



Thoughts on Imagining a Queer Bible

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1. At 13, my body finds every book of the Bible a text of terror.
2. In 1992, J. M. Clark and G. McNeil proposed a "pro-feminist gay theology." In 1993, Robert Goss introduced a queer theology in his book *Jesus Acted Up*.
3. The boys at church put their Bibles in their guitar cases and have memorized all the verses that keep me up at night.
4. I carry the weight of narratives that do not belong to me as my own. I do not know my own stories.
5. Queer theology pioneer Marcella Althaus-Reid published her first book, *Indecent Theology*, in 2001. She died eight years later.
6. Every woman I love in the Bible dies. There are no women in the Bible who love me.
7. The girl I love does not read the Bible.
8. No one at church will talk about homosexuality, but everyone goes home and makes predictions about who will leave next. No one guesses me.
9. I exist in an idle space, I am allowed to breathe, but not to own my identity.
10. Some biblical scholars theorize that Jesus was gay. Far fewer have asked this question of Mary Magdalene.
11. Our narratives exist in this canon, is it not heretical to use them against us?
12. In the book of Judges, Jael existed in the space between difference, "she smote Sisera, she crushed his head." She was a new breed of womanhood.
13. Hagar was sent away by Sarah in Genesis. In 1969, Betty Freidan labeled lesbian feminists a lavender menace; casting us out of a movement founded on our backs. We are waiting with Hagar, we are still waiting.
14. Rahab of the book of Joshua was unmarried, polyamorous, laughing, a subject, wide, large and queer.
15. In the book of Samuel, David described Jonathan's love for him as passing the love of women.
16. Ruth clung to Naomi as Adam clung to Eve. She vowed, "where you go, I will go, where you lodge I will lodge, your people shall be my people." How many girls are collapsing, dying to make this vow?
17. Julian of Norwich knew Jesus as her mother. Feminine by nature, wide enough to emerge from his own womb, he is a new body.
18. Mary Magdalene, apostle of apostles, indecent and holy, her narrative is one I can finally breathe in, I am whole here.
19. We are imaging God inside of our indecent bodies. We are taking ourselves back.
20. Interpretations of this text have been thrust against our bodies for centuries. It is a tribute to our suppressed stories, you cannot use this text against us anymore, it is ours now.