woman Chronicles Journey From Rabbi To Her True Self”](#)

[Optional] Debra Nussbaum Cohen, [“‘Gender Began Punching Me in the Face’: How a Hasidic Rabbi Came Out as Trans Woman.”](#) *Haaretz* (Feb 17, 2017)

Wed. 4/27 Jewish Lesbians: A Seat at the Table?

Sonia Zylberberg, [“Oranges and Seders: Symbols of Jewish Women’s Wrestlings.”](#) *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women’s Studies & Gender Issues* 5: (5763/2002), 148–71.

Chabad Sociologist Video: [Susannah Heschel recounts the origin story behind the custom of adding an orange to the Passover Seder plate](#)

“Trembling Before G-d” (documentary), [long clip](#)

“[Object Lesson: The Passover Seder Plate.](#)” with culinary historian and author Michael Twitty & curator of Judaica Abigail Rapoport

BimBam: [“What is Rosh Chodesh? Intro to the Monthly Jewish Holiday”](#)

ELI Talks with Sarah Michal Waxman: [“Rosh Chodesh: A Guide to the Cycles of Our Lives”](#)

“[Angela Buchdahl: Kimchi on the Seder Plate](#)”: “Rabbi Angela Buchdahl remembers the wonderful cultural blending of her [Korean and Jewish] childhood home, and reflects that Judaism has always taken elements from the cultures around it.”

Islam

Mon. 5/2 “Transgender–Similar” Experience in Bangladesh & India

Adnan Hossain, [“Beyond Emasculation: Being Muslim and Becoming Hijra in South Asia.”](#) *Asian Studies Review* 36 (2012): 495–513.

Gender Spectrum: [“Understanding Gender: Narratives of Hijras in Bangladesh”](#)

Refinery 29: [“India’s Transgender Community: The Hijra”](#) {shown in class: 1:55 to 5:01}

[Optional] Serena Nanda, [“The Hijras of India: Cultural and Individual Dimensions of an Institutionalized Third Gender.”](#) *Journal of Homosexuality* 11, no. 3–5: 35–54.

[Optional] Janice Boddy, [Civilizing Women: British Crusades in Colonial Sudan](#) (2018) (on the disparate worlds of British colonial officers & the Muslim Sudanese people they sought to remake into modern imperial subjects)

[Optional] [“Transgenders \[sic\]: Pakistan’s Open Secret”](#) (see 5:25 to 13:23 for more on teacher/disciple relationships)

Writing Exercise: Consider the distinction between hijras as either janana (“non-emasculated”) or chibry. What are the specific ritual functions of each group? How do skill/experience (rather than anatomy) define hijra identity? (Upload pdf., 1-3 pgs.)

Wed. 5/4 Transsexuality in Iran & Malaysia

Afsaneh Najmabadi, [“Transing and Transpassing across Sex–Gender Walls in Iran.”](#) *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 36, No. ¾ (2008): 23–42.

Joseph N. Goh, [“*Mak Nyah* Bodies as Sacred Sites: Uncovering the Queer Body–Sacramentality of Malaysian Male–to–Female Transsexuals.”](#) *CrossCurrents* 62, no. 4 (2012): 512–21.

[“BBC World-Iran’s ‘sex-change’ solution”](#) (not the best documentary, but noteworthy for masculine-of-center representation at 26:39 to 29:03 and 37:37 to 40:43)

VICE on HBO: [“Transsexuals of Iran”](#) (at 14:40)

The Full Frontal TV: [“What It’s Like: Transgender Men in Malaysia”](#)

cilosmy: [“Malaysian Trans men answer burning questions from FB”](#)

Docu: [“Growing Seed: A Malaysian Transgender Story”](#)

Local Indigenous Traditions

Mon. 5/9 Spirit Wives in Burma: Nat Kadaws

Ward Keeler, [“Shifting Transversals: Trans Women’s Move from Spirit Mediumship to Beauty Work in Mandalay.”](#) *Ethnos* 81, no. 5: 792–820.

Nick Baker, [“How Myanmar’s Paranormal Spirit Wives Escape LGBTQ Persecution.”](#) *Vice* (October 23, 2017)

Brown University: [“Buddhist Sexual Ethics: The Ancient Textual Tradition and its Modern Relevance”](#) with Jose Cabezon

[“Nat Kadaw: Empowered Change”](#) short documentary

[Optional] [“Friends in High Places,”](#) documentary about “nat worship in Myanmar (formerly Burma) despite the wide spread of Buddhism and devastating military dictatorship.”

Writing Exercise: Why have gay, bisexual, and trans people customarily been excluded from ordination as Buddhist monks? Conversely, why are gay men and trans women privileged as both “spirit wives” & beauticians in Buddhist Burma? (Upload pdf., 1-3 pgs.)

Wed. 5/11 “Two-Spirit” Experience[§]

John R. Sylliboy, [“Using L’nuwey Worldview to Conceptualize Two-spirit.”](#) *Antistasis* 9 (no. 1): 96–116.

[“Two-Spirit - A Movement Born in Winnipeg”](#): “Dr. Myra Laramée...of Fisher River First Nation discusses what it means to be Two-Spirit, as well as the term’s history and origin.”

[“A Place in the Middle’: Hawaii’s Transgender Curriculum,”](#) featuring Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu (Kumu Hina)[**]

[“Leitis in Waiting”](#) documentary trailer: “The story of Joey Mataele and the Tonga leitis, an intrepid group of indigenous transgender women fighting a rising tide of religious fundamentalism and intolerance in their South Pacific Kingdom.”

[Optional] Kai Pyle, [“Naming and Claiming Recovering Ojibwe and Plains Cree Two-Spirit Language,”](#) *TSQ* 5, no. 4 (2018): 574–88.

[Optional] Carolyn Epple, [“Coming to Terms with Navajo ‘Nádleehí’: A Critique of ‘Berdache,’ ‘Gay,’ ‘Alternate Gender,’ and ‘Two Spirit,’”](#) *American Ethnologist* 25, no. 2 (1998): 267–90.

Writing Exercise: How have the terms used for “Two-Spirit” people changed over time? What are the meanings of “Two-Spirit” among Mi’kmaq and/or in Ojibwe and Plains Cree language [if you did the optional reading for this session]? (Upload pdf., 1-3 pgs.)

Mon. 5/16 Mexican Muxes

Alfredo Mirandé, [“The Muxes of Juchitán: A Preliminary Look at Transgender Identity and Acceptance,”](#) *California Western International Law Journal* 42: no. 2 (2012): 509–40.

[“Blossoms of Fire” documentary trailer](#)

National Geographic: [“Third Gender: An Entrancing Look at Mexico’s Muxes”](#)

[“Muxes: auténticas, intrépidas y buscadoras de peligro,” Parte 4](#) at .33 and 11:44

[“Muxes: auténticas, intrépidas y buscadoras de peligro,” Parte 6](#) at 13:11

[“Iguana Stew with Mexico’s Third Gender: MUNCHIES Guide to Oaxaca”](#)

Writing Exercise: What is the muxes’ place in Juchitán’s social, economic, & religious landscape? What positions/professions do they occupy? What aspects of indigenous culture have enabled them to retain the power they have today? (Upload pdf., 1-3 pages)

The Black Church & Afro–Diasporic Traditions

Wed. 5/18 Adodis, Oremi, & More in Afro–Cuban Lucumí[††]

Salvador Vidal–Ortiz, [“Sexuality and Gender in Santería: LGBT Identities at the Crossroads of Santería Religious Practices and Beliefs.”](#) in *Gay Religion*, ed. Scott Thumma and Edward R. Gray (Boston Way Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2005), 115–37.

Miguel “Willie” Ramos, [“Afro–Cuban Orisha Worship.”](#) in *Santería Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art*, ed. Arturo Lindsay (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 56–74.

Writing Exercise: What are some of the struggles faced by trans people in the Lucumí/Santería tradition? What cultural forces stand in the way of their full participation in this and other “gay-friendly” Afro-Diasporic traditions? (Upload pdf., 1-3 pgs.)

Mon. 5/23 To Be Black & Gay in the U S of A[‡‡]

Yvette Flunder, [“Church Interlude II: Healing Oppression Sickness.”](#) in *Queer Christianities: Lived Religion in Transgressive Forms*, ed. Mark Larrimore, Kathleen Talvacchia, and Michael Pettinger (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 115–24.

E. Patrick Johnson, [“Church Sissies: Gayness and the Black Church”](#) in *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South, an Oral History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 182–255.

Ashon T. Crawley, [“I Grew Up Afraid. Lil Nas X’s ‘Montero’ Is the Lesson I Needed.”](#) *National Public Radio* (April 14, 2021)

[“Pouring Tea: Black Gay Men Of The South Tell Their Tales.”](#) E. Patrick Johnson’s one-person show performing monologues of interviews from *Sweet Tea*

Lil Nas X, [MONTERO \(Call Me By Your Name\) \(Official Video\)](#)

[Optional] [“No Fats, No Femmes” documentary intro: An experimental performance piece using Mark Aguhar’s “Litanies to My Heavenly Brown Body.”](#)

[Optional] Daryl White and O. Kendall White, Jr., [“Queer Christian Confessions: Spiritual Autobiographies of Gay Christians.”](#) *Culture and Religion* 5, no. 2 (2004): 203–17.

[Optional] Jem Aswad, [“Kendrick Lamar’s ‘Auntie Diaries’ Is a Powerful, Genre-Shifting Statement on Transphobia.”](#) *Variety* (May 13, 2022)

Wed. 5/25 Haitian Vodou

Omise’ke Natasha Tinsley, [“Songs for Ezili: Vodou Epistemologies of \(Trans\) gender.”](#) *Feminist Studies* 37, no. 2 (2011): 417–36.

Beenish Ahmed, [“Queer Haitians Find a Refuge in Vodou.”](#) *The Advocate* (October 31, 2016)

[“Of Men and Gods \(*Des Hommes et Dieux*\).”](#) documentary, directed by Anne Lescot and Laurence Magloire (2002)

[Optional] Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, [“Serving the Lwa”](#) in *Afro-Caribbean Religions: An Introduction to Their Historical, Cultural, and Sacred Traditions* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010), 74–91.

[Optional] Elizabeth Pérez, [“‘I Got Voodoo, I Got Hoodoo’: Ethnography and Its Objects in Disney’s *The Princess and the Frog*.”](#) *Material Religion* (2021) [proofs].

MON. 5/30 MEMORIAL DAY, NO CLASS SESSION [\$\$]

[Optional] Rachel Aroesti, [“It was like a ceiling fell in’: the women whose lives have been saved by Gentleman Jack.”](#) *The Guardian* (May 23, 2022)

Wed. 6/1 “Take Me to Church”: Dance Floor as Sanctuary

Jafari Sinclair Allen, [“For ‘the Children’ Dancing the Beloved Community.”](#) *Souls* 11, no. 3: 311–26.

River Ocean feat. La India, [“Love & Happiness’ \(Yemeya \[sic\] Y Ochun\)”](#)

Kenny Bobien, [“I Shall Not Be Moved”](#)

[Sister Rosetta Tharpe Documentary](#) (2011) at 36:20

BET: [“The Story Behind The Ballroom Scene & The Safe Space It Presents”](#)

The Philadelphia Inquirer: [“LEGENDARY: 30 Years of Philly Ballroom”](#)

[“St. Louis Ballroom.”](#) featuring Spirit Ebony; emcee: Meko Lee Burr

[“Paris Is Burning”](#) (with Hebrew subtitles); *Shade* at 33:22

[“Re\(s\)parations -Breathing With Orisha”](#) by Kiire Wellness (Baba Oludaré)

[Optional] [“The Ballroom Pentecostal Video Art Church of Minister Akins”](#) (September 1, 2015)

Writing Exercise: Analyze the space of the Black queer club (as explored by Jafari Sinclair Allen) in terms of the “cathartic vulnerability” it has offered. In what ways has the dance floor promoted this type of healing? (Upload pdf., 1-3 pgs.)

[*] This section is adapted from

<https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/statements>

[†] The video links are for clips shown in class—not viewed beforehand by students—unless otherwise noted.

[‡] In 2018, the course was honored to have KC Slack, MDiv, a Unitarian Universalist/Pagan scholar/activist (scholar, artist, activist) and spiritual leader, as a guest speaker.

[§] In 2018, the course was honored to host Julian Talamantez Brolaski, a Two-Spirit and transgender poet and musician of mixed Mescalero and Lipan Apache, Latin@, and European heritages, as a guest speaker.

[**] The video selections for this May lecture were inspired by Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Instructors are urged to find materials that tie in with heritage months or holidays to diversify the curriculum and enhance the relevance of the sessions for BIPOC.

[++] In 2022, the course was honored to host as a guest speaker (via Zoom) R. Cielo Cruz, a writer, parent, and social justice movement leader with over 20 years of experience with numerous organizations in the struggle for racial justice, lgbtq liberation, and immigrant rights.

[‡‡] An “Easter egg” was included at the point in 2022: “If you have read the syllabus to this point by noon on March 30, email me to receive one writing assignment credit!”

[§§] On the following week in 2022, the course co-hosted a guest speaker (with another of the instructor’s classes) via Zoom, Timothy R. Landry, a Trinity College Associate Professor, award-winning author, and anthropologist, on the topic, “Life as a Queer Witch: When the Pagan Is Political.”