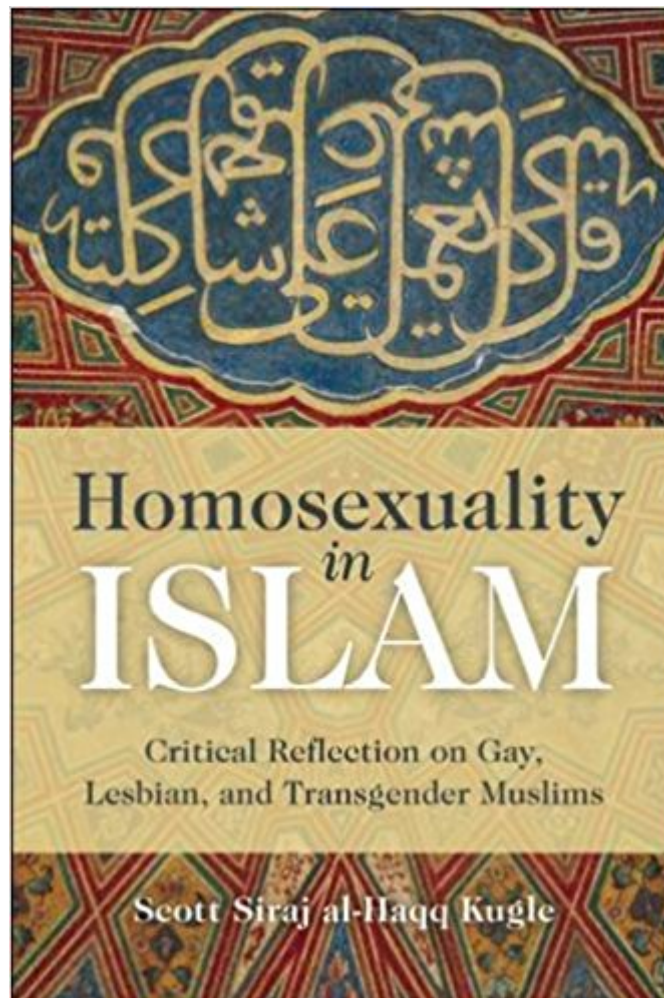




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Homosexuality In Islam: Critical Reflection On Gay, Lesbian, And Transgender Muslims



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 Qur'ân 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 Qur'ân 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

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.

The much needed discussion in our communities, addressed in a very responsible way. We have included this book in our Muslim women study group with a lot of enthusiasm. A must read!

This is an extremely thorough investigation into this topic. If there is anyone out there that finds themselves conflicted on this issue, this book can be a guiding light (may Allah accept this effort). Also, as may not be clear from the title, this book also discusses transgender issues.

The package came in perfectly and the book is very well written.. It's a very fascinating take on the religion and quite a compelling argument.

I'm still reading the book, and so far i'm really happy that I bought this book. This book has already influenced me and i'm very excited to read the rest of the book.

I am very proud and extremely happy to finally see this book online. After reading a number of excerpts from this book, as a gay Muslim, Siraj provides the GLT Muslim community thoroughly researched theological points of view, providing a diversity of understandings grounded in Quran, ahadeeth, fiqh, shari'ah and cultural traditions starting in antiquity to the present. I can't wait until I receive my copy of Siraj's book so I can read it cover to cover. This will be one that I keep in my library for life. Thanks, Siraj and looking forward to your next book.

These concepts shared in this book are nothing short of brilliant. Without ever having to refute or deny any words of the Qur'an itself, Siraj brings forth a truly educated, thorough, and refreshing alternative perspective to what many educated individuals (Muslim or otherwise) see as rigid and disingenuous interpretation of the faith (ie conservative straight males perspective ONLY). It is these 21st century ideas that can help bridge the divide among Islam in other cultures, should they choose to do so. Siraj talks about people and the purpose of faith and defies the taboo without apology a without undermining the faith. The naysayers are all the same. The same things they said about Fatima Mernissi and anyone else who challenges the old patriarchal ways about anything. On a personal note, this book not only changed my entire perspective of Islam (for the better no less), but helped me write one of the best academic research papers I think I have written. It is a must read for anyone interested in this very complex subject.

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 "openly 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. His introductory chapter is a wonderful summary of his whole book, telling readers what to expect in this book. He begins soon with discussion into the nature of human sexuality (including inherent nature of homosexuality) as a basis for his argument throughout the rest of the book. The next chapter is all about the Qur'an's stand on the issue of homosexuality. It's about liberating the Qur'an from shackles of previous traditional/classical (mis)interpretation of this issue, which I had come to accept as an absolute "fact" from my years of study. The arguments are laid out logically and coherently, free from "twisting of the fact" as accused by the majority of Islamic authorities. This chapter changed my view of the scholars' interpretation of the Qur'an as almost infallible. A very eye-opening section of the book. The following chapter talks about the hadith (Prophet Muhammad's sayings). In desperation to make sharia laws and rulings, jurists have used weak and (highly possibly) false/fabricated hadiths to justify condemnation of homosexuality and punishments for homosexual acts. Throughout my Islamic studies, I have surprisingly discovered many weak or fabricated hadiths that the "common Muslims" have accepted to be truth, so this chapter of the book serves to reinforce my discovery. Another eye-opening chapter if you aren't familiar with the studies of hadiths. Next comes the chapter on assessing fiqh (Islamic legal reasoning). It focuses on the legal standing of homosexuality and male-male anal intercourse, some female-female relations. This chapter and the next chapter is tightly linked, as the idea to legalise homosexual relationships (in the eyes of God)

via marriage (nikah) is explored, which requires critical reassessment of the current (patriarchal) idea of nikah between man and woman. This chapter provides solutions to the "problem" of homosexual relationships, and I commend the author for providing solutions instead of merely presenting his arguments in defense of homosexuality. The last chapter before the conclusion presents points for transgender individuals, which is also a great read. Overall, this book is simply a superb buy, and in retrospect, I would have gladly paid even more for the quality of writing that I get from this book. Who do I recommend it to? Well, of course for LGBTIQ Muslims this book is a must-read. I would also recommend all Islamic teachers, imams, scholars, and authorities to give this book a read and please do so with an open and neutral mind, as I have forced myself to do (due to my classical/traditional Islamic understanding). For LGBTIQ Muslims, I would also recommend lending/buying this book for your Muslim friends and family members who might have trouble understanding our position. I also think that non-Muslims can benefit from this book, to help them understand that Islam is accommodating to queers and is actually beautiful. Basically, "Homosexuality in Islam" deserves a place in everyone's bookshelf. It has helped me to reconcile with my religion and sexuality. Scott Kugle's work has probably saved my life from one of constant internal conflict and tormenting depression. What are you waiting for? Now go buy this book!

This book is forcefully projecting the authors view on homosexuality and his progressive beliefs onto the Quran without being faithful to the methodology of Quranic exegesis. People who support this book and its message are looking for anyone to justify and validate homosexuality in Islam. Anyone with any knowledge in Islam worth his salt would see the superficial understanding of the story of Lut.

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