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CARIBBEAN REVIEW OF GENDER STUDIES
A Journal of Caribbean Perspectives on Gender and Feminism

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Special Issue - Caribbean Review of Gender Studies

on Spirituality, Religion + Faith

Guest Edited by **Keith E. McNeal + Ponni Arasu**

SEXING THE SPIRIT IN THE REPEATING ISLANDS

CFS:

SCHOLARLY
ARTICLES,
LITERARY

SALON
(POETRY,
SHORT

FICTION,
OTHER)

ARTISTIC +
CREATIVE

WORK
(VISUAL,
PHOTO-

GRAPHIC,
OTHER)

INTERVIEWS +

CONVER-
SATIONS,
BOOK + ART

REVIEWS.



Photo: Abigail Hadeed, Splice Studios 2019, San Juan, Trinidad | Egungun Masquerade at La Venezuela Statue | info@splicett.com

The interdisciplinary study and creative praxis of the Caribbean have long harbored marvelous, critical, revelatory contributions to both Religious Studies and to Gender Studies. And while there are certainly important past interventions that have illuminated interrelations between gender and religion in the region which deserve recognition and remembrance, conversations recognizing the intermeshed relationship between spirituality and gender remain underdeveloped and unrealized. Sex and sexuality even less so. Caribbean creative praxis has been more forthright and searching in this regard, from literary to artistic to performative to activist forms of poesis. Thus Caribbean Studies has much to learn from these works of imagination.

GUEST EDITORS

Keith E. McNeal

(University of Houston)

+

Ponni Arasu

(Independent Scholar)

We invite abstracts and submissions outside of English, across various languages spoken in the Caribbean, for consideration.

Contributions to Caribbean Religious Studies have long illuminated the symbolic, intercultural, sociohistorical, and trans-spatial complexities of spiritual, religious, and ritual praxis over the last five centuries, indeed in ways that have yet to be properly recognized and fully digested by global—and perhaps even Caribbean—thought. The study of religion in the region has documented and analyzed complex dynamisms of diasporic African religiosities and sources of inspiration in dialogical counterpoint with a changing, competing, contested spectrum of Christianities variously tethered across the North Atlantic yet also increasingly further globally entangled. The field of discussion and debate between Christianity and Africanity in spiritual terms also structurally spans a complex hierarchical range of dominant-to-subaltern forms and configurations. Rastafari emerged out of this mix and has become for some the most iconic Caribbean spirituality. The region and its diasporas have hosted several streams of Islam and Muslim spirituality, from earlier Afro-diasporic Islamic streams in the colonial period of sub-Saharan African enslavement to post-Civil Rights Era forms of Black Islam (including but not limited to militant Islamism), as well as traditions of Indo-Caribbean Islam especially prominent in the southern Caribbean. Caribbean religiosity is also enriched and complexified by the presence and contributions of traditions connected to Hinduism, again especially throughout the southern Caribbean, but whose influences and entanglements extend much further than usually recognized (*vis-à-vis* Rastafari, for example). Moreover, worship of the divine feminine differentially cross-cuts all of these religious spaces and cultural boundaries in profound ways, some of which has been explored and illuminated in extant scholarship (such as the complexity of Rastafari and gender made by important womanist and Rastafari feminist contributions), but much remains to be documented and analyzed. Ironically and symptomatically last, but certainly not least, Caribbean Religious Studies have slowly but steadily begun to pay more attention to Indigenous spiritualities and forms of religiosity, which are now overlapping with the study of Maroon religious forms, understood in terms of a historically specific dispensation of Afro-diasporic Indigeneity. Powerful and conventional paradigm-challenging contributions have been made on all of these fronts, stemming from smart, systematic, searching study of Caribbean religious history, raising critical questions concerning space, place, identity, change, hybridity, faith, tradition, community, multi-ethnicity and globalization in rapidly-moving contexts of radical domination and racial terror.

For its part, the study of gender—and later, sexuality—emerged and coalesced later than the precocious and perspicacious field of Caribbean religious studies. Building on earlier milestone studies of kinship and family forms, Caribbean gender and sexuality studies fully emerged in the latter part of the 20th century, owing in no small part to political realignments forged by the women's and feminist movements, as well as queer and trans movements. Caribbean gender studies first focused upon cisgender women and female experience across the lifespan, and then added cis men and the developmental spectrum of male experience into the mix. The complex variability of sexuality and sexual praxis subsequently emerged as explicit areas of empirical attention, now accompanied by newly-evolving contributions concerning expansive and malleable forms of genderqueer and trans experience, expression, and identification.

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This special issue seeks to advance analytical and artistic thinking about sexuality, gender, religion, faith and spirituality in the Caribbean and its diasporas while also inspiring recollections and reviews of any and all relevant forms of intellectual work situated within the region conceptualized in the broadest terms. We welcome empirical research reports and scholarly articles; various forms of literary, artistic and creative work; germane conversations and interviews; as well as reviews of noteworthy art projects and literary and scholarly publications, both past and present. We are open to submissions from a range of epistemological perspectives and philosophical orientations, yet especially interested in contributions inspired by queer feminist analysis and the plethora of paths it opens up for us all.

Indeed, we are attuned to the appalling realities of gender- and sexuality-based violence and encourage critical interrogation of the complex interplay of religion, spirituality, gender and sexualities in order to highlight various forms of power relations and violences that intersect and overlap.

How can we put the study of faith, spirituality and religion, on the one hand, and the study of sexuality and gender, on the other, into deeper, more dynamic, and fruitful conversation with one another at this point halfway through the third decade of the 21st century? What can we also learn from revisiting past experiences, insights, and provocations? What is special, hidden, specific to the Caribbean understood as Ground Zero for the Colonial-Modernist project, and what can the synergistic interdisciplinary study of sexuality, gender, religion, faith and spirituality in this global region reveal about the past, present, and future. The Repeating Island trope appreciates the Caribbean region and its diasporic extensions as a complex, reiterating, fractal assemblage animated by a panoply of shared patterns and structures endlessly counterpointed by a proliferating range of revealing sociohistorical idiosyncrasies, synergies, contingencies, conjunctures and disjunctures. Oriented by this awareness, we seek to foster unconventional and new conversation and analysis on the frontiers, interstices and nodes connecting sex/gender/sexuality and faith/spirituality/religion in this meta-archipelago.

Photo: Keith McNeal 2023, Arouca, Trinidad | Kali Manifestation at Shakti Mandir

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Photo: Keith McNeal 2023, Siparia, Trinidad | La Divina Pastora Statue at Siparia Catholic Church

COMMUNICATIONS WITH CO-EDITORS

When communicating with the co-editors about this special issue, please make sure to address all correspondence to **both coeditors**. Thank you.

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TIMETABLE

2024

- Dec 1:** Abstracts + proposals due.
Dec 15: Notification of acceptances.

2025

- March 15:** Submissions due.
April 15: Editor feedback to contributors.
May 15: Revised submissions due + move to professional review.
July 1: Reviews completed + returned to contributors.
Aug 1: Revised submissions due from contributors.
Sept 1: Final round of editor feedback, revisions, any outstanding issues.
Oct 1: Collection goes to CRGS for layout.
Nov 1: Proofing + publication.

PARAMETERS

Research and scholarly articles should be no more than 10,000 words maximum including footnotes and bibliography.

Reviews of books, artistic work, and so forth should be no more than 2,000 words maximum.

Word count for literary contributions (poetry, fiction, other) and conversations or interviews, as well as amount of space for artistic contributions (visual, videographic, other), are subject to discussion with editors based on content of contribution.

Fortunately, CRGS is an online journal, hence less restricted by conventional length + space constraints of print journals.

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AUTHOR GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Authors wishing to submit material for possible publication in the CRGS should note that CRGS uses as its style guide The Chicago Manual of Style, latest edition. That means all submissions should follow this stylebook's guidelines, particularly with reference to presentation of in-text citations and the list of references. Chicago has two referencing styles. The CRGS uses the author-date citation style, not the notes and bibliography style. Up to date guidelines can be accessed on the CRGS website and from the Editorial Assistant.

SUBMISSION OF BIOS AND PHOTOS

A portrait photo and brief biographical note of not more than 80 words about each author of manuscripts or artists of artwork accepted for publication should be supplied on a separate page. This could include information about location institutional, geographical, publications and/or exhibitions, etc.

ISSUE COVER ARTISTS

A portrait photo and brief biographical note of not more than 80 words about the creator of the cover artwork will be required.

<https://sta.uwi.edu/crgs/artists.asp>

COMMUNICATIONS WITH CRGS

All correspondence or questions regarding submissions for the Caribbean Review of Gender Studies should be addressed to:

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