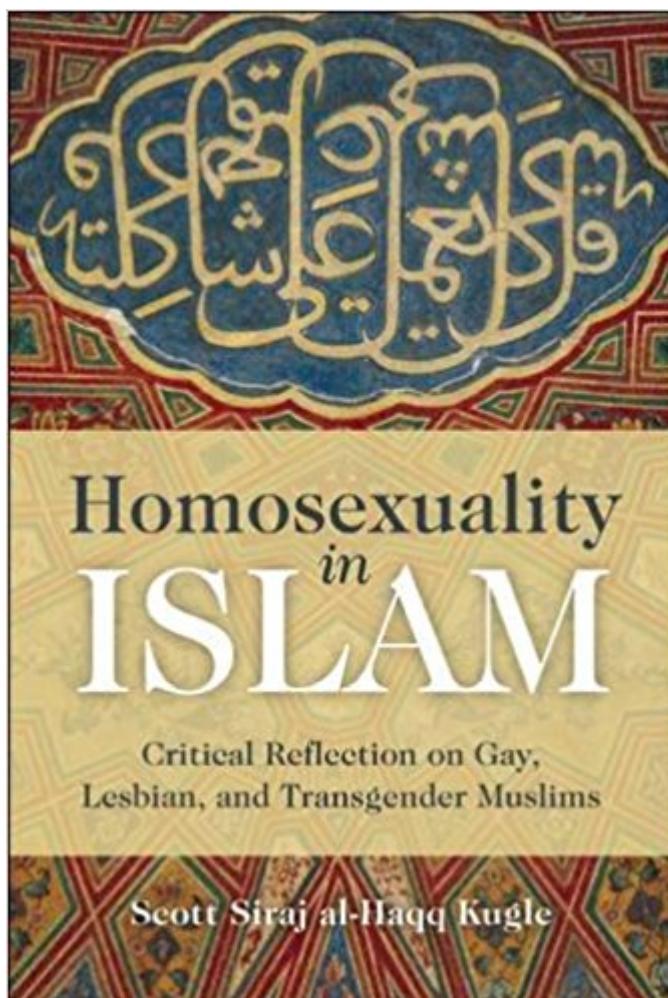


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Homosexuality In Islam: Critical Reflection On Gay, Lesbian, And Transgender Muslims



Synopsis

Homosexuality is anathema to Islam – or so the majority of both believers and non-believers suppose. Throughout the Muslim world, it is met with hostility, where state punishments range from hefty fines to the death penalty. Likewise, numerous scholars and commentators maintain that the Qurâ™an and Hadith rule unambiguously against same-sex relations. This pioneering study argues that there is far more nuance to the matter than most believe. In its narrative of Lot, the Qurâ™an could be interpreted as condemning lust rather homosexuality. While some Hadith are fiercely critical of homosexuality, some are far more equivocal. One even appears to actively endorse love between men. This is the first book length treatment to offer a detailed analysis of how Islamic scripture, jurisprudence, and Hadith, can not only accommodate a sexually sensitive Islam, but actively endorse it. Scott Kugle is the first Muslim to publish widely on the issue of homosexuality and Islam. An independent research scholar in Islamic studies, he has previously held positions at Duke University, the University of Cape Town, and Swarthmore College.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For the purpose of this review, I thought it's important to give some of my background. I'm a 24-year-old medical student and I'm a practising Muslim, having learned Islamic studies ever since I was little up till I was 19, so I have extensive knowledge about it. I have always been inquisitive and questioning by nature, and I brought these into the realm of my Islamic studies to further understand Islam, much to the discomfort of other students ("common Muslims" are discouraged from having "obviously questioning" discussions as they are deemed to have inadequate scholarly knowledge).

After years of study (including comparing other faiths), even though I was brought up as a Muslim, I believed in Islam on my own accord. I realised my same-sex attraction ever since I was about 9, but I thought I was attracted to females as well, so I concluded I was a bisexual some years later. I have been taught that homosexuality has no place in Islam, but it didn't bother me as much as I thought I could always settle with a girl. Late 2009, after further reflection and exploration, I concluded that I was actually gay, not having any sexual attraction toward females. This epiphany brought intense internal conflict - a battle between my religion and my sexuality. I desperately searched for answers. Scott Kugle is the first Muslim to publish widely on the issue of homosexuality and transgender identity in Islam. Like some gay Muslim advocates, I expected a very emotionally-driven writing to defend queers when I bought this book. Instead, I was delightfully surprised by his neutral-sounding, critical and objective writing, reflecting years of careful research and synthesis of valid ideas. This book is divided into systematic sections, bringing readers into natural progression across his arguments.

I'm truly open to looking at new interpretations of Islam; I have nothing against that. After all, who has not enjoyed the wonderful performance of the Puerto Rico Lin-Manuel Miranda in recreating the story of Alexander Hamilton? And who doesn't look forwards to the next beauty reappraising the works of, say, Faulkner? No one can argue that Bradley's 'Shakespearean Tragedy' is a master work, but everyone looks forward to what new magic Bloom has found in Shakespeare. In all of the above examples, however, two things remain constant: they base themselves on the text; they are logically coherent. It would not do if Bloom did not know English, or decided to ignore this or that part of Hamlet due to his own fancy. Similarly when we approach any text, especially one as important as the Qur'an we must do so with great caution. It is true that there is a possibility that all the exegites before a new one were wrong, but it is unlikely, especially if the problem has not changed. For example we know that pictures and images were disliked by the Prophet Muhammad because in his time they were used as idols which people worshiped, and yet no scholar would claim that television is un-Islamic. There are many such issues which are changed as times progress, the nature of the Qur'an however has few such issues: that is why it is written as metered poetry, and certain issues are left vague. Homosexuality is not one of them. Whilst Islam has nothing against a person who has homosexual desires, it cannot, and will not condone sexual intercourse just as it will not condone heterosexual intercourse outside of marriage. Without going into detail, the argument of this book is that because God created a gay desire it can't all be so bad.

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