Department of History
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

3 Credits ● Online ● Asynchronous
COMM-B ● Humanities ● Intermediate ● L&S Credit
June 19–August 13, 2023 ● Course Canvas ● Course Zoom

History 201: *The Historian's Craft*

Sex and Love in Asian Religions

Instructor

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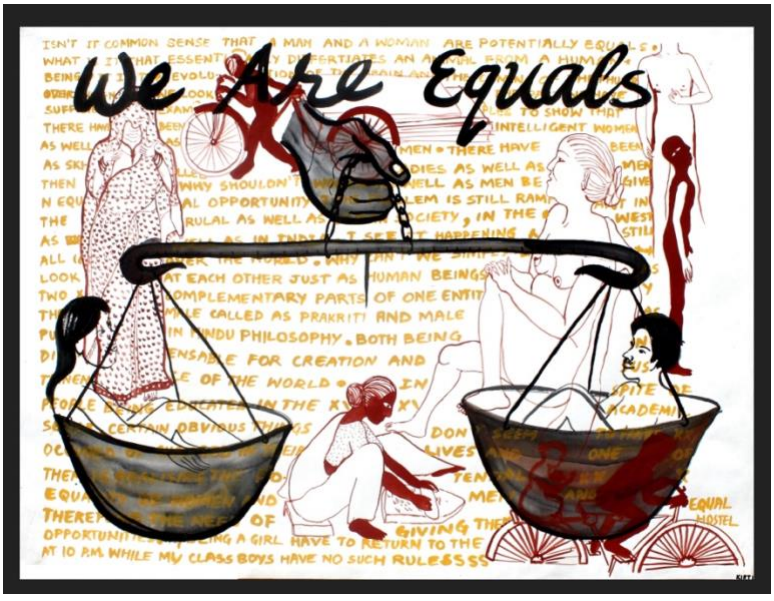
Description

This course examines the religious history of everyday life in South and Southeast Asia from the perspectives of desire, love, intimacy, gender, and queerness. While almost all the world's religious and spiritual traditions seek to address the myriad issues of human embodiment—longing, suffering, intimate desire, and above all these, love—sometimes, in their institutional and politicized forms, they have tended to ignore the voices and experiences of not only women, but also queer and gender nonconforming people.

What happens when we examine these ordinary and not-so-ordinary lives in the histories of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and other religious traditions beyond their sacred texts and hierarchies? What local and non-institutional histories of everyday life remain? In what ways might the historical studies of "gender," "sexuality" and "religion" be intertwined? And in doing so, what implications might this have for our methods and work as historians?

This course brings together three case studies which pair primary and secondary sources rooted in love and sexuality in (mainly) South and Southeast Asia as they intersect with religious thought, practice, and forms of identification. Our conversations about historical skills and methods center the preceding questions as we learn about gender nonconforming Buddhist monastics, urban sex workers, activists and writers in diaspora, lonely ghosts, and queer cinema together with contextualizing voices in religious and gender history.



Our course explores digital archives of primary sources, such as the artwork found in UW–Madison's South Asian Feminist Activist Archive.

[1] Email me whenever you need to find a time to meet, or if you have any questions or concerns.

As both a *COMM–B* and *Historian's Craft* course, we will practice and sharpen important research skills like asking savvy questions, using digital library and archival resources, and critically and creatively analyzing primary and secondary sources.

Along the way, we will try our hand at many of the essential nuts and bolts of historically informed scholarship (and even digital literacy). We will explore digital archives of primary sources, build bibliographies, assess citation management platforms, construct footnotes, and consider diverse historical methods, sources, interpretations, and styles of argumentation.

By the end of the course, you will showcase these skills by drafting and revising a 10 to 12–page research article (on a topic you develop in consultation with me) over the second half of the term. The paper will engage both primary and secondary sources, reflecting an intellectually stimulating and thoughtful self-directed trajectory of research and historical argumentation. *Don't panic if this sounds like a lot—it is a lot—we'll get there together!*

Format, Weekly Plan, and Credit Hours

This course is online and *mostly* asynchronous. Here is the general snapshot for how, over eight (rather than fifteen) weeks, you will spend a total of appx. 135 hours—that's 17 hours a week on average—engaging with this course in order to earn the 3 credits.

Each week, you will be expected to:

- Watch two pre–recorded lectures.
  - Recorded *LIVE* on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:00AM–10:15AM. If the time suits your schedule, please join me! ***Note:*** *You will not be able to succeed in this course without employing the skills and using the tools modelled in lectures.*

- Read/watch/listen/look at a variety of primary and secondary sources, such as academic articles and book chapters, oral histories, films, activist art, digital archives, and religious literature. Your reading load *will decrease* over the second half of the term.

- Meet for about one hour in a small weekly peer–review group.
  - Your group is free to determine when to meet each week. Keep in mind that I will join the second and sixth meetings (you will be giving 5 to 10–minute presentations during these weeks).

- Plan to carry out three self–guided Research and Writing Skills Workshops, two of which you will revise and edit collaboratively with your peers.
  - Instead of weekly reading responses and discussion sections, in your small groups, you will work together and collaboratively review, edit, and help one another to revise your ongoing work in this class.

- Iteratively conduct ongoing primary and secondary research for, draft, peer–review, and revise an original 10 to 12–page research article (plan for *at least* two 1-on-1 meetings with me over the term to discuss your progress).

***Celibacy and sex work*: Buddhist monks and gender nonconforming "ladyboys" are common in urban Bangkok. Are there historical connections between these different ways of making a life?**

Objectives[2]

This course, like other *Historians Craft* and *COMM-B* offerings, marks a transition from **studying** history to learning how to **do** history. By the end, this course will give you both the tools and opportunities to demonstrate that you can:

- Learn how historians research and write;
- Conduct historically savvy research with archival and library sources;
- Identify, assess, and build knowledge across diverse kinds of sources;
- Creatively and critically evaluate different kinds of historical evidence;
- Ultimately, each of these skills will allow you to make significant progress, *relative to wherever you started*, in composing intellectually stimulating academic-historical writing.

Required Materials

All required readings and materials are provided on or linked through ***Canvas****.* There are no books to purchase. You will submit all assignments on Canvas. You will need consistent access to the internet, Zoom, and Microsoft Word (or a similarly robust word processing tool; not Google Docs).

[2] This course also fulfills the Department of History's list of approved "Goals for HIST 201—The Historian's Craft," which is appended to this syllabus.

Grade Scale

93-100% **A** | 88-92.99% **AB** | 83-87.99% **B** | 78-82.99% **BC** | 70-77.99% **C** | 60-69.99% **D** | 0-59.99% **F**

Assignments and Grading

This is a general outline. Refer to the schedule below for due dates (as applicable), and to **Canvas** for the official gradebook and substantive details about all assignments.

Weight	Assignment	Notes
10%	**Presentations**	5 to 10–minute presentations in your small groups:
5%	1. Historian's Skill Presentation	During week 2
5%	2. Primary Source Presentation	During week 6
30%	**Drafts: Three Skills Workshops**	Three weeklong self-guided skill building workshops during weeks 3, 4, and 5. **Drafts are due 24 hours *before* your small group meetings in those weeks.**
10%	1. Dispatches from the Archive	
10%	2. Book Review	
10%	3. Annotated Bibliography	
30%	**Peer Review and Revisions**	Work in your small groups to discuss and provide feedback on one another's drafts. Your article draft (see below) will also be reviewed by an anonymous (to you) classmate. You will also "blindly" review an anonymous classmate's draft. **Revised writing due 48 hours *after* small group meetings.**
5%	1. Peer review: Archive Workshop	
5%	2. Peer review: Book Review	
10%	3. Peer review: Article draft	
10%	4. Blind review	
30%	**Research Article**	An original 10 to 12–page research paper in the Chicago Notes–Bibliography ("footnotes") style (17th edition).
12%	1. Rough draft	
18%	2. Final submission	

Rubric

Although every assignment will have its own specific rubric and expectations, in general:

- **An Excellent (A) submission** is intellectually challenging and sophisticated, logically argued, thoughtfully developed, clearly and compellingly written, and free of major errors in grammar, punctuation, style, and usage. Most importantly, an A paper will have a clear and thorough thesis that is defended via high–level engagement with primary and secondary sources.
- **A Very Good (AB) submission** will do one or more of the less important things less well.
- **A Good (B) submission** has reasonably strong arguments and complex ideas, but may be flawed in other areas.
- **A Satisfactory (BC) submission** has flaws in significant areas, including weaker arguments and unchallenging or insufficiently clarified or supported ideas, or it may have minor flaws in multiple respects.
- **A Lacking (C) submission** has numerous flaws in significant areas.
- **A Not Very Good (D) submission** has major problems in all areas.
- The rare **Unacceptable (F) submission** must be willfully bad, incomplete, hilariously incomprehensible, or plagiarized (see below).

Priya, a sex worker in Dhaka, Bangladesh, teases a male friend. Photo by Sandra Hoyn.

Academic Honesty

UW–Madison policy and Wisconsin Statutes define plagiarism as "seeking to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation."[3] Because this class will work extensively with both primary and secondary sources, we might be susceptible to committing unintentional acts of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. This is easily avoided with the proper use of citations, *a topic to which we will devote considerable attention*. If concerns about academic honesty remain unclear, please meet with me early to discuss how to avoid any potential for academic impropriety and its resultant consequences. *We will discuss the course policy regarding ChatGPT and other AI technologies in lecture*.

Accommodations, Diversity, and Inclusion

I am committed to fostering an intellectually productive and mutually respectful environment where we can explore diverse historical perspectives, cultural expressions, and systems of human thought and practice together in meaningful ways. I believe that excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity are inextricably linked goals.

In addition, I want to do whatever I can to help you be as successful and engaged in this course as possible! Especially in view of the global COVID-19 pandemic, all timely, reasonable requests for alternative accommodations, arrangements, or individualized plans of study (including *but not limited to* McBurney Center or other forms of documentation) will be honored and implemented.

Finally

Before I get to the schedule of topics, readings, and assignments each week, understand that this class is subject to numerous and frequently updated University policies related to data transparency and dissemination, students' rights and responsibilities, accommodations, disability, academic integrity, diversity, and several other important matters. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with them here.

[3] "Chapter UWS 14: Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures," Wisconsin State Legislature, April 2016 Register, https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14/03.

Schedule

Case 1/ Embodiment and Desire in Early Indian Buddhism

Week 1 *June 19–June 23*

Theme	**Thinking with Categories**
Skill	**Identifying Arguments**
Due	• Determine a consistent day and time each week for small group meetings • Sign up for a topic for the Historian's Skill Presentation next week
Read	***Primary Source***: • Charles Hallisey, trans., *Therigatha: Poems of the First Buddhist Women* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), vii-45, and 183-195. **Note**: *Read the Introduction, and the translations on odd-numbered pages.* ***Secondary Sources***: • Susanne Mrozik, "Virtuous Bodies: A Physiomoral Discourse on Bodies," in *Virtuous Bodies: The Physical Dimensions of Morality in Buddhist Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 61-81. • Leonard Zwilling, "Homosexuality as Seen in Indian Buddhist Texts," in *Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender*, ed. José Ignacio Cabezón (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 203-214.

Week 2 *June 26–June 30*

Theme	**Power and Representation**
Skill	**Contextualizing Sources**
Due	• Historian's Skill Presentation (in small group meetings) • Sign up for your Digital Archive for the Workshop next week
Read	***Primary Source:*** • Ven. Anālayo, "Mahāpajāpatī's Going Forth in the *Madhyama-āgama*," *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 18 (2011): 267-317. ***Secondary Sources:*** • Judith Butler, "Preface (1990)" & "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire," in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), *xxix*-46. • Janet Gyatso, "One Plus One Makes Three: Buddhist Gender, Monasticism, and the Law of the Non-Excluded Middle," *History of Religions* 43, no. 2 (2003): 89-115.

Skill Building Interlude/
Crafting History with Primary and Secondary Sources

Week 3 *July 3–July 7*

Theme	**Past(s) in/and the Present(s)**
Skill	**Working with Digital Archives**

Due	• Dispatches from the Archive Workshop
	  ○ Submit **draft** 24 hours **before** small group meeting
	  ○ Revise and submit **final** 48 hours **after** small group meeting
	• Sign up for a book to review for the Workshop next week

Browse & Read	***Digital Archive (Primary Source):*** • Review your digital archive and analyze key sources as part of your Dispatches from the Archive Workshop ***Secondary Sources:*** • Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Women's Worlds in Qajar Iran Digital Archive and Website: A Report," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 12, no. 2 (2016): 246-250. • Grace I. Yeh, "Filipino Love Stories Digital Archiving Project," *American Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (2016): 393-396.

Week 4 *July 10–July 14*

Theme	**Argumentation**
Skill	**Integrating Primary and Secondary Sources**

Due	• Book Review Workshop
	  ○ Submit **draft** 24 hours **before** small group meeting
	  ○ Revise and submit **final** 48 hours **after** small group meeting

Read	***Secondary Source:*** • The book you have selected for the Book Review Workshop is your assigned reading this week.

Case 2/ Sex Work, Masculinity, and Religious Activism in Urban Southeast Asia and Bangladesh

Week 5 *July 17–July 21*

Theme	**Narrative**
Skill	**Crafting Thesis Statements**
Due	• Annotated Bibliography Workshop ○ Submit 24 hours **before** small group meeting
Watch & Read	***Documentary Film (Primary Source):*** • Michael Glawogger, dir., *Whore's Glory* (2011; Wien, Austria: Lotus Film GmbH, 2012), Canvas streaming. ***Secondary Source:*** • Kimberly Kay Hoang, "New Hierarchies of Global Men," and "Autonomy and Consent in Sex Work," in *Dealing in Desire: Asian Ascendancy, Western Decline, and the Hidden Currencies of Global Sex Work* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 53-77, and 104-125.

Week 6 *July 24–July 28*

Theme	**Context and Style**
Skill	**Topic Sentences, Citations, and Chicago Format**
Due	• Primary Source Presentations (in small group meetings) • Research Article rough draft ○ Submit 24 hours **after** small group meeting
Read	***Primary Source:*** • Wasfia Nazreen, "The Crying Quarter," *Forum, a Daily Publication of the Daily Star* [Bangladesh] 3, no. 7 (July 2010): < http://archive.thedailystar.net/forum/2010/july/quarter.htm > ***Secondary Source:*** • Firdous Azim, "Keeping Sexuality on the Agenda: The Sex Workers' Movement in Bangladesh," in *South Asian Feminisms*, ed. Ania Loomba and Ritty A. Lukose (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 267-284.

Case 3/ Diaspora and Impossible Desire in Thai and Sri Lankan Queer Cinema

Week 7 *July 31–August 4*

Theme	**Writing is Rewriting**
Skill	**Narrative Voice, Editing, and Review**
Due	• Research Article blind reviews ○ Submit by date at 11:59PM
Watch & Read	***Film (Primary Source):*** • Nonzee Nimibutr, dir., *นางนาก* [*Nang Nak*] (1999; Bangkok: Tai Entertainment/Kino Lorber USA, 2005), Canvas streaming. ***Read (Secondary Source):*** • Arnika Fuhrmann, "*Nang Nak*—Ghost Wife: Desire, Embodiment, and Buddhist Melancholia in a Contemporary Thai Ghost Film," in *Ghostly Desires: Queer Sexuality and Vernacular Buddhism in Contemporary Thai Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 47-86.

Week 8 *August 7–August 11*

Theme	**Postscript: Flexible Citizenship in the South Asian Diaspora**
Skill	**Revising and Polishing**
Due	• Research Article final draft ○ Submit by Sunday August 13 at 11:59PM
Watch & Read	***Film (Primary Source):*** • Deepa Mehta, dir., *Funny Boy* (Los Angeles: Netflix, 2020), Canvas streaming. ***Read (Secondary Source):*** • Gayatri Gopinath, "Nostalgia, Desire, and Diaspora: *Funny Boy* and *Cereus Blooms at Night*" in *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 161-186.

Goals for HIST 201 – "The Historian's Craft"
Approved by Undergraduate Council, December 8, 2010

The "Historian's Craft" courses offer an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing original historical research and conveying the results of that work to others. Through engagement with locally available or on-line archival materials, the courses encourage undergraduates to become historical detectives who can define important historical questions, collect and analyze evidence, present original conclusions, and contribute to ongoing discussions—the skills we have defined as central to the history major. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to undertake substantial historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST 600 seminar. Specific goals for this course include learning to:

1. Ask Questions: develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research.
- Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions.
- Ask historical questions to guide individual research.
- Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion.

2. Find Sources: learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consult them to identify and locate source materials.
- Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web.
- Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel.
- Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects.
- Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan.

3. Evaluate Sources: determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials.
- Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic.
- Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation.
- Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects.
- Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source.
- Summarize an argument presented in a text.
- Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.

4. Develop and Present an Argument: use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.
- Write a strong, clear thesis statement.
- Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis.
- Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly.
- Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument.

5. Plan Further Research: draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation.
- Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract.
- Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.

6. Communicate Findings Effectively: make formal and informal, written and oral presentations tailored to specific audiences.
- Write a clearly argued, formal academic paper, using appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus.
- Deliver a concise, effective, formal verbal presentation with appropriate supporting material.
- Contribute constructively to discussion, whether proposing or responding to an idea.