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Cur Deus Homo[sexual]: The Queer Incarnation

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What relevance does the doctrine of incarnation—that is, the belief that God became human in the person of Jesus Christ—have for queer people?¹ For many queer theologians, the significance of the incarnation is centered upon *flesh*; that is, the Johannine notion of the Word becoming flesh, or “*ho logos egeneto sarx*” (Jn 1:14). In other words, the incarnation is significant because it is God’s affirmation of the fundamental goodness of human flesh, or *sarx*, and this is reflected in the writings of queer theologians about the fundamental goodness of queer sexualities and queer gender identities.

One place where queer theologians have fallen short, however, is writing about the experiences of the full range of queer people, and especially queer people of color. That is, although queer theologians have been quite successful in terms of arguing for the goodness of *queer* flesh, they have been much less successful in terms of addressing the significance of *racialized* flesh. That is, the significance of queer bodies of color are largely overlooked or ignored in most queer theological writings. To this end, this chapter reviews the works of a number of queer theologians of color and examines how such works might help to create a fuller understanding of queer incarnation.

The title of this chapter is a play on Anselm of Canterbury’s essay *Cur Deus Homo*, or “Why God Became Human.” The purpose of this essay is to explore the queer incarnation, or “Why God Became Homo[sexual].”

The first part of this chapter focuses on the incarnation and flesh, or *sarx*, and how queer theologians have affirmed the goodness of human flesh, particularly with respect to queer sexualities and queer gender identities. The second part of this chapter focuses on the incarnation in the context of racialized flesh and the bodies of queer people of color. In so doing, it draws upon the theological and spiritual writings of queer theologians of color. Finally, the third part of this chapter concludes with some reflections on the postcolonial notion of hybridity, and how this concept might help in terms of constructing a fuller understanding of queer incarnation for all of humanity.

THE INCARNATION AND QUEER FLESH

The doctrine of incarnation traditionally involves abstract questions about the being of Jesus Christ and the relationship between his human and divine natures.² For example, the central theological question at the First Council of Nicaea (325 CE) was whether, in light of the incarnation, Jesus Christ was truly God; that is, whether he was in fact both fully human and fully divine. The central question at the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) was similarly abstract; it dealt with the precise relationship between Jesus Christ's humanity and divinity. The council concluded that Jesus Christ's human and divine natures both existed in one person, yet "without confusion or change, [and] without division or separation."³

This movement toward theological abstraction—that is, away from reflecting upon the concrete, physical body of Christ—is particularly ironic in light of the fact that both of the Greek and Latin words for "incarnation" are literally translated as "enfleshment." In Greek, the word for becoming incarnate is *sarkōthenta*, which is derived from *sarx*, or flesh. Similarly, in Latin, the term for becoming incarnate is *incarnatus est*, which is derived from *carō*, or flesh.⁴

Queer theologians have done a particularly good job in terms of resisting this trend toward abstraction. Instead, these theologians have gone back to the original notion of flesh with respect to the doctrine of incarnation. Many of these theologians—and especially gay male theologians from a Roman Catholic background—have written about the need to acknowledge the full embodiment of Jesus Christ, including questions about his sexuality.

For example, the gay theologian and Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) pastor Robert Shore-Goss has written extensively about the tradition of homodevotion to Jesus Christ. This tradition presumes

that Jesus Christ—as one who was fully human—was a sexual being. In his provocative book *Queering Christ: Beyond Jesus Acted Up*, Shore-Goss argues that “the scandal of the incarnation is not that God became flesh but that God became fully human and actively sexual.”⁵ Shore-Goss contends that we must ask taboo questions such as “Did Jesus have an erection? Did he have wet dreams? Did Jesus have an orgasm?” And, if so, “Orgasm with whom?”⁶

The gay Canadian religious scholar Donald Boisvert has written about the importance of uncovering the genitals of Jesus Christ in his book *Sanctity and Male Desire: A Gay Reading of Saints*. Boisvert asks, “How many Christian gay men have not glanced at an image of the crucified or dead Christ, and silently asked themselves what this penis looked like?” For Boisvert, the image of the penis of the naked crucified Christ—such as the “imposing rock penis hanging in view of all” in the Sagrada Familia temple in Barcelona, Spain—is significant because it “reaffirms, in the most visible and human way possible, the complete gift of the Creator through the Incarnation.”⁷

Like Shore-Goss and Boisvert, the gay religious scholar Mark Jordan has written about the importance of affirming the full embodiment of Jesus Christ, genitals and all. Jordan notes the irony of the fact that even though Christian theology is focused on a divine incarnation, almost all depictions of the corpus of Jesus Christ on a crucifix—no matter how realistic—have erased the genitals of Christ. According to Jordan, these “alternate bodies for Jesus the Christ” are in fact “mutilated” corpses that prevent Jesus’ body from being “whole, either in death or in life.”⁸

Other gay men have written about literally seeing Christ in their sexual partners and/or taking on the identity of Christ themselves in their sexual encounters. For example, Jeff Mann writes about one sexual encounter in which his partner became his “Christ in the Candlelight” and how Mann “ate his smooth, perfect butt—white as a communion wafer” and “fucked him for a long time.”⁹ In another encounter, Mann writes about how he was the bottom and thus became “the Christos, naked, anointed with my own sweat, hands bound behind me ... grunting and helpless.”¹⁰

Gay men are not the only persons, however, who have affirmed the importance of flesh in their writings about the incarnated Christ. For example, the lesbian English theologian Elizabeth Stuart has argued that Christians should be “promiscuous with their love”—that is, “taking our bodies to other people’s bodies”—in the same way that “Jesus of Nazareth gave himself bodily” in the Eucharist.¹¹ Similarly, the lesbian ethicist Kathy Rudy has focused on the Body of Christ and how the

members of that body are called to a sexual ethic of hospitality that could include “radical sex communities” that engage in “communal living and communal sex.”¹² Finally, the lesbian Roman Catholic religion scholar Jane Grovijahn has argued in her essay “Reclaiming the Power of Incarnation” that the image of God, or *Imago Dei*, must be understood as “God-between-my-legs.” According to Grovijahn, if God cannot be a part of her body and sexuality, “then the Incarnation is a lie.”¹³

The transgender theologian Justin Tanis has focused upon flesh by drawing parallels between the resurrected body of Jesus Christ and the experiences of trans people who have come out of sexual reassignment surgery. Like the resurrected Jesus Christ, the bodies of trans people who have transitioned are “both the same and different.” That is, the transitioned bodies are not “wholly different,” but are instead “transfigured and resurrected.” For Tanis, sexual reassignment surgery is a way of “participating in the resurrection and of being born again.”¹⁴

Like Tanis, the Argentinean queer theologian Martín Hugo Córdova Quero has argued that theological reflections about the incarnation must include transgender and intersex people. Córdova Quero notes that although many Christians view the incarnation in salvific terms (i.e., they profess that God has saved humanity through the incarnation), “the reality is that some humans are more worthy than others of that salvation.”¹⁵

Finally, the queer religion scholar Virginia Mollenkott has written about the intersex significance of the incarnation. According to Mollenkott, the doctrine of the virgin birth means that Jesus Christ was conceived without any Y chromosomes (which are provided only by sperm). Thus, even though Jesus Christ is traditionally understood as having the body of a man, he lacks the usual male XY chromosomes and has instead XX chromosomes. This means that Jesus Christ can be understood as an intersex person.¹⁶

Interestingly, none of the foregoing reflections has affirmed the traditional theological understanding of the incarnation as the only means by which a fallen and sinful humanity is redeemed. This traditional understanding can be traced back to the 11th-century medieval theologian Anselm of Canterbury. In his book *Cur Deus Homo* (i.e., “Why God Became Human”), Anselm argued that the incarnation had to occur because no human being could ever repay the infinite debt owed to God as a result of Adam’s and Eve’s disobedience and Fall. In other words, the incarnation of Jesus Christ had to happen because only a person who is both divine and human (i.e., a God-human) could repay this infinite debt.¹⁷

Instead, queer theologians have understood the significance of the incarnation—either explicitly or implicitly—in terms of *deification*, or the process of becoming holy like God. In the words of the third-century theologian Athanasius of Alexandria, God “became human [so] that we might become divine.”¹⁸ For example, the theologian Wendy Farley, in her book *Gathering Those Driven Away*, has written about salvation in terms of *theōsis*, which is the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of deification. For Farley, the incarnation is not just about redemption from suffering, but it also “lights the path by which humanity returns to the Divine Eros.”¹⁹ That is, Jesus Christ is a compass or a guide star that directs us to our future eschatological home. And a critical part of coming home for queer people is the theological affirmation of the fundamental goodness of flesh in the incarnation.

Although queer theologians have made a strong connection between the incarnation and queer sexuality through the notion of enfleshment, it remains to be seen whether these ideas can be translated from theory into praxis by actual queer communities of faith. That is, despite the existence of a number of sex-positive practices within the queer community such as the Body Electric School and erotic genital massage,²⁰ or a radically sex-positive ethics as articulated in works such as *The Ethical Slut* and *Radical Ecstasy*,²¹ often times a theology of incarnation is limited to less controversial issues such as equal civil rights or equal access to the sacraments and rites of the church (e.g., holy matrimony and ordination).

Despite the resistance of some queer communities of faith to broadening the range of what is considered to be “normal” sexual practices,²² the connections made by queer theologians between the incarnation and enfleshment can be a helpful way of understanding the radically embodied nature of the incarnation.

THE INCARNATION AND RACIALIZED FLESH

Although queer theologians have done a good job over the past few decades in terms of reclaiming the goodness of sexualized flesh in light of the incarnation, they have been far less successful in terms of reflecting upon—or even giving voice to—the experiences of queer people of color. Although queer theologians of color have been writing about their experiences for nearly two decades, these writings still remain largely on the margins of queer theological discourse.

Race and ethnicity, as we have seen in the proliferation of contextual liberation theologies since the 1960s, is a central part of our enfleshed

identities. Indeed, as the lesbian theologian Laurel Schneider has argued in her influential essay, "What Race Is Your Sex?," the notion of race cannot be separated from notions of sex and sexuality. That is, race, sex, and sexuality are "co-constitutive" qualities that have "utter dependence of one upon the others for meaning and existence."²³ For example, the phrase "gay man" immediately invokes images of whiteness for most people. By contrast, the phrase "gay black man" evokes images of hyper-masculinity, whereas the phrase "gay Asian man" evokes images of hyper-femininity. Race cannot be separated from sex or sexuality.

Furthermore, queer bodies of color experience a profound alienation from both the larger queer community (i.e., with respect to racism), as well as their own communities of origin (i.e., with respect to homophobia and transphobia).²⁴ In other words, queer people of color—and their flesh—become racialized and sexualized signifiers with respect to their communities. Some queer white theologians such as Robert Shore-Goss and Susannah Cornwall have written about the issues faced by queer people of color from a theological perspective.²⁵ It is unfortunate, however, that the great majority of white queer theologians have not focused on the experiences of queer people of color in their writings (whether about incarnation or other theological doctrines).

Although queer white theologies have existed since at least the 1950s—and liberation theologies have existed since the late 1960s—the theological voices of queer people of color did not start to emerge until the early 1990s.²⁶ In 1993, Elias Farajajé-Jones, an avowed gay-identified, bisexual black theologian, published a controversial essay, "Breaking Silence: Toward an In-the-Life Theology," which challenged the Black Church on its homophobia and biphobia, as well as its AIDSphobia during the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.²⁷ In that same year, Renée Hill, a lesbian womanist theologian, published the groundbreaking essay "Who Are We for Each Other?: Sexism, Sexuality and Womanist Theology," which critiqued womanist theologians for failing to address the issue of love between women (sexual or otherwise) in their theological writings.²⁸ Following the publication of Hill's essay, a number of womanist and black feminist theologians and ethicists—including M. Shawn Copeland, Kelly Brown Douglas, Emilie Townes, and Traci West—have written about the importance of challenging the sin of heterosexism in the African American community.²⁹

Since the 1990s, a number of queer African American theological voices have emerged. In 2006, Horace Griffin, a gay African American Episcopal priest and professor at the Pacific School of Religion, published

Their Own Receive Them Not, a book about the homophobia that African American lesbians and gay men continue to face in the Black Church, as well as the emergence of queer black congregations and even denominations.³⁰ And in 2010, Roger A. Sneed, an openly gay African American religious studies scholar at Furman University, published *Representations of Homosexuality*, which documented the experiences of same-gender loving black men and the ways in which traditional black liberation theologies have failed to allow them to speak in their own voices.³¹

Queer Asian American theologians also have engaged in theological reflections on the intersections of race and sexuality. Like queer African American theologians, they have written about the ways in which they have experienced both racism and homophobia from the communities in which they are located. One of the earliest theological works relating to the queer Asian American experience was published in 1996. In that year, Leng Lim published an essay, "Exploring Embodiment," which addressed the intersections of race, sexuality, and spirituality in his life. Lim, who is an ordained Episcopal priest, wrote a series of theological works over the next decade about his experiences as a gay Asian man.³² Eric Law, also a gay Asian American Episcopal priest, wrote about similar themes of racism and homophobia in his 1997 essay "A Spirituality of Creative Marginality."³³

In 2001, I wrote an essay, "Multiplicity and Judges 19," which examined the queer Asian experience of racism and homophobia in light of the nameless concubine in Judges 19 who is gang-raped and then dismembered.³⁴ In my more recent work, such as my 2011 essay "I Am Yellow and Beautiful," I have written about the racism that is experienced by queer Asian men in cyberspace and in the larger white queer community.³⁵ Also, theological writings about the queer Asian experience outside of the United States have started to emerge. In 2010, the Asian feminist theological journal *In God's Image* published a special issue called "Beyond Right and Wrong: Doing Queer Theology in Hong Kong," which featured essays from 11 queer Asian writers and allies from Hong Kong.³⁶

Finally, other ethnic and racial groups have started to write about the intersections of race and sexuality in the context of theology and religious studies. For example, in 2007 the gay Latino theologian Orlando Espín wrote in his book *Grace and Humanness* about the need for Latin@ theologians to break the silence about the Latin@ and black queer communities and to recognize the full humanity of such marginalized communities.³⁷ Despite the rapidly growing population of Latin@s and Hispanic Americans in the United States, much more work still needs to

be done with respect to theological reflection upon the queer Latin@ or Hispanic experience.

As mentioned earlier, even though queer theologians of color have been writing about the intersections of spirituality, sexuality, and race for nearly two decades, the larger queer theological community has remained almost completely silent about these issues. Important anthologies about queer theology such as *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body* contain few references to—not to mention contributions from—queer people of color.³⁸

In sum, there is a growing body of work by queer theologians and religion scholars of color who have written about the significance of both racialized and sexualized flesh, as well as their embodied experiences of racism and homophobia. Despite the focus by many queer white theologians on the significance of flesh and the incarnation, it is troubling that, to date, few queer white theologians have written about these works or the ways in which race and sexuality are inextricably intertwined. Any queer theology of incarnation must take seriously the experiences of queer people of color, both in the United States and around the world.

HYBRIDITY AND THE QUEER INCARNATION

What can be done to expand the notion of queer flesh to include the racialized flesh of queer bodies of color as well as others who are on the margins within the larger queer community? One possibility is to broaden the understanding of queer incarnation by using the postcolonial notion of hybridity. Hybridity refers to the middle or third space between two binary poles. According to the postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha, hybridity is akin to a landing between two floors in a stairwell. It is in this hybrid space that the two binary poles—for example, colonizer and colonized, or gay and straight—are challenged and transformed.³⁹

Interestingly, the incarnation itself can be understood in terms of hybridity. That is, Jesus Christ is the third space between the two poles of humanity and divinity, as well as flesh and spirit. It is in the incarnation that this hybrid being or "*tertium quid*" is created, thus challenging the conventional wisdom that keeps these two poles separate and distinct. In light of the incarnation, Jesus Christ can be understood as a "mediator" or "*mesitēs*" (Heb. 9:15), who brings together humanity and divinity. The mediating function of Jesus Christ is particularly important with respect to Eastern Orthodox doctrine of *theōsis*, in which humanity is deified over the course of salvation history. Jesus Christ, as a hybrid being, brings the

two poles together through the incarnation. To paraphrase Athanasius of Alexandria, God became human so that humans could become divine.

As I have written elsewhere, Christian theology itself can be understood in terms of hybridity. That is, Christian theology is about a love so powerful that it dissolves the natural boundaries that separate binaries such as humanity and divinity, flesh and spirit, temporality and eternity, and so on.⁴⁰ Nowhere is this seen as clearly as in the incarnation, in which the two natures of Jesus Christ (i.e., human and divine) come together in one hybrid person. Not surprisingly, this hybridity threatens the powers and principalities of Jesus' time, and it results in his torture and execution.

Queer theology can also be understood in terms of hybridity. In addition to challenging the binaries of humanity and divinity, queer theology also challenges the false binaries of sexuality and spirituality. In other words, sexuality and spirituality are not polar opposites or mutually exclusive categories. (That is, not all queer people are atheists, and not all people of faith are straight and cisgender.)⁴¹ Rather, sexuality and spirituality come together in the experiences of queer people of faith. As others have noted, sexuality and spirituality are in fact inextricably tied together—in large part because the “rapture of sexual union and the rapture of communion with the divine are strikingly similar in their power and transcendence.”⁴²

Last but not least, queer theology—and the doctrine of incarnation—must challenge the false binaries of sexuality and race. A truly inclusive queer theology—that is, one that acknowledges the bodies of queer people of color—challenges the stereotypes that all queer people are white and that all people of color are straight and cisgender. We must stop seeing sexuality and race as mutually exclusive categories and start seeing them as inextricably intertwined.⁴³

It is in this realm—that is, the incarnational intersections of sexuality and race—that the MCC denomination has brought forth many gifts to the broader world. Many MCC congregations are racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse. The MCC People of African Descent (PAD) group, founded in 1995, is a global network of MCC clergy and lay people of African descent as well as their allies. Over the years, PAD has sponsored many conferences and other events relating to the intersections of sexuality, race, and spirituality.⁴⁴ Queer Asian Spirit, a group that was founded in 2001 by a number of individuals with MCC ties, serves a similar purpose for queer Asians of faith and their allies around the world.⁴⁵

There are also many MCC churches in the two-thirds world, which reflects the true incarnational diversity of queer and racialized flesh,

and which also makes the Body of Christ a multiracial as well as multi-sexual body. In Africa, there are MCC congregations in Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.⁴⁶ In Asia and the Pacific Islands, there are MCC congregations in Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.⁴⁷ And in Latin America, there are MCC congregations in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Venezuela.⁴⁸

In sum, the notion of hybridity can be a useful metaphor for thinking about the doctrine of incarnation. Hybridity not only helps us to understand the incarnation of Jesus Christ as bridging the gap between the divine and the human, but it also helps us to recognize that incarnation is about bridging the gap between sexuality and spirituality, as well as the gap between sexuality and race.

CONCLUSION

I have argued in this chapter that, to date, queer theologians have done a good job in terms of reconnecting the incarnation with the notion of flesh. In particular, the writings by gay male theologians about the sexuality of Jesus Christ—as well as their own sexual attraction to Christ—serve a powerful purpose of reclaiming the goodness of sexuality and queer flesh.

However, I have also argued that, to date, queer theologians have not done as well in terms of acknowledging all of the dimensions of enfleshment. These dimensions include a deeper understanding of the inextricably intertwined relationships between racialized and sexualized flesh, as well as giving voice to the experiences of queer people of color with respect to racism and homophobia.

I conclude by suggesting that the postcolonial notion of hybridity can be a helpful way of thinking about the doctrine of incarnation. Specifically, hybridity challenges all kinds of binaries, including the binary poles of divinity and humanity, spirituality and sexuality, and queerness and race. Because of this, hybridity can help us better understand why God became queer, or, to paraphrase Anselm of Canterbury, *cur Deus homo[sexual]*.

NOTES

1. In this essay, I use the term “queer” as an umbrella term to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and questioning people, as well as their allies. For a discussion of the various uses of the word queer in theological discourse, see Patrick S. Cheng, *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* (New York: Seabury Books, 2011), 2–8.

2. For an anthology of contemporary theological reflections on the incarnation, see Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins, *The Incarnation* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002).
3. For a discussion of the theology of the ecumenical councils, see Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325–787): Their History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1983).
4. Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, 6th ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 2:57.
5. Robert E. Goss, *Queering Christ: Beyond Jesus Acted Up* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2002), 119.
6. *Ibid.*, 113.
7. Donald L. Boisvert, *Sanctity and Male Desire: A Gay Reading of Saints* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004), 176.
8. Mark D. Jordan, *Telling Truths in Church: Scandal, Flesh, and Christian Speech* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), 84–87.
9. Jeff Mann, "Binding the God," in *Queer and Catholic*, ed. Amie M. Evans and Trebor Healey (New York: Routledge, 2008), 65.
10. *Ibid.*, 68.
11. Elizabeth Stuart, *Just Good Friends: Towards a Lesbian and Gay Theology of Relationships* (London: Mowbray, 1995), 213.
12. Kathy Rudy, *Sex and the Church: Gender, Homosexuality, and the Transformation of Christian Ethics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 128.
13. Jane M. Grovijahn, "Reclaiming the Power of Incarnation: When God's Body Is Catholic and Queer (with a Cunt!)," in *Queer and Catholic*, 250.
14. Justin Tanis, *Trans-Gendered: Theology, Ministry, and Communities of Faith* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2003), 142–43.
15. Martín Hugo Córdova Quero, "This Body Trans/Forming Me: Indecencies in Transgender/Intersex Bodies, Body Fascism and the Doctrine of the Incarnation," in *Controversies in Body Theology*, ed. Marcella Althaus-Reid and Lisa Isherwood (London: SCM Press, 2008), 96.
16. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *Omnigender: A Trans-Religious Approach* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2001), 105–7.
17. See Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo* (1098), in *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. Eugene R. Fairweather (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1956), 100–83.
18. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation of the Word of God*, §54, in Norman Russell, *Fellow Workers with God: Orthodox Thinking on Theosis* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2009), 23–24.
19. Wendy Farley, *Gathering Those Driven Away: A Theology of Incarnation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 170. For a discussion of *theosis* in the context of sin and grace, see Patrick S. Cheng, *From Sin to Amazing Grace: Discovering the Queer Christ* (New York: Seabury Books, 2012).
20. Michael Bernard Kelly, *Seduced by Grace: Contemporary Spirituality, Gay Experience and Christian Faith* (Melbourne, Australia: Clouds of Magellan, 2007), 182–86 ("Sex with soul, body and spirit").
21. Dossie Easton and Janet W. Hardy, *The Ethical Slut: A Practical Guide to Polyamory, Open Relationships and Other Adventures*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, 2009); Dossie Easton and Janet W. Hardy, *Radical Ecstasy: SM Journeys to Transcendence* (Oakland, CA: Greenery Press, 2004).

22. For a critique of normalcy within the queer community, see Michael Warner, *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

23. Laurel C. Schneider, "What Race Is Your Sex?," in *Disrupting White Supremacy from Within: White People on What We Need to Do*, ed. Jennifer Harvey, Karin A. Case, and Robin Hawley Gorsline (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004), 142.

24. Patrick S. Cheng, "Gay Asian Masculinities and Christian Theologies," *CrossCurrents* 61, no. 4 (2011): 540–48.

25. Goss, *Queering Christ*, 253; Susannah Cornwall, *Controversies in Queer Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 72–113.

26. For a genealogy of how queer theology has developed since the 1950s, see Cheng, *Radical Love*, 26–42.

27. Elias Farajaje-Jones, "Breaking Silence: Toward an In-the-Life Theology," in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, Volume II, 1980–1992*, ed. James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 139–59. Other works by Farajaje-Jones, now Ibrahim Abdurrahman Farajaje, include "Holy Fuck," in *Male Lust: Pleasure, Power, and Transformation*, ed. Kerwin Kay, Jill Nagle, and Baruch Gould (Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 2000), 327–35.

28. Renee L. Hill, "Who Are We for Each Other?: Sexism, Sexuality and Womanist Theology," in *Black Theology II*, 345–51. Other works by Hill include: "Power, Blessings, and Human Sexuality: Making the Justice Connections," in *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ian T. Douglas and Kwok Pui-lan (New York: Church Publishing, 2001), 191–203; "Rev. Dr. Renee L. Hill," in *A Whosoever Church: Welcoming Lesbians and Gay Men into African American Congregations*, ed. Gary David Comstock (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 189–201; "Disrupted/Disruptive Movements: Black Theology and Black Power 1969/1999," in *Black Faith and Public Talk: Critical Essays on James H. Cone's Black Theology and Black Power*, ed. Dwight N. Hopkins (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 138–49.

29. M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), 78–84; Kelly Brown Douglas, *Sexuality and the Black Church: A Womanist Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 87–108; Emilie M. Townes, "Washed in the Grace of God," in *Violence Against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook*, ed. Carol J. Adams and Marie M. Fortune (New York: Continuum, 1995), 65–67; Traci C. West, *Disruptive Christian Ethics: Where Racism and Women's Lives Matter* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 141–79.

30. Horace L. Griffin, *Their Own Receive Them Not: African American Lesbians and Gays in Black Churches* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2006).

31. Roger A. Sneed, *Representations of Homosexuality: Black Liberation Theology and Cultural Criticism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

32. Leng Leroy Lim, "Exploring Embodiment," in *Boundary Wars: Intimacy and Distance in Healing Relationships*, ed. Katherine Hancock Ragsdale (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1996), 58–77. Other works by Lim include: Leng Lim, Kim-Hao Yap, and Tuck-Leong Lee, "The Mythic-Literalists in the Province of South Asia," in *Other Voices, Other Worlds: The Global Church Speaks Out on Homosexuality*, ed. Terry Brown (New York: Church Publishing, 2006), 58–76; Leng Leroy Lim, "'The Bible Tells Me to Hate Myself': The Crisis in Asian American Spiritual Leadership," *Semeia* 90/91 (2002): 315–22; You-Leng Leroy Lim, "Webs of Betrayal, Webs of Blessings," in *Q&A: Queer in Asian America*, ed. David L. Eng and Alice Y. Hom (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 323–34; Leng Leroy Lim, "Webs of Betrayal,

Webs of Blessing," in *Our Families, Our Values*, 227–41; Leng Leroy Lim, "The Gay Erotics of My Stuttering Mother Tongue," *Amerasia Journal* 22, no. 1 (1996): 172–77.

33. Eric H. F. Law, "A Spirituality of Creative Marginality," in *Que(e)rying Religion: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gary David Comstock and Susan E. Henking (New York: Continuum, 2007), 343–46.

34. Patrick S. Cheng, "Multiplicity and Judges 19: Constructing a Queer Asian Pacific American Biblical Hermeneutic," *Semeia* 90/91 (2002): 119–33.

35. Patrick S. Cheng, "'I Am Yellow and Beautiful': Reflections on Queer Asian Spirituality and Gay Male Cyberculture," *Journal of Technology, Theology, and Religion* 2, no. 3 (2011): 1–21.

36. "Beyond Right and Wrong: Doing Queer Theology in Hong Kong," *In God's Image* 29, no. 3 (2010): 1–80.

37. Orlando O. Espín, *Grace and Humanness: Theological Reflections Because of Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 51–79 ("Humanitas, Identity, and Another Theological Anthropology of (Catholic) Tradition").

38. Gerard Loughlin, ed., *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

39. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 5.

40. Cheng, *Radical Love*, ix–x.

41. The term cisgender refers to people who do not self-identify as transgender.

42. Phil Zukerman and Christel Manning, "Sex and Religion: An Introduction," in *Sex and Religion*, ed. Christel Manning and Phil Zuckerman (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005), 1.

43. Cheng, "Gay Asian Masculinities." Some of my other theological writings on the queer Asian experience include: "A Three-Part Sinfonia: Queer Asian Reflections on the Trinity," *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion* 2, no. 13.9 (2011): 1–23; "Rethinking Sin and Grace for LGBT People Today," in *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, 2nd ed., ed. Marvin M. Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglas (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 105–18; "Galatians," in *The Queer Bible Commentary*, ed. Deryn Guest, Robert E. Goss, Mona West, and Thomas Bobache (London: SCM Press, 2006), 624–29; "Reclaiming Our Traditions, Rituals, and Spaces: Spirituality and the Queer Asian Pacific American Experience," *Spiritus* 6, no. 2 (2006): 234–40. For my book-length discussion on the intersections of race, sexuality, and spirituality, see Patrick S. Cheng, *Rainbow Theology: Bridging Race, Sexuality, and Spirit* (New York: Seabury Books, 2013).

44. See <http://www.mccpad.org> (accessed March 15, 2013).

45. See <http://www.queerasianspirit.org> (accessed March 15, 2013).

46. See <http://mccchurch.org/overview/ourchurches/find-a-church/africa-church-listings> (accessed March 15, 2013).

47. See <http://mccchurch.org/overview/ourchurches/find-a-church/asia-and-pacific-islands-listing> (accessed March 15, 2013).

48. See <http://mccchurch.org/overview/ourchurches/find-a-church/latin-america-church-listing> (accessed March 15, 2013).