

City University of New York (CUNY)

CUNY Academic Works

Dissertations, Theses, and Capstone Projects

CUNY Graduate Center

6-2016

Christ the Queer: Gender and Sexuality in Scorsese's "The Last Temptation of Christ"

Stephen Barnett

Graduate Center, City University of New York

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

More information about this work at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/1332

Discover additional works at: <https://academicworks.cuny.edu>

This work is made publicly available by the City University of New York (CUNY).

Contact: AcademicWorks@cuny.edu

CHRIST THE QUEER
GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN SCORSESE'S *THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST*

by

STEPHEN BARNETT

A master's thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2016

© 2016

STEPHEN BARNETT

All Rights Reserved

Christ the Queer: Gender and Sexuality in Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*

A Case Study

by

Stephen Barnett

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies
in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Date

David A. Gerstner, Ph. D.

Thesis Advisor

Date

Matthew K. Gold, Ph. D.

Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ABSTRACT

Christ the Queer: Gender and Sexuality in Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*

A Case Study

by

Stephen Barnett

Advisor: David A. Gerstner, Ph. D.

Although great strides have been made since the landmark 1969 Stonewall Riots in liberating queer equal rights, both politically and societally, there are still prevalent belief systems in strong opposition to those human rights of gender and sexuality. Biblical religion, through its various monotheistic faiths and denominations, continues to condemn queer as a sin against God because, they argue, God, (through the text of the Bible written solely by men), defines queer as an abomination. Yet, the Book of Genesis queers human gender and sexuality through its narrative of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Nevertheless, the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States regulates the separation of church and state, and this has allowed for the evolution of queer rights in governing law. Furthermore, contributions via shifting social attitudes and cultural productions have contributed to the verity of gender and sexuality as a queer identity. Therefore, as a queer artist, filmmaker, and theorist, in this essay I question how the art of cinema has historically contributed to the advancement of equal rights for gender and sexuality. Specifically, in what way does Martin Scorsese, in his 1988 film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, render gender and sexuality to queer Christ? Through the theoretical triptych lens of queer, homosocial, and queer heterosexuality, this essay analyses the cinematic aesthetic of Scorsese's Christ-narrative. This close reading of the film's narrative focuses primarily on Jesus and his relationships with Judas, Mary Magdalene, and Lazarus's sisters, Mary and Martha. Findings project a Jesus who is not only conflicted in his duality between divinity and humanness but that he is also dichotomized between a conscious desire for heteronormativity and an unconscious sexual desire for Judas, which is divined by God. Ultimately, this analysis reveals that the biblical Jesus, because he was dually divine and human and thus subject to the human psychology of gender and sexuality, his life and its teachings posit that humankind is inherently queer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In many ways, writing this thesis was a solitary act of sitting alone at my desk with nothing but two hands, ten fingers, the keypad, computer screen, and an inquisitive mind. Yet, prior to that, and in preparation for, my mind had analyzed through my eyes and ears numerous times and in multiple ways the *mise-en-scène* from which I perceived Martin Scorsese's bold and compelling personification of the life of a man that continues to have such a profound effect on the world. As well, I had read various theoretical and critical texts that aligned or maligned my interpretation of the film. Hence, I was never really alone in the process; and for that I am deeply appreciative to all those involved, cited or otherwise.

Personally, I have the honor and privilege of holding in my heart the love and friendship of my partner, Shannon Foreshee, for whom I am perpetually thankful for his encouragement and support throughout life, and the wild roller coaster of writing of this thesis.

Academically, it is with great pride and with an immense respect that I will carry an eternal gratitude for my advisor, the daring and debonair, David A. Gerstner.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Introduction	1
I. Throat-clearing: Christ-figurative vs. Christ-narrative	5
II. Queer: Gender and Sexuality	12
III. Evidentiary Aesthetics	21
A. The Foundation of Queer	22
B. For the Love of, Judas?!	25
C. Judas the Lion; Judas the Heart	32
D. Judas the Monogamist	33
E. Judas Weeps	35
F. The Kiss in the Garden of Gethsemane	38
G. Jesus, Judas, and the Betrayal of Love	40
H. Queer Heterosexuality: Conflated Hail Marys	44
I. Mother Mary	45
J. Mary Magdalene, Sister Mary, and then Martha	51
K. The Divine Visionary Dream Hallucination	70
Conclusion	75
Works Cited	77

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Bible is a canonical collection of Abrahamic Middle Eastern texts, (all of which were written by men), and it is defended as the word and law of God. It is derived from the ideology of monotheism: the belief in one God and the oneness of God. There are three preeminent religions gleaned from the Bible's Old Testament (Judaism), or based on the Bible's Old and New Testaments (Christianity), or in response to the Bible's Old and New Testaments (Islam); but this essay focuses specifically on the Christian faith, which, although has produced various translations and subsequent denominations utilizing chosen selections and interpretations of the Bible texts, universally, Christianity is a belief in the life of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior, the Messiah in behalf of humankind.

Although the United States of the Americas is built on a constitution that specifically separates church from state, Christianity, and yet still more generally, the Bible has had, and continues to have, influence on American society; a society, as Michel Foucault observes, "whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies" (93) from which certainly and specifically effects the subjects of gender and sexuality. There are several biblical texts that vilify and condemn gender and sexuality and this has empowered monotheistic religions to historically wield adjudications against them. However, as Foucault clarifies, "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (95). In other words, resistance plays its part in the relations of force inherent to power and not external to it. Thus, power adjusts and moves from within itself and, ironically, these internal relations of force can be found within the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis, in its formulation of gender and sexuality.

There is no one single canonical Bible; thus, like Christianity, there are multiple versions of fluidic, folding, and conflating renditions. Nevertheless, the story of God's creation of man and woman is generally consistent throughout; therefore, as a primary scholarly source, I must choose a version and hence acquiesce to Catholicism's online public Vatican text only because the denomination holds the largest number of constituents throughout the world. Nonetheless, within this essay, I will refer to the biblical narrative as "canonical text" or "the Bible."

According to the Bible, gender and sexuality are the foundations of humanity, which is illustrated through the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. To begin with, as the first chapter of the Book of Genesis proposes, "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (*Vatican*, Genesis. 1.27), which implies that God is male and female, man and woman, dual gendered.

Subsequently, the second chapter of the Book of Genesis elaborates further on the foundational narrative of the creation of gender and sexuality with greater detail:

then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. / [...] but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. / So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. / And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. / Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." /

Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. / And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

(Genesis, 2.7, 2.20-25)

Thus, again, the implication here is that God is both father and mother, male and female, a singular transgender and, furthermore, that gender and sexuality are not (yet) stigmatized, nor shamed through Adam and Eve's awareness of their nakedness in the Garden of Eden.

However, the third chapter of the Book of Genesis illustrates a realized awareness of the inherent queer of gender and sexuality as a result of eating the forbidden fruit:

when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. / Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. / They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. / But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" / He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." / [...] And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them. / Then the Lord God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" - - / therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. / He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis, 3.6-10, 3.21-24)

Hence, this third chapter of the Bible's First Book of Moses illustrates that gender and sexuality are now stigmatized, shamed in the eyes of Adam and Eve through their abrupt awareness of

their nakedness, as well as their abrupt awareness of their gender and sexuality differentiated within that nakedness. Adam and Eve believed that from Adam came Eve and that they were, therefore, two of the same one, like God; but once Adam and Eve realized their difference through the abrupt awareness of their nakedness, which manifests gender and sexuality, they both perceived a stigma, a shame, a queer in their own eyes and, they believed, in the eyes of God, whom they hid from in the garden. Once God realized Adam and Eve were now aware of their nakedness God solidified the queer of gender and sexuality through the making of their clothing, condemnation, and banishment from the Garden of Eden.

Thus, the understanding evidenced from this biblical canonical narrative text is not only that God is both male and female; a singular unified transgender identity, but that God's creation of Adam and Eve accordingly queers gender and sexuality as a result of Adam and Eve's abrupt awareness of their nakedness after having eaten from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden. Put another way, and further still, the biblical God's creation of earth, air, land, water, vegetation, animals, Adam, and then Eve is a queer exposed to human consciousness upon the eating of the forbidden fruit. Gender is delineated by the construction of man, and then from him, woman, and sexualities are as a result of their anatomical difference. Hence, and ironically, the story of Adam and Eve is the story of their awareness of their queer gender and sexuality, which then propagates through a queer heterosexuality, and, moreover, man (through religion) allocates this from within the "divined" canonical text of the Bible.

Therefore, through an analysis of the cinematic aesthetic of Martin Scorsese's, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, I argue that Scorsese *queers* the Christ-narrative and, thus, its depiction of the canonical biblical narrative of gender and sexuality because gender and sexuality are inherently shamed, condemned, and stigmatized by the biblical God.

I

THROAT-CLEARING: CHRIST-FIGURATIVE vs. CHRIST-NARRATIVE

Phillip Lopate inadvertently throat clears the distinction and yet provocative similarity, between the Christ-figurative and the Christ-narrative film when he admits that he is “bothered by the endless privileging of one man’s bodily anguish when so many millions have suffered at least as much” (74). In other words, although Christ-figurative and Christ-narrative are dichotomized by the personification of either a Jesus-like or Jesus-literal character, they are nevertheless two sides of the same coin. Since the advent of cinema just over a century ago, Hollywood has enacted some form or another of a Jesus-like protagonist because dramatic narratives are inherently a figurative form of the Christ-narrative, which is, as Syd Field indicates, “*a linear arrangement of related incidents, episodes, or events leading to a dramatic resolution* [emphasis in the original]” (29). Moreover, as Melanie J. Wright affirms, “Countless [...] productions, whilst not explicitly concerned with religion, have explored themes commonly associated with religion, such as forgiveness, hospitality, redemption, sacrifice or tradition” (3). Thus, for example, Martin Scorsese has personified the life of Jesus through multiple cinematic Christ-figurative plots and then literally, as the back cover of the film’s DVD suggests, his *The Last Temptation of Christ* enacts a “Powerful, passionate and thought-provoking, [...] extraordinary film that follows Jesus Christ’s journey as He accepts His divinity and ultimate fate [...] through this visually breathtaking re-imagining of faith and sacrifice, guilt and redemption, sin and atonement” (Scorsese), which he adapted from Nikos Kazantzakis’s novel of the same name published in Greek in 1955 and then published in English in 1960. Furthermore and ironically, the distinction of figurative and literal is mirrored as similar through what is at the heart of Jesus’s own conflicted duality between his divinity and humanness in Scorsese’s film.

Nevertheless, Scorsese's film is a Christ-narrative because it enacts the filmmaker's artistic interpretation of the canonical Christ-narrative.

Over the last century of Hollywood's birth, growth, and maturation, cinema has had a long history of producing the Christ-narrative numerous times and Scorsese's version, although distinct, is just one of the many. Yet, what is inherent to all of the Christ-narratives is the construction of a divine figure; and moreover, the numerous personifications of Hollywood's Jesus have consistently emphasized his divinity over the duality of his human existence. Jesus's humanity may be tortured through the crucifixion of his body but his character consists solely of a divine psychology. These varied Christ-narratives enact an *asexual* Jesus who has no human psychological conflict as a divine figure. Thus, the lavish Hollywood enactments of the Christ-narrative portray Jesus as wholly divine and not fully human because he is neither sexual nor psychosomatic. In short, or more specifically to the point, the Christ-narrative has always been castrated and consistently portrayed as a one-dimensional divine protagonist within the story of his own human life ... that is, until Scorsese's Christ-narrative.

Scorsese was born in 1942 and throughout his formative years he was an avid cinephile, which, as Scorsese explains in *Scorsese on Scorsese*, informed his later years at New York University as "a film student from 1960 to 1965, during the height of the French New Wave, the international success of the Italian art cinema and the discovery of the new Eastern European cinema" (14). He was born on the cusp between the Silent Generation and the Baby Boomers, which grew into the generation from which spawned the counterculture revolutions of the 1960s occurring primarily among those living through their twenties. The historical counterculture evolved with, just to name a few, the introduction of the birth control pill (1960), Betty Friedan's revolutionary book, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), the music and ideology of the Beatles and

the subsequent British invasion of musicians (1964), the revolutionary Civil Rights Act (1964) and its ensuing Voting Rights Act (1965), America's peak involvement in the Vietnam War (1968), and the landmark Stonewall Riots (1969). Thus, Scorsese was a twenty-something living through the film, hippy, music, feminist, civil, queer, and political movements that all converged into the now infamous 1960s counterculture from which, as Scorsese notes, "Although I'd heard about Kazantzakis's book when I was a student at NYU, it was Barbara Hershey and David Carradine who gave it to me [...] in 1972. [...] However,] It took me a number of years to read it [...] and I finally reached the end [...] in 1979" (116).

Throughout the 1980s Scorsese developed the Kazantzakis fictional novel into a producible screenplay first with Paul Schrader and then later with un-credited help from Jay Cocks. When Scorsese went to mount the financing and production of the film in the early 1980s version he experienced a detrimental false start, which lasted until its revival in 1987. Lloyd Baugh summarizes Scorsese's rollercoaster ride through the development and pre-production stages of the film:

The first producers, in the early 1980s, of the Scorsese film project were Paramount Pictures, who attempted to deal with the early protests from fundamentalist Protestant groups by insisting that the film project, only in pre-production, be given "a new working title – 'The Passion.'" When the letters of protest continued to pour in, Paramount nervously called together a group of "eminent theologians" to advise them concerning Scorsese's project. The seminar concluded that "while there were obvious risks, *The Last Temptation of Christ* deserved to be made. Paramount did not want to take those risks and in 1983, the project was terminated. / Scorsese then looked for financing in France [...] but when, in the wake of public protest over the Godard film, *Je vous salue, Marie*

(1985), the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Lustiger, wrote a letter of “solemn warning to President Mitterand about the misuse of public funds for a project founded on subverting scripture,” the French backed off. Only in 1987 was Scorsese’s project accepted by Universal Pictures: he had to slash the film’s budget from 15 million to “a lean 6.5 million for Universal,” but the picture he had so longed to make was underway. (51). Unfortunately, the controversy surrounding the film’s depiction of Jesus didn’t subside and, in fact, only grew worse during its eminent and subsequent release on August 12, 1988.

Charles Musser reminds us that “The passion play has had a tumultuous history in the United States” (208), and Scorsese’s film proved no exception to that historiography. Indeed, as Thomas R. Lindlof confirms, “By almost any standard, the firestorm accompanying the release of [the film] was beyond the pale of media controversies before or since. No film [...] aroused the passions of a wider spectrum of the public, involved the country’s religious, political, and media communities to a greater degree, or resulted in more worldwide actions against distributors, theaters, and theater owners” (9). Nevertheless, critics were both respectful and disparaging in their reviews of the film. In a full-page scanned image in *Variety* a letter appears from Franco Zeffirelli where he wrote to Tom Pollock, who was at the time the head of Universal/MCA, in which Zeffirelli states, “I am a Roman Catholic myself, and therefore have a deep appreciation for the concerns expressed by a number of Christian organizations about Martin Scorsese’s controversial interpretation of Jesus’[s] life, especially the alleged erotic aspects of it.” (5); Janet Maslin’s review in the *New York Times* believed, “Though the choices that shape the exceptionally ambitious, deeply troubling and, at infrequent moments, genuinely transcendent film are often contradictory, they create an extra dimension. Mr. Scorsese’s evident struggle with this material becomes as palpable as the story depicted on the screen.” (C1); the

Philadelphia Inquirer compiled brief quotes from a multitude of national newspapers with an article titled: “Is it banal or brilliant?: Critics’ opinions of ‘Temptation’” (4-C); David Denby, of *New York* magazine found that the film “is a furiously earnest and emotionally demanding film – never lurid or sensational, but certainly painful (50), [... and Scorsese’s Jesus] lacks the militant goodness, the wit, and the genius for teaching that the Christ of the Gospels possesses. He is exasperating, unable to make up his mind, and his many scenes with his passionate friend Judas [...] come close to unintentional parody” (54); and finally, in *Cineaste*, Christopher Sharrett indicated that “The vicious attacks on the filmmakers have served to obscure and deflect the reasoned investigation [the film] tries, falteringly but with considerable integrity, to undertake” (29). These reviews may at least partly explain why, as Lindlof concludes, “At the end of its North American theatrical run, [the film] had played in only 140 theaters and grossed \$8,373,000, which put it in the bottom ten of 1988’s top one hundred releases” (10).

Furthermore, and without question, human civilization is wrought with religious influence and Scorsese’s Christ-narrative film suffered, at least partly, by the perils of its Christian condemnation; but that denunciation, as Kevin Fauteux warns, was naively misguided and injudicious:

Cries of condemnation and blasphemy serve as a psychological defense against these Christians’ recognition of their own frailties and temptations. Should they respond openly to such works as the “Last Temptation,” they too might awaken to the weakness and temptations that work helps reveal. But they are not willing to acknowledge, and probably feel incapable of managing, these inner longings and forbidden impulses. So they instead project them onto works of art that they then condemn. By condemning them, these men and women feel as if they have successfully silenced their own inner

urges. At the same time they preserve the sacred and solely acceptable image of a Jesus who exemplifies freedom from temptation. (200)

Insecurity, it seems, is at the root of fear towards works of art that question and explore possible answers, based on reason and logic, to the fundamental questions of who we are, how we got here, and why we are here. Religion's answers to these age-old questions have only served to forestall human psychosomatic interactions and understandings between the body and the mind, which has subsequently reverberated through prescribed normalizations of gender and sexuality manifested from man's writings and ensuing interpretations of canonical religious texts.

Nevertheless, Scorsese's astute capacity as an artist and filmmaker is brought to the foreground in his unique interpretation of the Christ-narrative. "In a sense," as Scorsese indicates, "it's an 'art film' according to the American definition, in other words not a commercial mainstream movie: it runs two hours and forty-three minutes and it was not made for exploitative reasons" (124). Scorsese utilizes traditional Hollywood dialog in shot/reverse-shot sequence editing, which grounds the narrative in visual familiarity; he cross-pollinates religion and cultural practices; he utilizes centuries of artistic works to inform his film's aesthetic to exquisite affect; and he purposely uses contemporary English demotic dialog. As Scorsese explains, "We wanted a straightforward representation of speech, anti-poetic in a way. Jay Cocks and I wrote the dialog as if we were speaking together, putting ourselves in the scenes and saying, how would we react?" (128), which is a rather provocative comment given the film's *queer* relationships within his interpretation of the Christ-narrative. Too, quintessentially, Scorsese's artistic rendition of the Christ-narrative fluctuates between conscious and unconscious visionary dream hallucinations that delve into gender and sexuality through the dual nature of Jesus's divinity and humanity.

Like Kazantzakis, although using the canonical texts as narrative story outline, what Scorsese brings to his cinematic personification of the Christ-narrative is a conceptualization, a “fictional exploration of the eternal spiritual conflict,” which Scorsese notes in the second opening title card of the film. Scorsese’s Jesus is dichotomized between divinity and humanness, which manifests through his psychosomatic conflict of belief in his divinity as the Son of God and then as well through his human sexuality. Scorsese exacerbates the conflict of Jesus’s belief in his divinity through a pendulum duality that swings between acceptance and debilitating resistance and fear throughout the film, which culminates as the prompting of Jesus’s last temptation. Finally, but no less significant, Scorsese sexualizes Jesus as crucial to his human nature. Viewed as such, Jesus’s sexuality extends across, through, and around both dualities of gender *and* sexuality. Thus, the film’s retractors perceive Jesus’s conflicted divinity and human sexuality to be the perverse act of Scorsese’s rendition of the Christ-narrative.

II

QUEER: GENDER & SEXUALITY

Gender and sexuality are queer. Such queerness is enacted in Martin Scorsese's personification of the Christ-narrative through, I contend, multiple modes of distinguishable theory: Queer, Homosocial, and Queer Heterosexuality. However, these three distinct theoretical modes consistently coalesce via a triptych lens that singularly focuses Jesus's duality of divine and human conflict within the gender and sexuality enacted within the film's narrative.

Specifically, the film's text symbiotically deploys all three modes of theory noted above through the Christ-narrative story of the protagonist, Jesus. Thus, although my analysis focuses primarily on the driving momentum, proportion, and tendency within each scene and sequence to expose its applicable individual theory, my analysis invariably intermingles these theories because Scorsese's Christ-narrative lends itself to the inevitability of fluidity, folding, and conflation.

"Queer" is a linguistic and theoretical term used to fluidify and integrate notions of gender and sexuality. Historically, as Judith Butler discloses, "The term 'queer' has operated as one linguistic practice whose purpose has been the shaming of the subject it names or, rather, the producing of a subject *through* that shaming interpellation. 'Queer' derives its force precisely through the repeated invocation by which it has become linked to accusation, pathologization, insult [emphasis in the original]" (226). Yet, throughout the last decade of the 20th century, on the cusp of what has become the "new" queer theory's firm establishment as an academic discourse, Lisa Duggan reports that the term queer "is often used to construct a collectivity no longer defined solely by the gender of its members' sexual partners. This new community is unified only by a shared dissent from the dominant organization of sex and gender [... and] better able to cross boundaries and construct more fluid identities" (165). Furthermore,

Annamarie Jagose finds that “queer locates and exploits the incoherencies in [...] which stabilize heterosexuality. Demonstrating the impossibility of any ‘natural’ sexuality, it calls into question even such apparently unproblematic terms as ‘man’ and ‘woman’” (3). Moreover, Michael Warner acknowledges that “‘queer’ represents, among other things, an aggressive impulse of generalization; it rejects a minoritizing logic of toleration or simple political interest-representation in favor of a more thorough resistance to regimes of the normal” (xxvi). Finally, most recently, and well within the new millennium, Kathryn Lofton concludes that “‘Queer’ has become an increasingly generic term for anyone who seeks to differentiate themselves from socially normative heterosexual experience” (197). In other words, queer is just another word for the stigmatized; it is anti-hegemonic, a label for non-normative gender and sexuality, and a progressive opposition to normativity. It is a term for difference.

For example, I’ve been queer all my life. My applicable qualitative data regarding queer begins publically with the first grade when my mother was told at a parent teacher conference that my social nature of which manifested in hanging my arm around, holding hands with, and sitting close to fellow students, regardless of gender, whenever the opportunity of whim and feeling presented itself was inappropriate and therefore must be squelched, broken, stopped immediately for the sake of the children, both for my own and my classmates. Being a young demonstrative child was different, stigmatized, named “queer,” both for its homosexual sense and for its odd, strange, and peculiar sense characteristic of a culture wherein such things were, and still are, not appropriate for the male gender to enact. When my mother told me to stop physicalizing my social interactions I argued that the girls were doing it amongst themselves all the time so why shouldn’t I and couldn’t I do the same. Lovingly, she dismissed my argument as my being too young to understand. But now, having been raised in the heart of America and

presently living as an adult, I know all too well why heterosexual men don't physicalize their social relations with other men: fear of homosexuality, or the implication of it by such enactments of physically social interactive behaviors between and among men. Regardless, today my difference, my uniqueness, my queer is manifested literally and figuratively both in my life and my work as an artist and filmmaker.

Accordingly, Scorsese's Christ-narrative enacts "queer" through the canonical Jesus's gestures of anti-establishment, characterization, and emphasis on his humanity. The orthodox life of Jesus is the story of one man acting divinely noble as purveyor of humanity's salvation against the status quo of what was tradition; a queer objective in and of itself. Martin Scorsese's Jesus, on the other hand, is characterized as passive, weak, and perpetually debilitated by fear, a fear that compels him to seek strength and comfort with Judas. In other words, Jesus finds comfort not with a woman but with another man. As well, and as the first, (and thus far only in the historiography of Christ-narrative films), Scorsese's focus on the human Jesus presents a sexual Jesus, which, as Daniel S. Cutrara discloses, "not only invades his consciousness, raising questions of Jesus's sinfulness, but also his subconscious, raising questions of his sexuality" (169). Scorsese's Jesus chooses the sole companionship of other men, his disciples, to support his role in facilitating his divine quest even though the disciples are barely legible in the film. At heart, Scorsese's Christ-narrative is bound up in Jesus's emotional, physical, and psychological relationship with Judas; in fact, it is Judas that ultimately impels him to abandon his dream of heteronormativity, climb back on the cross, and fulfill his destiny as the Messiah.

Furthermore, like the term queer, Scorsese's Christ narrative fluidifies, folds, and conflates the gender and sexuality of women through Mother Mary, Mary Magdalene, Mary Sister of Lazarus (Sister Mary), and Martha Sister of Lazarus (Martha). Women in the film

primarily serve to function as domestic production and human reproduction, which is reinforced by the mechanical notion that “there’s only one woman in the world,” stated by the film’s Girl Angel in the last temptation sequence. And, yet, it is not simply ironic that of the four women in the film, three of them share the same name, “Mary.” Further still, all four share the same first three letters of their name: “Mar.” The “mar” that marks their name as such introduces a provocative amalgamation of naming insofar as the “mar” in Mother Mary, Mary Magdalene, Sister Mary, and Martha points to bodies that are disfigured, impaired, and spoiled by the normative obligations of gender and sexuality assigned to women. Therefore, Scorsese enacts this Mar-y/ta conflation into “multiple Mars.” The gesture serves as a hail of obligatory heterosexuality that weighs upon the life of Jesus against an unconscious queer sexual desire that, I contend, Scorsese presents with the first of two divine visionary dream hallucinations, which are illuminations manifested by God.

In 1976, during the 200th anniversary of the United States’ Declaration of Independence, Jean Lipman-Blumen “define[d] ‘homosocial’ as the seeking, enjoyment, and/or preference for the company of the same sex. It is distinguished from ‘homosexual’ in that it does not *necessarily* involve (although it may under certain circumstances) an explicitly erotic sexual interaction between members of the same sex [emphasis in the original]” (16). Furthermore, as Dana M. Britton summarizes, “Men homosocial in outlook prefer other men’s company and also work to maintain all-male institutions” (425). Still, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick acknowledges, “To draw the ‘homosocial’ back into the orbit of ‘desire,’ of the potentially erotic, then, is to hypothesize the potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual” (1-2). Scorsese’s Christ-narrative takes full advantage of this continuum by smudging the line of

distinction between homosocial and homosexual through homoeroticism enacted and, as well, manifested through a divine visionary dream hallucination.

Scorsese's film directs a queer homosocial bond between Jesus and Judas from which enacts a homoerotic buddy-film relationship that operates in tandem with queer relationships between Jesus and the multiple Mars, which act as "subplots" to the Christ-narrative Central Plot. The film's dual subplots are critical to the Christ-narrative Central Plot and its multiple threads of desire. Robert McKee defines subplots as "receiv[ing] less emphasis and screentime [*sic*] than a Central Plot, [*which in this case is the Christ-narrative*]", but often it's the invention of a subplot that lifts a troubled screenplay to a film worth making" (226). All four of McKee's reasons for the subplot relationships to the Central Plot are utilized in the Scorsese film:

[1:] A subplot may be used to contradict the Controlling Idea of the Central Plot and thus enrich the film with irony. [2:] Subplots may be used to resonate the Controlling Idea of the Central Plot and enrich the film with variations on a theme. [3:] When the Central Plot's Inciting Incident must be delayed, a setup subplot may be needed to open the storytelling. [4: A] subplot may be used to complicate the Central Plot. (227-9)

Thus, the Jesus, Judas, and the multiple Mars subplots are constructed to contradict, resonate, enrich, and complicate Scorsese's "Central Plot" Christ-narrative. First, the relationship between Jesus and Judas contradicts the relationship with Jesus and the multiple Mars, and both contradict the canonical tradition of Jesus as an asexual that fulfills divinity as the Messiah. Second, the relationship among Jesus, Judas, and the multiple Mars resonate Scorsese's humanization of the Christ-narrative. Third, Scorsese's Christ-narrative portrays a debilitated Jesus unable to pursue his quest and, in fact, working to escape what we know is his destiny. Hence, to complicate Christ's destiny in relation to the idea of a human Christ-figure, a subplot

(or two) is essential to expand Jesus's humanity through relationships with other humans in intimate ways. And fourth, the Judas and multiple Mars subplots complicate the Christ-narrative because they work as antithesis to the central plot. Hence, and in short, Scorsese's Christ-narrative enacts subplots of gender and sexuality to elaborate on the humanness of Jesus through the personifications of Judas and the multiple Mars, which bear directly on Jesus's Central Plot quest for divine fulfillment.

Importantly, because Jesus does not start out in the film pursuing his traditional Christ-narrative quest but, rather, he avoids it, the opportunity to set up two complicating, alternating, and opposing subplots act as a way to revive the Christ-narrative into a more complexly-rendered personification of his human experience. As such, the subplot relationship between Jesus and Judas is established within the first five minutes of the film while the subplot narrative with Mary Magdalene (the principle figure within the multiple Mars conflation) is established approximately twelve minutes into the film. Ultimately, the humanized Jesus is only enriched by his queer relationship with Judas because their homosocial and subsequent homoerotic bond acts as a safe resonate to the film's central premise that Jesus was, in fact, human, and therefore one who is sexual, conflicted, and afraid. In this way, the polygamous relationship within the subplot of the multiple Mars serves only as an antagonistic trope to the homosocial subplot.

Scorsese's Christ-narrative subplots, which not only put into tension the Central Plot but the subplots among themselves, involve the intimate human relationships between Jesus, Judas, and the multiple Mars insofar as they can only be described as "queer heterosexuality." This sounds like an oxymoron; however, it has become a theoretical term in studies of gender and sexuality. Queer heterosexuality, as Celia Kitzinger and Sue Wilkinson note, "has come to refer to those people who, while doing what is conventionally defined as 'heterosexuality,'

nonetheless do so in ways which are transgressive of ‘normaility’” (451). These transgressions show, as Clyde Smith discloses, “that human sexual activities are complex in ways that go beyond labels such as gay and straight but that many if not most of us have unrevealed potentials for experimentation” (1).

Furthermore, queer heterosexuality is lived in multiple ways. For example, as Tristan Taormino reports, “In some cases, it’s based on either one or both partners having non-traditional gender expressions, [...] Some queer heterosexuals are strongly aligned with queer community, culture, politics, and activism [...] and he] also consider[s] folks who embrace alternative models of sexuality and relationships (polyamory, [polygamy], non-monogamy, BDSM, cross-dressing) to be queer” (1). Finally, according to Annette Schlichter, queer heterosexuality “aims at the de- and possible reconstruction of heterosexual subjectivity (545) [and, moreover, that the] disaffiliation from the hegemonic project through queer aspiration appears as an individualist and voluntarist endeavor” (555). Thus, the theory of queer heterosexuality is a narrow field with only a handful of people coming out as such and claiming the title in academic and cultural discourse. Yet, Scorsese’s Christ-narrative enacts precisely queer heterosexuality through the human life lived by Jesus as a result of his subplot relationships with Judas and the multiple Mars in which, as the final dream sequence portrays, only suggests Jesus’s desire for heteronormativity.

Thus far, the theory of queer heterosexuality is contingent on a person’s naming, claiming, and proclaiming through self-identification; it requires a conscious awareness of self sexually and an intellectualism to own that identity. But what does one call those who may not be fully aware of their self, sexually? Or how does one refer to a person who has not lived bisexually but who has sexual visions, dreams, and hallucinations that involve queer sexuality? Bisexuality requires a knowing *and* doing of sexual intercourse with both genders, together or

separate from each other in practice; but one isn't exclusively heterosexual if, as in the case of Scorsese's Christ-narrative Jesus, their divined by God visionary dream hallucination involves a metaphor for sex with someone of the same sex. Therefore, I apply "queer heterosexuality" as the applicable theoretical term to include such persons because queer heterosexuality involves the unconscious fluidity of sexual desire. Sexual desire is therefore manifested and performed through sexualized queer, social, and erotic experiences within divine visionary dream hallucinations; and Scorsese's Christ-narrative portrays this through Jesus.

In a rather long sequence, with no dialog, Scorsese conveys what I argue as evidence for an even broader expansion on the meaning of queer heterosexuality. The human Jesus, on behalf of the divine Jesus, derogates Magdalene's financial promiscuity on the basis that it performs a lack of self-respect. Yet, ironically, the canonical Jesus *and* the message of Scorsese's Christ-narrative Jesus proclaims in the film's Sermon on the Mount, "We're all a family." He argues that his metaphorical seed is "Love, love one another." Jesus then goes on to explain: "You're thirsty for justice, for people to treat you fairly, for people to treat you with respect. ... To love, share, and comfort. ... Mourners will be blessed. ... And the meek ... and the suffering ... and the peacemakers, and the merciful, and the sick, and the poor, and the outcasts, you'll all be blessed because heaven is yours!"

If we are to take Jesus at his word, a word wherefrom he'll "just open his mouth and God will do the talking," then why does Jesus condemn one domestic space over the other, a duality of condemnation marked as right or wrong? Likewise, within his seeking Mary Magdalene for condolence from the clawing headache that debilitates his journey of divine awareness, Jesus perceives a princely Young Man standing outside the front door to Magdalene's domestic space as "one of God's angels, he came down to show me the way" and yet the Young Man is a patron

of Mary Magdalene, but Jesus imposes a judgment on her for enacting control over her body's production; a production solicited by "one of God's angels."

Finally, several dream hallucinations occur throughout the film but only two are actually visionary dream hallucinations divined by God. As such, these dreams intersect, mirror, and conflate these multiple theories of queer, homosocial, and queer heterosexuality through edited cinematic juxtaposition. Although, according to Melanie J. Wright, "film's basic building blocks are the shot (the photographic record made when the film is exposed to light, or its digital equivalent) and the editorial cut (the transition between shots made in the pre-digital age by splicing the end of one shot to the beginning of another) but little religion (or theology) and film work explores these fundamentals" (22), it is precisely this act of an "editorial cut" from which triggers the divine key that ultimately queers gender and sexuality in Scorsese's Christ-narrative film. In other words, through the fluidic, folding, and conflating nature of gender and sexuality, Scorsese dichotomizes Jesus between a conscious queered heterosexuality and an unconscious homosexuality, both divined by God that, in turn, queerly mirrors the canonical gender and sexuality of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Ultimately, Scorsese's Christ-narrative Jesus, as well as the canonical Jesus, (the Lord and Savior, the Messiah of Christianity), is undeniably queer because Jesus whole-heartedly loved humanity and believed that by sacrificing his life for us our humanity could and would be freed and forgiven from sin, which was a sin that began with the original sin of Adam and Eve; the ruse of eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that exposed gender and sexuality as not the sin but the divine creation of gender and sexuality as queer.

III

EVIDENTIARY AESTHETICS

Before entering the movie theater, most audiences already realize the Central Plot of the Christ-narrative; they know how it ends, but what they may not know is how Martin Scorsese's interpretation, his humanized Christ-narrative, will play itself out within Jesus's quest to fulfill his role as the Messiah. What we ultimately experience in Scorsese's version is a Jesus who is almost always passive, resistant to believing in his divine birth, and therefore reluctant to choose to pursue his quest as Holy Savior of humankind, as Messiah, which acts as the central conflict for Scorsese's Christ-narrative story. Jesus's avoidance of his role of divinity in Scorsese's film is fundamentally strange and unfamiliar against the traditional portrayal of Jesus in Hollywood's previous cinematic Christ-narratives; in other words, Scorsese's Christ-narrative personification is queer to the normativity of Jesus depictions.

Scorsese's directorial resistance of Jesus to identify as the Messiah is established from the onset of the film. After the opening quote, disclaimer, and minimal opening title credits from which the last, (the director's), title card has faded out, the screen quickly fades into a swift moving God's point of view as if the camera is a bird flying past and through trees and brush landscape. In other words, as audience, you feel as though, just like the bird, you are flying through a swift landing onto the lowest limb of a tall tree, which is eventually confirmed by the screeching sound of an eagle, one we never actually see, followed by a few gentle caws of said unseen eagle. Kathleen Martin explains that the eagle, a truly magnificent bird of which is an American icon, symbolizes "The wings of an angel, those messengers of unflinching gaze and transcendent vision" (256). The image cuts to a directly overhead aerial wide full shot of Jesus, (Willem Dafoe), lying on his left side along the ground with his eyes closed, wearing a dark

robe, and in his bare feet. The image cuts to a level point of view full shot of Jesus, and then cuts again to a close-up of his face:

Jesus narrates: “The feeling begins. Very tender, very loving. Then the pain starts.”

With eyes still closed, Jesus tightly cringes his forehead as he rolls back with his hand clasping behind his head:

Jesus continues to narrate: “Claws slip underneath the skin and tear their way up. Just before they reach my eyes, they dig in. ... And I remember.”

Jesus opens his eyes in sudden relief from the pain as he stares forward, off-screen, and then abruptly stands, which moves him out of frame and the image cuts to the next scene. In this opening introduction to Jesus, Scorsese establishes that the man’s antagonism is internal, stemming from a psychological pain manifesting within his head, and, moreover, his conflict is not in any way a traditional depiction of the Christ-narrative Jesus.

The Foundation of Queer

Although the disciples play a very minor supporting role in Martin Scorsese’s human struggle within the Christ-narrative, they, nevertheless, personify the queer homosocial dynamics inherent in a group of men living together with no mention of women ever from them in their lives over the course of their part in the film’s narrative. “Scorsese diverges widely from both [the Nikos] Kazantzakis [novel] and the gospels,” Lloyd Baugh notes; “together they establish a community of love, in which he teaches them, observes and comments on their behavior, and entrusts to them his mission. The Gospel Jesus, in a certain sense, needs the disciples, and his relationship with them is rich, varied and mutually beneficial” (65) but that does not occur within Scorsese’s interpretation of Kazantzakis’s rendition the Christ-narrative.

Furthermore, Scorsese's Christ-narrative reveals implications of homosexuality through the suggestion of homosocial eroticism between the disciples. Immediately after Jesus and Judas have established the founding of disciples, at night in an exterior wooded graveled olive grove on the outskirts of town, a medium shot of James, John, and Peter features them as they lay down to sleep beside one another, spooning for warmth toward the right side of the frame by a small fire just off-screen on the left side of the frame. James is in the foreground, John is in the middle, and Peter is in the background:

Peter: "Move over, John."

John: "Move over, James."

James: "I was just comfortable."

John: "Peter wants to lay down."

James: "Peter, there's no more room."

Peter: "I'm cold. I want to be by the fire."

The image cuts to a close-up on Judas as he discerns them off-screen before him:

James, off-screen: "Go over by Phillip. We're all cold."

Peter, off-screen: "Shut up."

There is nothing in the shots or the sequence as a whole to suggest that there is a need beyond body contact that necessitates their spooning proximity with one another. In other words, if warmth were the sole objective then the fire would satisfy that requirement so the excuse that there is no more room is not supported by the vast empty space behind Peter within the circumference of the fire's periphery. When Judas looks over to his off-screen right the image cuts to a medium shot on Phillip, Nathaniel, and Andrew lying relatively close together under an olive tree. Phillip, seated, looks up at Judas with a curiously suggestive allure. The image cuts

back to a medium shot of Judas's waist as he moves across the frame, and the camera follows with him away from the sleeping disciples, toward the background of the frame. Consequently, the physical closeness, the cuddling within this scene eroticizes the homosocial relations and the queer tendency of the disciples, which implies homosexuality.

The Scorsese Christ-narrative Central Plot's limited use of the disciples beyond physical presence and a few intermittent dialogue exchanges nevertheless does also function as significant to the personification of queer in the Garden of Gethsemane between Jesus and John. In the silent dark of the night the scene opens on a close-up of a tree as the camera slowly moves forward, through the garden like a ghost, and stops on a rock clearing. The camera pans back around and stops in a medium shot where we see, from left to right, Peter, John, and James:

Jesus, off-screen: "Wait for me here."

The camera pans back around again as Jesus walks over to the rock clearing and kneels to assume a ground-seated prayer position with his hands clasped upon his inner lap while composed on the left side of the frame facing into the center of the frame, with his head down. The image cuts to a high-angle, tightly framed full shot that looks down on Jesus; the camera then slowly floats down to a close-up facing Jesus, which mirrors the same approach by God to Jesus earlier in the first divine experience.

As Jesus kneels under the glow of the moonlight, hands clasped in solemn prayer, he first honors, then begs, and then weeps to God for his life:

Jesus: "... Can I ask you ... one last time? Do I have to die? Is there any other way?

You're offering me a cup, but I don't want to drink what's in it. Please, take it away. Please, stop. Please, Father. Father. Please."

Jesus looks up to the sky, the wind blows over his face, and he stops sobbing. He hears a set of footsteps, looks to his right off-screen and the camera pulls back to reveal John standing before him in the foreground. John holds a bowl in his hand. Jesus looks from John to a full shot of John, Peter, and James lying down and asleep in the distance. The image cuts to a medium shot of John, asleep, as the camera then quickly pans right to John in a close-up looking at Jesus. In other words, Jesus looks at both a sleeping John and a vision of a not-sleeping John kneeling before him. The awake-John extends to Jesus the bowl cupped in his hands:

Jesus: "Is this your answer?"

John brings the bowl back toward himself as he drinks from the cup and then extends it back toward Jesus. Jesus takes the cup from John with both hands. John rises to his feet and moves behind Jesus as he lays his hands upon his shoulders and runs one hand down along Jesus's hair and then rests both hands on each of Jesus's shoulders:

Jesus: "All right. Just please give me the strength."

Jesus then drinks from the cup. This is the first and only intimate physical contact Jesus has with any disciple other than Judas. Nevertheless, within Scorsese's Christ-narrative John's gentle caress and loving touch are manifestations of God's divine love for Jesus from which reflects a homosocial, indeed homoerotic, queer reading of the film. Incidentally, this enactment is the second and final divine visionary dream hallucination condoned by God in Scorsese's film.

For the Love of, Judas?!

The first subplot that is introduced immediately follows Jesus lying on the ground in the film's opening scene shot sequence, which cuts to a full shot of the interior of a room built of mud and rock. There are large clay plates, vases, and an open square window where sunlight

beams through and dust lingers in the air against the far background wall. We hear the sound of hammering as the camera slowly dollies to the right:

Jesus narrates: “First I fasted for three months. I even whipped myself before I went to sleep.”

The camera stops on Jesus, in a medium shot, carving a long tree trunk into a rectangle beam approximately six feet in length:

Jesus narrates: “At first it worked. Then the pain came back; and the voices, they call me by name: Jesus.”

Jesus lifts the beam across two wood support pegs and then he stretches his arms across both sides, which foreshadows himself hanging on the cross but in this instance he faces the beam instead of facing outward. Furthermore, he has self-inflicted lashes across his back. Hence, Jesus’s self-flagellation is a form of sadomasochism, which suggests non-normative, ant-hegemonic, and thus, queer sexuality.

The reversed crucified image of Jesus cuts again to a medium shot as Jesus, in slow motion, abruptly rises into frame:

Jesus narrates: “Who is it? Who are you? Why are you following me?”

The image cuts to a medium shot that immediately zooms into a close-up on a wood slat door as it bursts open and a man stands outside with his face wrapped in linen, except for his eyes. In shot/reverse-shot sequence, Jesus stares very wide-eyed and fearful at the man before him off-screen, which reverses back to the close shot on the man, who steps forward into the house as he unwraps the linen from around his face. The man, as it turns out, is Judas, (Harvey Keitel). Jesus stands with his body facing the beam he was carving but he is looking away and down from the off-screen Judas as if ashamed. This image cuts to a close shot of Jesus, from his waist to his

knees, as he gently hangs the chisel on a peg behind him. This sequence suggests that Judas is a relief from Jesus's pain; the chisel acts as the physicalized object clawing through his skull but with the arrival of Judas comes a letting go, a hanging up of the chisel, the symbolic source of his pain. However, so too the dialog questions and the subsequent shot sequence also suggests Judas is the source of the pain, which positions Judas as authority, as acting on behalf of God; and this duality is enacted throughout Scorsese's Christ-narrative.

There is a domesticity to the mud and rock walled interior of this particular workroom, as well as to Jesus's and Judas's interactions throughout their following scene together. Jesus, on the left side of the frame and in the foreground, moves off-screen while Judas, in the background on the right side of the frame, is crouched, rinsing his hands and blotting his face from a bowl of water. He appears like a spouse having returned home from a soiled and sweaty day's work. Judas stands and follows behind Jesus while the camera follows him to reveal Jesus sitting on a stool as Judas approaches him. Bearing in mind that Jesus is shirtless, the image cuts to a low angle close-up from behind Jesus on the bottom left of the frame. Jesus looks up at Judas as he enters the frame and Judas looks down on Jesus:

Judas: "Are you ready?"

The image is the first in which we see the two of them framed together in a mutual shot, stitched together through an assemblage of high- and low-angled compositions, which further establishes, psychologically, the dominant and passive dynamic between the two men. Here, Jesus is the passive and Judas is the dominant – a dynamic emphasized throughout the film. Their looks and corporeal exchanges are presented in shot/reverse shot format. Jesus looks off-screen, from the left side of the frame toward the right, and then turns away from Judas's direction, which implies a dismissive response to Judas's initial question of whether or not Jesus is ready.

Judas: “No. No. No more crosses. We’re ready.”

Jesus looks dazed, distraught, and confused as Judas leans down, grabs hold of his shoulders, and shakes him:

Judas: “Do you hear? Where’s your mind? Do you hear what I’m saying?”

Jesus rises out of frame and the shot reverses to a profile close-up on Judas, on the right side of the frame, as Jesus rises into frame on the left:

Jesus: “The Messiah won’t come that way.”

Jesus walks out of frame, past Judas, who watches after him. This dueling beat within this scene establishes a conflicted homosocial bond between Jesus and Judas, which is symbolic of Jesus and God; Judas is ready and Jesus is not, but the reason for this is yet to be revealed in the continuing scene’s sequences of exchange between them.

Jesus walks out of the right side of the frame and Judas turns and follows from the left, with the camera panning with Judas:

Judas: “What do you mean by that? Who told you?”

Judas approaches Jesus, who has returned to the beam. Jesus stands silent as he stares down before himself and Judas looks at him, puzzled. Jesus takes hold of the beam to resume carving but Judas grabs it from him and throws it to the ground; he smashes dishes along the way as he stomps and then spits on the beam. Jesus stares downward as Judas repeatedly points at him:

Judas: “You’re a disgrace! Romans can’t find anybody to make crosses except for you!

You do it! You’re worse than them! You’re a Jew killing Jews. You’re a coward.”

Jesus remains still, silent, and ashamed. Judas storms past him toward the exit off-screen. The image cuts to a medium shot on Judas as he moves into the open doorway to exit but then he turns to face Jesus, who is now off-screen:

Judas: “How will you ever pay for your sins?”

Jesus, off-screen: “With my life, Judas.”

The image cuts to a medium shot on Jesus as he now kneels before the smashed dishes and looks up at Judas, off-screen:

Jesus: “I don’t have anything else.”

This beat establishes the central conflict for Jesus while also revealing to Judas his feelings of life and death vulnerability, which is a homosocial bonding act of trust and faith.

In this sequence, Judas, I argue, responds to Jesus with homoerotic compassion. In other words, the performances, the *mise-en-scène*, the cinematography, and the editing reveal the Jesus-Judas relationship as erotically charged. Hence, Judas stands in the doorway and then moves toward Jesus, the camera panning with him. Judas kneels down behind Jesus and fervently tries to take hold of Jesus’s face as Jesus resists looking at him:

Judas: “Don’t turn away. Look at me. Look at me.”

This sequence in which Judas cups Jesus’s face with his hands is cut in shot/reverse pattern as the two men kneel almost fully embraced with one another as one:

Judas: “With your life. What do you mean?”

Jesus: “Please, Judas.”

Jesus, vulnerable, looks up at Judas:

Jesus: “I don’t know if ... I don’t know.”

Jesus looks at Judas tragically, as if he is about to cry. Jesus then kisses and cuddles the hands of Judas, who then slowly rises out of frame. Jesus holds Judas’s hand with both of his as he looks down off-screen and Judas gently pulls his hand away. Judas looks down on Jesus, who is now off-screen below him:

Judas: “Are you still taking the cross?”

This image composition is a repeat of the dominant and passive homosocial, homoerotic, and sadomasochistic composition I discussed earlier between the two. In other words, as Jesus begs for Judas’s love and support, Judas uses dominance to wield power over the passive Jesus.

Nevertheless, Jesus asserts dominance in his positionality regardless of his physical passivity. Jesus looks up confident at Judas, off-screen:

Jesus: “Yes, I am.”

Judas yanks Jesus up from the ground from under his arms:

Judas: “No, you’re not.”

Judas smacks Jesus’s body as Jesus is crouched over and now moving backward until Jesus is backed up and leaning against a wall. The image cuts to a close-up of Judas on the left side of the frame facing Jesus on the right as Judas grabs hold of Jesus’s shoulders and shakes him. The following dialog exchange is also cut in shot/reverse shot between the two men:

Judas: “I won’t let you! No! I won’t let you!”

Jesus looks down with his eyes, ashamed.

Jesus: “Please, I beg you, Judas. Don’t get in the way.”

Judas: “What way?”

Judas looks at Jesus and then gently cups Jesus’s face, ears, and jawline with both of his hands:

Judas: “What’s happened to you? Who’s doing this to you?”

Jesus: “I’m struggling.”

Judas: “With whom?”

Jesus: “I don’t know. I’m struggling.”

Judas: “No.”

Judas removes his cupping hands from Jesus's head:

Judas: "No."

Judas charges toward the front door and the medium shot follows him with a quick pan and then a quicker forward zoom in on Judas to a close shot as he turns back to Jesus, now off-screen:

Judas: "I struggle."

He points at Jesus, who is still off-screen.

Judas: "You collaborate."

Judas turns and exits through the open doorway. The image cuts to a close-up of Jesus as he watches after Judas exiting off-screen and the shot lingers, which concludes the scene and sequence between the two men.

The introduction of the subplot of Judas and his relationship to Jesus is configured to establish Judas as the dominant in what clearly reads as a queer, homosocial, and homoerotic relationship with a passive Jesus. At the very least, the physical and psychological homosocial interactions between them are unsettlingly queer in terms of what American society defines as acceptable or normative heterosexual social dynamics between men. Furthermore, as Joey Eschrich finds in his study of the construction of Jesus's masculinity in American cinema, "Jesus'[s] masculinity is challenged through comparison with a more traditional model, generally Judas [... yet,] This 'strong man' is in some way humbled by Jesus, often in the spectacle of his crucifixion" (533). In America, heterosexual men do not kiss, touch, or even hold hands with other men without fear of stigmatization, without fear of being branded a queer. Nevertheless, in Scorsese's introduction scene to the bond between Jesus and Judas, as well as throughout the rest of their affinity in his rendition of the Christ-narrative, the homosocial dynamic between these two men personify a queer relationship.

Judas the Lion; Judas the Heart

Judas is later found in the desert, through Jesus's hallucination, as a lion. When Jesus enters the desert to meditate and seek out God, what he actually finds, subconsciously, is the fluidic folding conflation of gender and sexuality. Tattered and tired, Jesus wanders through a stark barren gravel desert. He stops and stands on a flat area before a large rock mountain as backdrop, picks up a small rock, and drags it through the gravel to make roughly a ten-foot diameter circle around him, which he produces in perfect symmetry:

Jesus: "I'm not going to leave this circle. I'm not going to leave here until you speak to me. No signs, no pain. Just speak to me in human words. Whatever path you want, I'll take; love, or the ax, or anything else. Now if you want me to stay here and die, I'll do that too. But you have to tell me."

Jesus finishes his circle, tosses the rock out of frame, and sits himself central within the circle. The camera cuts to a quick zoom close-up facing Jesus and then fades to black.

As the desert sequence proceeds, Jesus is visited by three unique characters as visionary dream hallucinations, which are all manifested by Satan, not God, unbeknownst to Jesus and the viewer. The first vision is a black cobra, the second is a male lion, and the third is a flame torch shooting from the earth, all of which occur at night before Jesus from just outside the circle. However, it is important to note that, as Kathleen Martin, editor of, *The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images*, explains, "Sheer deprivation exaggerates basic needs into hallucinatory longings, conjuring both literal mirages (a natural refraction of light caused by the desert's prismatic atmosphere) and haunting fantasies of tantalizing voluptuaries and airy banquets" (116). Hence, Scorsese's Jesus believes that these dream hallucinations are divine progressive tests that end with the final torch flame as God revealing himself and conveying his

quest for Jesus. Yet, furthermore, sleep deprivation and dream hallucinations are a human body experience, which is relevant to Scorsese's humanized Jesus because the film's narrative personifies that humanness throughout his divinity as the Messiah.

In the second desert dream hallucination of imagery and dialog, the Lion is represented. Here the symbolism of king of the jungle is matched with the voice of Judas. As Martin summarizes about this symbolic image: “[The Lion’s] prestige is not of swiftness but strength, and lithe elegance, lusty sensuality, sumptuous pelage. Conveying protective grace and noble authority, they have inspired everything from warrior societies and shamanic magic to some of our oldest, most commanding images of majestic divinity” (268). The merging of the symbolic Lion with the voice of Judas expands on the queer tendency of the homosocial and, at times, homoerotic relationship between Jesus and Judas.

What is further noteworthy in this scene is that Judas states he is Jesus's heart. The heart is a symbol of love and, although it suggests the nature of Jesus's divine character and intention, it also suggests that the heart of the relationship between Jesus and Judas is that of love. The homosocial love between these two men has already been personified in previous scenes and this dream hallucination sequence only adds to reinforce their queer love for one another. In other words, the voice of the Lion could have been cast with an anonymous voice but Scorsese chose Judas in order to affirm the symbolic bond, the union between these two kings: Jesus as king of kings and Judas as king of the jungle.

Judas the Monogamist

The homosocial bond between Jesus and Judas continues to evolve and grow stronger as the film progresses in Scorsese's Christ-narrative. Judas asserts his commitment to Jesus and their relationship by renouncing his past commitments and solidifying his present one with Jesus.

At night, along the outskirts of town, Judas, in a close-up, lies by a small fire leaning against his left arm. A few disciples are seen in the distant blurred background sitting and laying around another small fire of their own. In shot/reverse-shot, the scene opens in mid-conversation wherein Judas is explaining why the Zealots killed Lazarus in the previous scene:

Judas: "... That's what the Zealots want; their revolution, not yours."

The image cuts to a close-up on Jesus as he lies by the small fire casually leaning back against his right arm and a large boulder behind him. Jesus looks down at the fire, then up at Judas:

Jesus: "You want to go back to them?"

Judas lovingly looks at Jesus before him off-screen with a heartfelt smirk and a glint in his eyes before responding:

Judas: "No, you're the one I follow."

Jesus, equally loving and relieved, grins back at Judas before him off-screen. Jesus then relays a memory story of a visit with Isaiah. When Jesus has finished, Judas smirks while nodding as if understanding, and then embarrassed, he looks across at Jesus:

Judas: "I don't understand."

Jesus: "Judas, I am the lamb. I'm the one who's going to die."

Judas, agitated: "Die? You mean you're not the Messiah?"

Jesus: "I am."

Judas, more agitated: "That can't be. If you're the Messiah, why do you have to die?"

Jesus: "Listen. At first, I didn't understand myself - "

Judas interrupts him: "No, you, listen! Every day you have a different plan! First it's love, then it's the ax, and now you have to die. What good could that do?"

Jesus: "I can't help it. God only talks to me a little at a time. He only tells me as much as I need to know."

Judas: "We need you alive!"

Yet, it seems as though it is Judas that "needs" Jesus alive. The homosocial relationship for Judas has abruptly turned from affirmation to rejection and a fear of loss. Judas refuses to believe that Jesus must die and, more importantly, that he will lose his queer bond, his love with Jesus, with whom he has willingly chosen to follow at the expense of his original path he planned to take with the Zealots. Nevertheless, Judas does not abandon Jesus and, in fact, remains his closest ally who protects him in his further desperate times of need.

Judas Weeps

In the temple hall where Jesus has led his followers and the disciples to destroy the temple market, we see them in a medium-long shot; the camera is placed behind Jesus as Jesus looks down on the crowd:

Jesus: "I am here to set fire to the world. In the desert, the Baptist warned us, God is coming. Well, I'm telling you it's too late. He's already here. I'm here. And I'm going to baptize everybody with fire!"

Then, suddenly, various shots of the Roman soldiers surrounding the crowd with swords and daggers while the crowd falls silent. The disciples and the crowd look to Jesus for guidance, for a sign, as Jesus, terrified, looks up to the sky and then down as the camera pans with his look onto his open palmed hands where blood flows from their centers. We cut again to the crowd, with Peter seen in the lower left corner, Thomas in the middle, and John in the lower right of the frame. The crowd stares silently, afraid. The image cuts to Judas amongst the crowd and then cuts to the close-up on Jesus's bleeding palms as thunder rolls louder. The camera then pans up

to Jesus, terrified as he looks across at Judas off-screen, but who now enters the frame and wraps his hand around Jesus to comfort him as he stands beside him:

Jesus: "Judas, help me! Stay with me. Don't leave me."

Judas looks around at the off-screen crowd and then leads Jesus forward. The image cuts to a full shot on the crowd from behind Jesus as Judas safeguards Jesus through the now disgruntled crowd as the soldiers invade the temple. Thus, in Jesus's time of need, his homosocial relationship with Judas is there to protect him.

The next scene looks down a long stone-enclosed corridor as the screaming crowd is barely visibly seen in the far right background of the frame and Judas cuddles Jesus as they walk along the corridor toward the left of the frame. The camera dollies with them to the end of the corridor and then stops as Judas sets Jesus down against a wall where they are now completely alone. Judas walks away from Jesus confused and distraught. Judas looks to the sky, and then returns to sit beside Jesus. The images between the two men cut in a shot/reverse-shot pattern as Judas feels Jesus's forehead:

Jesus, distraught: "I wish there was another way. I'm sorry, but there isn't. I have to die on the cross."

Judas places his hand upon Jesus's cheek, tender, loving:

Judas: "I won't let you die."

Jesus: "You have no choice, neither do I. Remember, we're bringing God and man together. They'll never be together unless I die. I'm the sacrifice. Without you, there can be no redemption. Forget everything else. Understand that."

Judas: "No, I can't. Get somebody stronger."

Jesus: “You promised me. Remember, you once told me that if I moved one step from revolution, you’d kill me. Remember?”

Judas: “Yes.”

Jesus: “I’ve strayed, haven’t I?”

Judas: “Yes.”

Jesus: “Then you must keep your promise. You have to kill me.”

Judas: “If that’s what God wants, let God do it. I won’t.”

Jesus: “He will do it through you. The temple guards will be looking for me where there aren’t any crowds. We’ll go to Gethsemane. You’ll make sure that they find me.”

Judas turns away toward the screen:

Jesus: “I am going to die. But after three days, I’ll come back, in victory.”

The image cuts to a close-up of Judas, positioned on the left side of the frame while Jesus is positioned on the right. Disgruntled, Judas shakes his head and Jesus turns Judas’s head toward him by placing his hand on Judas’s cheek and holding it there. They are very close, as if they are about to gently kiss. Judas touches Jesus’s wrist:

Jesus: “You can’t leave me. You have to give me strength.”

Judas: “If you were me, could you betray your master?”

Jesus slowly drops his hand and sits back:

Jesus: “No. That’s why God gave me the easier job. To be crucified.”

They stare into each other’s eyes. Judas then looks down, raises his hand to cover his face, and weeps as Jesus comforts him by wrapping his arm around Judas and gently holding him; a reversal of the scene’s beginning; as well, a mirrored reversal of their established homosocial dynamic wherein Judas was the dominant to a passive Jesus.

Without question, Jesus and Judas have an undying love for one another; so much so for Judas that the idea of Jesus's death brings about his heartfelt shedding of tears. This love is a result of their homosocial bond that, more than once, crosses into homoeroticism. This queer male-to-male bonding is not just an odd or peculiar relationship based on American standards of masculinity; moreover, it is romantic and suggestive of their queer heterosexuality.

Perhaps this is what Kevin Fauteux means when he suggests, "Jesus' struggle with temptation inspired Scorsese to confront, rather than hide, his own forbidden impulses and weaknesses. Usually these feelings are kept securely hidden because people find them unacceptable and even unmanageable. The artist's canvas, however, or film and dance, is a safe means of expressing these inner longings and anxieties" (197). I am not suggesting, certainly, Scorsese is homosexual but his desire to make the film opens to the critic a queer reading: "'So I can get to know Jesus better.' In a way all my life I wanted to do that [...] I felt that maybe the process of making this film would make me feel a little more fulfilled" (120), as Scorsese in, *Scorsese on Scorsese*, comments; and, moreover, that the film "makes you question and maybe understand the concept of loving a little better" (130). Scorsese's desire to "question" suggests that he may, at the very least, understand the queer nature of homosocial relationships. This is not a one-off possibility when one reflects on the multiple cinematically personal narratives he has made over the course of his career. Regardless, in Scorsese's Christ-narrative the queer homosocial love between Jesus and Judas has yet to be consummated; but Scorsese, in fact, allows for this, and it finally occurs in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The Kiss in the Garden of Gethsemane

In the Garden of Gethsemane, after Jesus has begged God for his life and John has appeared before him as the second divine visionary dream hallucination, the scene continues

with a cut to a full shot of John, James, and Peter sleeping. While they sleep, the camera moves toward them as we hear the sound of footsteps. Jesus enters the frame and approaches them:

Jesus: “Couldn’t you stay awake with me for just an hour?”

Peter wakes: “I’m sorry.”

They all wake to the off-screen sound of men shouting indistinctly as the camera pans around and moves into a full close-up on Jesus:

Jesus: “It doesn’t matter. It’s too late.”

An off-screen bird chirps and Jesus looks up toward the sky. The image cuts to a close-up on Judas as he walks in from the background, followed by a dozen soldiers behind him. The camera pans around to face Jesus standing in front of James, John, and Peter. Judas walks into frame from the foreground and takes Jesus by the shoulders with a gentle smile in his expression:

Judas: “Welcome, Rabbi.”

The image then cuts to a profile close-up of Jesus, who is positioned in the left of the frame with Judas situated to the right. In this shot, Judas kisses Jesus on the mouth for three seconds, which, in film time, is a very long kiss. They then whole-heartedly embrace. The image cuts to a close-up on Judas with his eyes open, from behind Jesus, embracing one another for four more seconds. This final impassioned kiss and then embrace acts as the subplot’s narrative climax.

Jesus and Judas’s homosocial relationship kiss consummates their queer desire. And, moreover, God has orchestrated it, but God in this case is Scorsese as Director. Scorsese’s film is, as the film conveys in the second title card at the start of the film, “not based upon the Gospels, but upon [Kazantzakis’s] fictional exploration [novel] of the eternal spiritual conflict.” Traditionally, the non-fiction biblical narrative kiss between Jesus and Judas has been, as Martin delineates, “‘the kiss of death,’ [which] reverses, in the perfidious intimacy of betrayal, all that is

signified by the kiss of love” (374). Yet, Scorsese has vexed the nature of the kiss in his Christ-narrative wherein, as Martin further illustrates, “we part our lips to draw in the breath of inspiration or to speak intimate feelings into the beloved’s ear, finally surrendering the private self in the loving convergence of one’s own lips with the lips of the other. Even when not romantic, the kiss implies affection, blessing, recognition and reconciliation” (374). Scorsese’s Christ-narrative climactic consummating kiss between Jesus and Judas is queer in relationship to the traditional understanding of the kiss that takes place between Jesus and Judas. Furthermore, Scorsese’s male-to-male kiss is especially queer to an American audience’s conception of masculinity even though, as Scorsese himself acknowledges, “I’m American, I have to think of the American audience first” (126). Thus, it is Scorsese who designed the nature of this kiss, along with constructing their queer, homosocial, and homoerotic relationship, which further evidences the compounding of queer identity between Jesus, Judas, and even his disciples.

Jesus, Judas, and the Betrayal of Love

At the end of the film, in the last scene of Scorsese’s Christ-narrative near-death dream hallucination sequence, which sparked extreme outrage for its depiction of Jesus’s polygamous life, Jesus is confronted by the disciples and, more significantly, by his partner, Judas. Jesus, as an old man, lays flat back on his deathbed surrounded by Sister Mary, Martha, the Girl Angel, Peter, Nathaniel, and John. Jesus looks at the disciples in the room:

Peter: “There’s someone else outside.”

John: “Be careful. He’s still angry.”

An aged Judas moves into the doorway:

Jesus: “Judas. . . .”

Jesus looks wide-eyed, longingly anxious, and his breath grows heavy as he stares at Judas:

Jesus: "Judas, come in. ..."

Judas stands just outside the front door:

Jesus: "... Didn't you hear me? Oh, I missed you so much."

Peter: "He hears you. He just won't say anything."

Judas enters the front door and steps down into the room and the camera moves toward Judas into a close-up on Judas's left hand as he holds his robe just below his chest:

John, off-screen: "He's been fighting in Jerusalem. Look at his hands. There's still blood on them."

Peter: "Judas, the Master is speaking to you. Answer him."

Judas: "Traitor!"

Jesus clinches his eyes closed and takes in a sharp breath. Judas approaches Jesus and stands beside Peter and then looks at Jesus from head to toe:

Judas: "Your place was on the cross. That's where God put you. When death got too close, you got scared and you ran away and hid yourself in the life of some man. We did what we were supposed to do! You didn't! You're a coward!"

Peter: "Don't you have any respect?"

Judas: "For him?"

Jesus: "You don't understand."

Judas: "Understand? Rabbi ... You broke my heart. Sometimes I curse the day I ever met you. ..."

Judas is now teary-eyed:

Judas: "... We held the world in our hands. Remember what you told me? You took me in your arms. Do you remember? And you begged me, 'Betray me. Betray me. I

have to be crucified. I have to be resurrected so I can save the world. I am the lamb,' you said. 'Death is the door. Judas, my brother, don't be afraid. Help me go through the door.' And I loved you so much. I went and betrayed you. And you- you- "

Judas chokes back from sobbing as Jesus closes his eyes:

Judas: "...What are you doing here? What business do you have here with women, with children? What's good for a man isn't good for God. Why weren't you crucified?"

In Judas's impassioned monolog, as Daniel S. Cutrara confirms, "Judas evokes their special relationship, one of deep intimacy, and places it in contrast with the domesticity of regular men, not men called by God. This relationship with its profound love that excludes women can be understood as queer, [which would ...] explain Jesus's passionless movement through the last temptation. He has rejected his true nature and betrayed his love, Judas" (181).

In Scorsese's Christ-narrative, the moment of truth for Jesus, "The way forward," as Stephenson Humphries-Brooks suggests, "seems to require two decisions. First, Jesus must resolve the problem of the flesh, Woman, sexuality, and desire for a settled existence by breaking it off, denying it any spiritual powers. Second he must get back on the cross and complete the suffering that God demands" (95).

In close-up, the camera pans down from Jesus's face to reveal the bleeding spike-holes in the palms of his hands:

Peter: "Look at his wounds, Judas. They're bleeding. You're hurting him. That's enough."

The camera then continues panning down to Jesus's ankles, bleeding from the spike-holes:

Judas: “He was going to be the new covenant. Now there’s no more Israel.”

Jesus: “No, you don’t understand, the guardian angel. God sent a guardian angel to save me.”

Judas: “Angel? What angel? Look at her.”

Judas looks to the Girl Angel, who is sullen as she looks back at Jesus. The image suddenly cuts to a close-up on the torch flame from the night dessert scene where Jesus sat inside the circle, and then cuts back to a close-up on Judas, who turns back to Jesus:

Judas: “Satan.”

Jesus stares over at the flame that is Satan with wide shocked eyes:

Satan: “I told you we would meet again.”

Judas: “If you die this way, you die like a man. If you turn against God, your Father, there’s no sacrifice. There’s no salvation.”

Screaming people are heard in the distance off-screen. Jesus crawls out of his bed toward the door. The camera follows him as he struggles in his journey across the floor:

Satan narrates: “There’s nothing you can do. You lived this life. You accepted it. It’s over now. Just finish it and die. Die like a man.”

Jesus drags his body up the steps toward the open door frame in the foreground on his way to outside, on his way back onto the cross.

Jesus narrates: “I want to be the Messiah!”

He leans his body back into his crucified position and looks out across to the sound of people clamoring and mocking him. Thus, this Jesus as man of polygamous marriage and children was all a dream, a near-death experience, a fantasy fulfilled through a hallucination. Jesus looks at the crucified man on his left, then to Martha comforting his Mother Mary, Sister Mary, and Mary

Magdalene, and then looks to the crucified man on his right. Jesus lays his head back against the cross, smiles, and proclaims:

Jesus: “It is accomplished! It is accomplished.”

But what, aside from artistically enacting the Central Plot of the Christ-narrative, has Scorsese accomplished through his human rendition of Jesus?

Queer Heterosexuality: Conflated Hail Marys

For the most part, Scorsese’s Christ-narrative Jesus avoids the company of women in his life’s journey. Four notable exceptions would be his Mother Mary, Lazarus’s sisters, Sister Mary and Martha, the Last Supper scene, and his final near-death dream hallucination sequence in which he marries Mary Magdalene, and then Sister Mary and Martha. Following the scene in which Jesus leaves his Mother Mary, he later claims to her face that “I don’t have a mother” yet seeks her out only when he is hanging on the cross. He uses Lazarus’s sisters, Sister Mary and Martha, as a food service when he finally returns from the desert. He denies Mary Magdalene’s love and later, when she asks permission to “Let me come with you, I can help,” he tells her “No, stay here,” and then she proceeds to kneel down and wipe his feet as he looks over to the three disciples: Andrew, Peter, and Phillip. Ironically, in the Last Supper scene, and as an extended queer act by Scorsese against the postulating non-fiction biblical narrative, Scorsese includes Mother Mary, Mary Magdalene, Sister Mary, and Martha at the table wherein they sit and eat the bread and wine as symbolic ingestions of the body and blood of Christ along with the disciples. Finally, in the final near-death dream hallucination sequence, women surround Jesus, but he is without the presence or companionship of men. As a result, throughout the film, more generally, women in the film are relegated to off-screen space in that they are barely legible in the film. Thus, Jesus’s denying, turning away, and avoidance of the multiple Marys, both figuratively and

literally, support a queer reading of Jesus insofar as women exist merely in service to his domestic and maternal needs.

Furthermore, the character of Girl Angel, who proclaims herself to be “the angel who guards [him]” but who ultimately turns out to be Satan, tells Jesus that because “there’s only one woman in the world” it is perfectly acceptable for him to engage in polyamorous polygamy, which he then does, in the dream the Girl Angel provides. In Satan’s dream for Jesus, Jesus has affairs with Lazarus’s sisters, Sister Mary and Martha following Mary Magdalene’s death. Fortunately, this “only one woman in the world” logic, as far as what is projected on the screen, excludes Jesus’s Mother Mary. Nevertheless, the film depicts multiple Mars and in doing so derives not only what is literally “only one woman in the world” but also the objectification of women in general who Jesus “makes love to,” as Scorsese remarks, “for the purpose of having children” (124-6). Hence, although Jesus’s desire for these women is driven “for the purpose of” reproduction and by the fact that, as Jesus states, “When I see a woman, I blush and look away. I want her, but I don’t take her, for God, and that makes me proud,” his first, and ultimate, divine visionary dream hallucination is not a sexual metaphor about a woman; it’s about a man.

Mother Mary

In Scorsese’s Christ-narrative, Mother Mary is barely present in the life of Jesus. With her introduction in the film, she enacts her maternal role as defender. In her early scene when we are first introduced to Mother Mary, Jesus walks through the crowd carrying the cross of the condemned man. Somewhere from within the crowd, a man yells in reference to Jesus:

Man: “There he is. Kill him!”

The medium shot image quickly pans over to Mother Mary as she fights back the crowd:

Mother Mary: “Don’t touch him. Get away from him!”

Mother Mary grabs the man's hand, which is about to throw a rock, while a pedestrian woman yells at her as she engages with their physical struggle over the rock:

Woman: "Don't defend him!"

Mother Mary: "He's my son!"

A soldier intervenes the fight as the camera pans back to Jesus while he continues to carry the horizontal beam of the cross through the crowded streets.

Immediately after the condemned man's crucifixion scene sequence where Mother Mary has defended her son against the pillages of rocks and public condemnation, and immediately following the blood that splatters across Jesus's face and the condemned man screams in pain, the image cuts to the synchronous sound of both the screams of Jesus and condemned man. In a very quick tracking shot from a medium shot to a close-up, the camera moves into a closed wood-slat door before the image cuts again to the interior of a mud-constructed house. We see, in a close-up, the dirt ground floor as Jesus falls into frame onto his knees and then his body onto the ground as his feet flails about from the unheard pain in his head as he wails. In an aerial long shot over Jesus, we see his body jerk as he continues to scream in excruciating pain. Mother Mary runs into frame to try to settle him:

Mother Mary: "No."

Jesus continues to flinch as the screaming falls silent:

Jesus narrates: "God loves me, I know he loves me. I want him to stop. I can't take the pain."

The image and time cuts to an extreme close-up on Mother Mary and then the camera pans down to Jesus in her arms as she comforts him by cradling and petting his head and hair:

Jesus narrates: “The voices and the pain. I want him to hate me. I fight him. I make the crosses so he’ll hate me. I want him to find somebody else. I want to crucify every one of his Messiahs.”

Here, Mother Mary has enacted her maternal role as consoler.

The film cuts to another scene of an aerial medium shot over various foods as Mother Mary’s hand reaches into frame where she takes a flat round bread and places it on top of another while Jesus’s hands help to wrap the food in cloth:

Mother Mary: “You’re sure it’s God?”

The image cuts to a close-up of Jesus and Mother Mary and shot/reverse-shot editing captures the dialog exchange between the two of them:

Mother Mary: “You’re sure it’s not the devil?”

Jesus: “I’m not sure. I’m not sure of anything.”

Mother Mary: “If it’s the devil, the devil can be cast out.”

Jesus: “But what if it’s God? You can’t cast out God, can you?”

The image cuts to the repeat aerial medium shot over the various foods as Jesus collects his wrapped food and then his hands exit the frame. The image cuts to a close-up shot on Jesus as he straps a satchel onto his shoulder and then he looks back at Mother Mary, resolute. Here, Mother Mary has enacted her role as nurturer. However, the bond between them is not sustained.

On the edge of town, Jesus walks with his disciples and a small crowd follows. Mother Mary and a younger female companion scurry past the crowd up toward Jesus:

Mother Mary: “Son.”

Jesus stops and turns to face his mother:

Mother Mary: “Come back with me. Please.”

She touches his shoulder:

Jesus: "Who are you."

He brushes her hand away:

Mother Mary: "Your mother."

Jesus: "I don't have a mother. I don't have any family. I have a Father, in heaven."

Mother Mary: "Don't say that to me."

Jesus places his hands upon her shoulders:

Jesus: "Who are you? I mean, really? Who are you?"

Jesus kisses her forehead. Mother Mary sobs and Jesus walks away from her. Jesus's rejection of his mother acts as a rejection of her maternity and wish for him to return to her way of life, a life of domestic heterosexuality. Jesus, however, rejects this for his homosocial bonds made with Judas and the disciples. Within his homosocial foundation, Jesus will preach God's words of love for humankind and wherein he, Jesus, is the Savior.

Mother Mary is not seen again until the scene of the Last Supper wherein she demurely sits at the table; last in line behind the other two Marys and Martha. Sister Mary and Martha enter the room with a pitcher and basket of bread, fulfilling their domestic duty. The camera tracks with them as Sister Mary approaches Jesus, seated at the center of the square U-shaped table. She leans down, hands the pitcher off to Jesus, rises, and walks away to off-screen as Jesus picks up a piece of the bread:

Jesus: "Listen to me. Take this bread."

The camera pans down to the bread:

Jesus: "Share it together."

The camera pans back up to face him:

Jesus: "This bread is my body."

The image cuts to a close-up on the bread in his hands. He breaks off a piece and then passes it to his left of the table. The camera follows the bread as it passes from John's hands, then pans up to Mary Magdalene, across to Martha, then pans back down to Sister Mary's hands, and concludes by panning back up to Mother Mary, to Andrew, to James, and, finally, to Phillip.

The image then cuts to a close-up on the pitcher of wine being poured by Jesus's hands into a small bowl:

Jesus: "Now drink this wine. Pass the cup."

The camera pans up to Jesus's face as he brings the bowl of wine up to his face:

Jesus: "This wine is my blood."

Jesus looks around off-screen and then takes a sip of the wine:

Jesus: "Do this to remember me."

Jesus passes the bowl of wine to his left and each take a sip and then pass the bowl: From John, to Mary Magdalene, to Martha, to Sister Mary, Mother Mary, to Andrew, to Mathew, to James, to Phillip, to Nathaniel, to Thomas, then to Judas, where the shot lingers, and then, finally, to Peter. Thus, and yet still, Scorsese's enactment of the Last Supper suggests that women, although included, nevertheless assume the traditional roles that establish and affirm the ideals of their place in the domestic space of heteronormativity within what has been the traditional non-fiction biblical narrative space depiction of a solely and holey homosocial final meal with Jesus.

Later in the film, in the scene of Jesus's crucifixion, as Jesus approaches the site while walking over the skulls of those who've come before him, the camera zooms into a medium shot of Jesus as his eyes widen at the sight of it all before him. Soldiers assemble the horizontal beam he was carrying to the vertical beam of what is to be his cross. Two other soldiers remove the

cloth wrap from around Jesus's shoulders. Jesus then looks about as the camera sweeps around, following his looking forward, toward the frame yet off-screen:

Jesus: "Mother? Magdalene? Where are you?"

In his time of need, when he is on the precipice of crucifixion, Jesus scans the crowd of observers and the soldiers who keep them at bay. As if taking up Jesus's point of view, the camera moves toward the four women, dressed in all black, from left to right: Martha, Mother Mary, Sister Mary, and Mary Magdalene. Mother Mary wears a dark brown shawl, which marks a subtle variation in color to signify her place as the mother. Martha, Mother Mary, and Sister Mary kneel, as Magdalene remains standing. The image cuts back to a close-up of Jesus as he stammers toward them off-screen:

Jesus narrates: "Father, I'm sorry for being a bad son."

A soldier yanks his beaten bloody body back toward the cross. From a high angle full shot, the soldiers lay him down on the cross, tie his hands, and pound the nails through his wrists as the blood splatters and Mother Mary wails. The soldiers raise the cross with the camera rising with him facing the backside of his stripped upper body. The image cuts to face Jesus while quickly moving from a medium shot to a close-up, and then he looks up and across off-screen. The shot then cuts to a medium shot of Mother Mary as she looks toward the frame in horror. This visual moment is the final image of Mother Mary and her emotionally unspoken exchange with her son. The silent vision of horror projected through Mother Mary's face and the regret in Jesus's eyes also marks the moment right before he shifts into his near-death dream hallucination wherein he fulfills his domestic heterosexuality with the other Marys and Martha. Hence, in what is an edited juxtaposition, the shift in Jesus's perspective from this moment to his "Last Temptation" acts as Jesus's desire to fulfill his Mother Mary's wish for his heterosexual domesticity.

Mary Magdalene, Sister Mary, and then Martha

The subplot of Mary Magdalene is the conscious objective of Jesus's desire for domestic heterosexuality, and his role in that as male is to possess her, to "take her." However, his sexual desire for her is queer. This is true because he, Jesus the Messiah, is seen to have sexual desire; and, second, because sexual desire runs counter to his Divinity in which he must maintain his virginity on behalf of God; and, third, because a dream toward heterosexuality at death stalls what has been front and center of *The Last Temptation of Christ*: his homosocial, homoerotic, and unconscious sexual desire for Judas. In other words, he does "want her," but that "want" only further defines him as a queer heterosexual because his unconscious desire, manifested through his first divine visionary dream hallucination, metaphorically sexualizes his relationship with Judas, which implicates his sexual desire as queer because the film suggests he has desire for both men and women. Put another way, Jesus may wish to fulfill his heterosexual social imperative but he unconsciously desires homosexual sex with Judas. This duality, and his fear within them, is what define Scorsese's Christ-narrative Jesus as a queer heterosexual.

Jesus's dualities are thus further multiplied in Scorsese's Christ-narrative. The relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene is one born out of conflict, and that conflict is squared: Jesus's fear of his dual nature of divinity and humanness, and then that duality is further dichotomized by the dual nature of his queer heterosexuality for man and for woman. Yet, further still, another duality exists for Jesus within the two domestic houses of Mary Magdalene, which, for Jesus, juxtaposes his perception of a sinful human sexuality against a divine sexuality. Queer sexual desire, through Jesus, is thus exponential.

The contentious relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene is established very early in the film with the scene in which Jesus carries the cross that he built for the condemned

man. Her introduction in the film begins with a close-up on a pair of a woman's tattooed feet, adorned with brass bells that wrap her ankles. The camera follows her feet through the jeering crowd and then she stops. The camera pans up to reveal a chiffon black dressed woman, Mary Magdalene, (Barbara Hershey). She is dressed much like an exotic belly dancer with small brass bells that cover her face like a wedding veil. As the camera tracks into a close-up, Mary Magdalene approaches Jesus, lifts the veil from her face, and then spits in his face. Jesus looks down toward off-screen as she looks at him in disgust. She then moves past him. Jesus turns the other cheek and proceeds off-screen as Mary Magdalene looks at him and then walks away.

In the soon-thereafter establishment of Jesus's life-quest, when he leaves his Mother Mary for his life's adventure as preacher, we see him with a linen cloth covering his head to protect him from the sun, as he passes by a lake with no vegetation anywhere in the shot's foreground or background. Jesus walks along the water's edge as we hear, off-screen, footsteps. This sound prompts Jesus to stop and turn around as the camera moves past him. No one appears behind him and the sound of footsteps has stopped. The camera pans back around to Jesus, who looks confused, so then Jesus turns back forward and resumes walking but then so too do the sound of footsteps following behind him, as well as the camera. Jesus drops the linen cloth from off his head, and abruptly stops again. He then turns around to face the camera:

Jesus narrates: "Who's that? Who's following me? Is that you?"

The camera quickly pans around to reveal that still no one is visibly present. The camera then pulls back behind Jesus and directs itself toward the empty background. Jesus then turns back toward the camera and continues onward. Suddenly, the sound of an off-screen eagle screeches, Jesus falls over, his head-wrenched with pain as he stumbles to the ground. He screams in agony as the camera rises above him into a bird's-eye view that looks down on him, flailing:

Jesus narrates: “Magdalene. . . . Magdalene.”

Thus, in his time of relief from the pain, is another Mary, but in this case it is Mary Magdalene, who becomes the replacement source of condoling, even though this Mary is one who has been previously established as a source of conflict for Jesus.

In what is one of the many breathtakingly beautiful images in the film, non-diegetic tribal music is heard as a human figure on the left side of the frame sits completely covered in a cloth, robe-like, blanket on a rug-covered mound. The shot cuts to an expanded full view of six completely cloth-covered figures, and three camels with three of the figures sitting on them. The shot cross-dissolves as the three camels sit. The three figures on the camels then pull back their coverings to reveal what is readily interpreted as the biblical three kings, the Magi, who brought gifts to the nativity of Jesus’s birth. This visual occurs at the archway entrance of the town of Magdala, which subsequently marks the transition from Mother Mary as maternal to the Mary Magdalene as maternal. The image cuts to a close-up on Jesus watching the three Kings before turning and walking into the crowded town square as the camera casually follows behind him.

There are several shots of Jesus and his observations as he strolls through the town market, but he stops a few yards in front of a patina door with two intertwining snakes painted on its surface: one black and one white with opposing black and white polka dots. Symbolically, as Martin discloses, “the snake enters our mythologies as cosmic creator, progenitor, destroyer and sacred being [...] Its unmistakable phallic shape combined with its habit of copulation for days or even weeks, either with one snake or with fifty, has identified the snake with active, penetrating phallic energy, fertility and potency” (194-6). The camera moves from a medium shot to a close-up of the door:

Jesus narrates: “Thank you, Lord, for bringing me where I did not want to go.”

The camera pans up to reveal, above the door, a carved green lizard on the wall's surface. The image then cuts to a close-up on a very regal well-dressed princely young man as he passes Jesus standing there looking at the door before him off-screen:

Jesus Narrates: "He must be one of God's angels. He came down to show me the way." Jesus follows the now off-screen princely young man. The camera pans with Jesus as he proceeds forward and toward the door as the princely young man, with Jesus behind him, passes through the patina door and into the interior space.

Jesus's entry into the first of Mary Magdalene's two domestic spaces yields a highly sexualized environment, and on very casual terms. In a medium full shot from within the interior of the house, Jesus enters the room behind the princely young man, who sits among a couple of other men all facing toward the frame, and then so too does Jesus sit just behind them. The camera pulls back to reveal many more men sitting and waiting as if in a theatre for a show, a meta-moment that illuminates cinema's objectification of women, their naked bodies, and their sexual activities as visual aesthetic and pleasure for men. The image cuts to a close-up of Jesus and then the camera slowly moves around to face behind Jesus to reveal a man and a woman in the background, behind sheer curtains, fucking. The image cuts to a close-up on the woman, Mary Magdalene, who appears somewhat physically uncomfortable but not necessarily because of sexual displeasure as much as a discomfort in the man's endowment and his repetitious penetrations. The image cuts back to a close-up on Jesus, who looks psychologically pained by what he is witnessing, so he looks away. The image then cuts to a medium shot on two men playing a chess-like game, then back to a full close-up on Jesus looking another direction, to then a close-up on two other men's seated bodies, and then the camera pans up to the men casually talking amongst themselves but we don't hear what they are saying. The image cuts to a close-up

on a dish of crabs and a bowl of hot water as the camera pans up to a woman, with snails on her arms, stirring the pot of steaming water. The image cuts again to a full shot on Mary Magdalene, behind the shear curtain, getting fucked again as the camera pans down to a couple of lizards perched on a potted tree branch. The image then cuts to a close-up on the well-dressed regal princely young man to the left of the frame and in focus and Jesus to the right behind him out of focus. The camera slowly zooms forward toward the eye of and then past the lustful looking princely young man and then focuses in on Jesus as they both watch before themselves at Magdalene off-screen before them. Ashamed, Jesus closes his eyes and looks down and away; but it is not clear if Jesus's shame is for her sexuality or a shame of himself for his lustful thoughts about her sexuality.

The image cuts to a reverse medium shot on Mary Magdalene through the shear curtains as she lay with her back to the frame and now a very dark-skinned man caresses her back. The image cuts to a close-up on a faint cave-like drawing of two dancing female figures painted on a cracked wall as the camera pans down on Mary Magdalene as the dark-skinned man now fucks her. The image cuts to a close-up on Mary Magdalene, who appears to be enjoying this round of sexual pleasure. The image cuts to a medium shot tracking with another exiting man's torso along a wall of men seated and waiting their turn. The camera stops on another dark-skinned man on the left of the frame and Jesus on the right at the end of the line as Jesus looks away from the off-screen direction of Mary Magdalene. The man on the left of Jesus taps him and suggests with a gesture of his hand that it is now Jesus's turn but Jesus declines so the man stands and exits the frame toward Mary Magdalene as Jesus looks down. Hence, Jesus acts as moral compass of humanity's condemnation of sex for money; however, Jesus is not speaking for God because God brought him to her, so his judgment of her, and of himself, is not divine.

Yet, what is further perplexing is Jesus's perceived "divine" condemnation of her sexual behavior against his human need for her forgiveness and acceptance. The first dialog exchange between Jesus and Mary Magdalene visually begins with a medium shot through a window on the sky and its clouds reflecting the setting sun off-screen. The camera pans over toward the left and stops on Mary Magdalene as another man exits her bed. She lies there on her back while fingering her long brown hair. The image then cuts to a close-up on Jesus's profile as he sits against the wall on the right side of the frame and the exiting man walks toward the foreground away from the background of Mary Magdalene behind the sheer curtains. Jesus rises to his feet and the camera rises with him. He moves toward the background and the camera follows behind him. The image cuts to a medium shot angled down on Mary Magdalene, she lies with her naked back to the screen. Her body suddenly stiffens:

Mary Magdalene: "Who's out there?"

The proceeding dialog sequence is shot/reverse-shot sequencing. In silhouette through the sheer curtains, Jesus approaches her:

Mary Magdalene: "Who is it?"

She looks over her shoulder up toward the frame. She realizes who it is and quickly covers her naked body as she sits upward:

Mary Magdalene: "What are you doing here?"

Jesus: "I want you to forgive me."

He kneels before her and the camera lowers down with him. Mary Magdalene looks off-screen toward Jesus, terrified:

Jesus: "I've done too many bad things. I'm going to the desert, and I need you to forgive me before I go, please."

Magdalene, heartbroken and tearful: “Oh, I see. You sit all day out there with the others and then you come in here with your head down saying ‘Forgive me.’ ‘Forgive me.’ It’s not that easy. Just because you need forgiveness, don’t ask me to do it.”

Jesus: “I’m sorry.”

Magdalene: “Get out! Go away!”

She breaks down sobbing, lies back, and turns away from Jesus and the frame:

Jesus: “Look, Mary. Look at this. God can change this. God can save your soul.”

Thus, “Jesus’s relationship with Mary Magdalene,” as Joey Eschrich illustrates, “is characterized according to binaries that construct sex as evil, women as the embodiment of sexual temptation, and masculinity as intrinsically ‘good.’ [Therefore,] Resistance of sexual temptation and subjugation of women serve as proof of this masculinity” [emphasis in the original] (525).

The scene continues in a shot/reverse-shot pattern that emphasizes the emotional and psychological conflict within their relationship. Mary Magdalene turns back around:

Mary Magdalene: “He already broke my heart; he took you away from me. And I hate both of you.”

Jesus: “Hate me, blame me. It’s all my fault, but not God’s. Don’t say that about God.”

Mary Magdalene: “Who made me feel this way about God?”

Jesus: “I know, that’s why I’m here. That’s why I want you to forgive me. I’ll pay my debt. I know the worst things I’ve done have been to you.”

Mary Magdalene: “Pay or go away.”

She lies back down and sobs again. Jesus rises and sits beside her on the mat with his back turned toward her:

Jesus: “Mary? Don’t you remember?”

Mary Magdalene rolls back over onto her back to face Jesus:

Mary Magdalene: “No, I don’t remember. Why should I? Nothing’s changed. Say the truth.”

Mary Magdalene slowly lowers the blanket to reveal her naked breasts:

Mary Magdalene: “If you want to save my soul this is where you’ll find it.”

The camera slowly zooms from a medium shot to a close-up on Jesus as he stares longingly at her naked body. He lusts for her while shaming her for her sexuality:

Mary Magdalene: “You know that you’re the same as all the others, only you can’t admit it. You’re pitiful. I hate you. ... Here’s my body.”

Mary Magdalene snakes her hand from her body onto his lap-placed hands:

Mary Magdalene: “Save it.”

She takes his right hand and the camera follows as she lays Jesus’s hand on her vagina, hidden under the blanket:

Mary Magdalene: “Save it.”

Jesus looks away from her as he yanks his hand away. Mary Magdalene quickly rises, covers her body with the blanket, and sits up as he stands and walks away off-screen:

Mary Magdalene: “Is that the way you show you’re a man?”

Jesus returns back into frame as she stands and covers herself in a step-into robe:

Mary Magdalene: “Turn away, don’t look at me.”

Bashful, Jesus looks at her:

Mary Magdalene: “You never had the courage to be a man. Don’t look at me!”

Jesus turns away from her and toward the frame, as she finishes getting dressed:

Mary Magdalene: “If you weren’t hanging on to your mother, you were hanging on to

me. Now you're hanging on to God. Going to the desert to hide because you're scared. Well, go."

The camera quickly zooms into a close-up on Mary Magdalene as she finishes dressing:

Mary Magdalene: "Whenever I see you, my heart breaks."

She rushes out of the frame and the camera lingers on the wall where there is a soft cave-like painting of a running bull. Mary Magdalene's final characterization of Jesus is, as Daniel S. Cutrara concurs, a "description [that] conveniently fits a stereotypical gay profile" (173).

The immediate and subsequent scene relocates Jesus and Mary Magdalene into her kitchen and dining room. This second domestic space within her home separates her sexuality from her domesticity, which enacts her dutiful role of nurturer for his sustenance. In a close-up on a seated Jesus, he stares, looking sorrowful and self-pitying, down before himself, then glances up at Mary Magdalene off-screen, and then back down. The image cuts to a close-up on Mary Magdalene as she, seating herself, looks at Jesus off-screen with resentment while also setting down off-screen a plate of food or a drink. Then, the reverse close-up on Jesus as he pours himself a drink and she leans over and into frame from off-screen and cups his face with her right hand. She withdraws her hand while gently dragging it along his jaw and her thumb swipes over his lips. Uncomfortable, he looks down before himself:

Mary Magdalene: "I do remember when we were children."

The dialog exchange occurs again in shot/reverse shot sequence:

Mary Magdalene: "Never have I felt such tenderness toward anyone as I felt toward you then. All I ever wanted was you. Nothing else."

Jesus: "What do you think I wanted?"

Mary Magdalene: "Please, stay. Is it so bad sharing a prostitutes room?"

The image cuts to a full shot on both of them as they sit across from one another with a large bowl between them:

Mary Magdalene: "I won't touch you, I promise. You'll still be a virgin for the desert."

Jesus stands, takes his satchel, and exits the frame:

Jesus: "Mary, I'm sorry. I can't stay."

Mary Magdalene is left sitting alone, eyes clinched with disappointment. Thus, as Eschrich further illustrates, "Jesus overcomes this temptation and subjugates it to a chaste male authority that controls sexual expression; his ability to resist and control sexuality marks him as masculine" (525); and, further still, because Jesus "wants her" but won't fulfill that desire because he feels he must remain a virgin for God, this also enacts and expands on his queer heterosexuality, which the film has come to signify.

Although the black cobra appears twice in the film, it is the first visit that holds this essay's theoretical significance. As symbolic of her sexual spirit, it is Mary Magdalene who voices it. The cobra's first appearance occurs when Jesus has sought refuge and meditation in the desert amongst Jeroboam and the other reclusive men just after leaving Mary Magdalene's home. The scene begins with a close-up of a worn grass mat and a hole in the ground from which a black cobra snake crawls out from to the non-diegetic sound of tinkling little brass bells, which has already been established as the sound of Mary Magdalene. The image cuts to a medium shot of Jesus as he sits up from the mat and stares at the now two snakes slithering out from the hole. Afraid, Jesus scoots himself back against the wall and away from the two intertwined snakes. The image cuts to a reverse close-up on the two snakes as we hear a giggling Mary Magdalene. Jesus stares, afraid, at the snakes through the frame before him off-screen:

Jesus narrates: "Everything is from God. Everything has two meanings."

The image reverse cuts to the two snakes slithering around each other and then one of the snakes poises as if to strike:

Mary Magdalene narrates, seductively: “Jesus. Oh, my sweet Jesus. I forgive you.”

Jesus pounds his chest with both hands and the camera zooms from a medium shot to a close-up on his hands:

Jesus: “Leave me. Leave me.”

The snake hisses. The image then cuts to a slow motion close-up on Jeroboam’s hands as he walks over, camera panning with him, to Jesus and then he covers Jesus’s lips with his hand.

Jesus closes his eyes:

Jesus: “They’re gone.”

In this first cobra encounter, Jesus, as Cutrara observes, “experiences a purging of his desire for [Mary] Magdalene, the desire concretized in the form of a snake. With this heterosexual desire temporarily expunged, he must face Judas once again” (174). Significantly, the subsequent scene with Judas occurs so that it is juxtaposed with Jesus’s first encounter with the snakes, and thus further emblemizing, like the two meanings of the two snakes, his queer heterosexuality.

Jesus’s desire for Mary Magdalene to live from within her second domestic space, one of heteronormative domesticity, occurs in the final near-death dream hallucination. Jesus hangs on the cross, on the cusp of death, and he longs for and then experiences his perception of a divine sexuality, a heteronormative life imagined through a near death experience otherwise known as the film’s dream sequence in which Mary Magdalene’s sexualized life inverts to an idealized heteronormativity. The sequence is introduced right after Jesus has looked across at his horrified Mother Mary and a stern Mary Magdalene. In a profile close shot on Jesus, the image slowly tilts

so that Jesus is visually laid back in a horizontal position to the sound of hard thunder, wind, and a driving rain even though the sky remains blue and there is no actual rain:

Jesus cries out: “Father, why have you forsaken me?”

Another loud crash of thunder is heard and then silence. We then only hear Jesus’s breathing. Suddenly, from nowhere, the self-proclaimed “Guardian Angel” appears at his feet. A thirteen-year-old girl (Juliette Caton) portrays the guardian angel character of “Girl Angel” because, as Scorsese discloses, “In the book and Paul Schrader’s original script, the angel at the end *was a little Arab boy*, but I felt that brought connotations and we’d have difficulties. People would get upset and it would get in the way of what the film’s really about. So then we decided it should be an old man [...] but that concept didn’t seem right. So we went with a little girl [emphasis added]” (143). Although abandoned, the provocative implication by Scorsese, regarding “connotations” and “difficulties” had they cast a “little Arab boy,” furthers supports a queer reading of Jesus’s sexual desire. Nevertheless, in the film Jesus believes God has sent him this Girl Angel as his Savior from death. She poetically facilitates his dissent from the cross and then leads him through the unaware crowd and into his new life. This unbeknownst to Jesus dream hallucination, this last temptation, as Curtrara explains, “becomes the final showdown between spirit and flesh, between homosocial and hetero-normative domesticity” (178).

After the Girl Angel has walked Jesus out of the crucifixion landscape and into his dream of a heteronormative life, the image cuts to a full shot on lush green grass and trees as Jesus and the Girl Angel enter the frame from the left side of the screen, and then the camera pans with them as they stroll side by side through the wooded area:

Jesus: “Is this the world of God? The one I spoke about?”

Girl Angel: “No, this is earth.”

Jesus: “Why has it changed so much?”

Girl Angel: “It hasn’t changed. You have. Now you can see its real beauty. Harmony between earth and the heart, that’s the world of God. Maybe you’ll find this hard to believe, but sometimes we angels look down on men and envy you. Really envy you.”

They reach a ridge and the camera pans out across the lush green lands below. Climbing the steep hill toward them are about a dozen men and women. The Girl Angel and Jesus look down toward them:

Jesus: “What’s that?”

Girl Angel: “A wedding ceremony.”

Jesus: “Who’s getting married?”

Girl Angel: “You are.”

The Girl Angel walks forward and out of frame and Jesus follows her. The image cuts to a medium shot on Mary Magdalene in a white dress and green-leafed crown, followed by six women completely covered, aside from their eyes, in white robes and three men in neutral brown robes as they walk forward into a close-up as Mary Magdalene approaches Jesus into a two-shot profile close-up with tears in her eyes:

Jesus: “What’s wrong? Why are you crying?”

Mary Magdalene: “I’m thanking God, for bringing you here.”

They embrace and hold each other tightly as she weeps. Thus, their embrace of a new life has subverted her anger, sternness, and resentment for God and Jesus and provided Jesus with his desire for heteronormativity.

Now married, the scene cuts to the exterior of a small stone constructed cottage amongst lavish trees, grass, and foliage. The Girl Angel sits just outside on a bench as a couple of monkeys playfully run past her and the cottage. The image cuts to the interior of the cottage, which looks like the inside of a barn with hay flooring and wood slat walls. Jesus and Mary Magdalene sit on a blanket of hay and a rug. Mary Magdalene gently pulls Jesus back against her lap. She wets a rag from the pot of water on top of a smoking ember fire pit behind them and then washes away the stains of blood from his face, hands, and feet through a series of images that transition through the fading in and out of alternating key, background, and fill lights, which leads to a close-up as Mary Magdalene kisses Jesus on the lips and he kisses her back, and then wraps his arms around her. The image sequence continues in a close-up of them kissing but now he is on top of her. He moves down and kisses her neck:

Mary Magdalene: "We could have a child. . . . We could have a child."

The image cuts to a full shot on the two of them; they lay naked on a fur rug engaged in lovemaking, sexual intercourse, fucking: all one and the same thing. The camera pulls back to reveal the Girl Angel sitting on a stool in the room on the left side of the frame as she faces off-screen, not looking at them. This composition suggests that the Girl Angel is condoning their sexual merge. When looking back upon this image, however, and after later learning that she is in fact Satan, the image now implies that it is only because of Satan that Jesus enacts his sexuality with Mary Magdalene, even though his divine sexuality is with Judas; it is only for the sake of reproduction that Satan facilitates the union of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Indeed, this scene mirrors the Bible's Book of Genesis in which Satan encourages the eating of the forbidden fruit so that Adam and Eve may attain the knowledge of good and evil and thus queer gender and sexuality from which induces reproduction, which is then not a pure act that precludes evil.

The sexual consummation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene cuts forward in time to a full shot on Mary Magdalene in the same room with sunlight barely visible but seen between the wall slats of the cottage. She is relegated to a unified domestic imprisonment where sexuality serves for reproduction and her domesticity serves Jesus. Mary Magdalene is now nine months pregnant as she sits alone caressing her belly. The image then cuts to a full shot from a side back view of Mary Magdalene as she sits prepping green beans in a bowl. Hence, Jesus's dream of subjugating her to role as domestic wife, mother, and woman has been fulfilled. The wind begins to howl and the door, off-screen, flies open. Mary Magdalene stands up and the camera follows her as she walks over and closes the door. She kneels down again and continues prepping the meal but then suddenly looks up, smiles, and white light pours over her from above. An eagle caws as the screen turns to completely white. Scorsese, as Graham Holderness indicates, "shows Mary Magdalene smiling beatifically in rapture, as God takes her into the light [...] this is how it should happen: Mary [Magdalene] should be taken peacefully to God's mercy in a world of enchantment without any shadow of disillusion" (93). In other words, it is not Mary Magdalene's fault that Jesus is living a queer heterosexual life. She does not deserve to die a painful death because her shift from sexual liberation to domestic heteronormativity is only as a result of fulfilling Jesus's desire for his own heteronormativity.

The next scene locates itself in the same dual sexual and domestic space wherein Jesus now kneels into frame and sobs as he embraces Mary Magdalene's dead body lying on a blanket. The camera pulls back to a full shot of the two of them. Jesus rises and the Girl Angel is revealed again off to the side watching them:

Girl Angel: "Where are you going?"

She rises to her feet as Jesus grabs an ax and moves to exit the house. The image cuts to a full

exterior shot of the cottage's front door. Jesus exits and the Girl Angel follows behind him as the camera follows with him:

Girl Angel: "Who are you going to kill? God? Are you going to kill, God? Didn't you here me, Jesus? There is nothing you can do. God's killed her. God's killed her."

In a medium shot, Jesus stops walking in the foreground on the left side of the frame and the Girl Angel stands in the doorway in the background on the right. Furious, Jesus swings the ax at the ground repeatedly as the camera moves into a close-up of him. He eventually tires after several strikes and then crumbles to the ground while the camera pans down with him. Jesus is angry that God took from him what he thought God wanted for him, but what was, in fact, Jesus's own desire for heteronormativity. God is well aware, however, of Jesus's queer heterosexuality and so too is the Girl Angel who now proceeds to seduce Jesus into believing that all women are one and the same and therefore he can still fulfill his desire for heteronormativity.

The image cuts to a medium shot of Jesus's profile as the camera tracks around to face him as the Girl Angel approaches and rests her hands upon his shoulders and she kneels down beside him. She strokes the back of his head throughout their conversation:

Girl Angel: "God took her away when she was happy. Now she's immortal. She won't see her love die or body decay. I was there the whole time he was killing her and I saw what happened."

Jesus: "But it wasn't right."

Jesus looks at the Girl Angel:

Jesus: "It wasn't right for God to take her."

Girl Angel: "You didn't complain when God let you live. You can't complain now because he let her die. Trust God's way. Listen, there's only one woman in the

world, one woman with many faces. This one falls, the next one rises. Mary Magdalene died; but Mary, Lazarus's sister, she lives. She's Magdalene with a different face. She's carrying your greatest joy inside her. Your son."

Jesus looks up at her teary-eyed and bewildered.

The final image of this scene concentrates on Jesus and the Girl Angel as she leads him away from the house:

Girl Angel: "Come with me."

Jesus passively follows behind her confused by the misogynistic notion that "there's only one woman in the world," and even more perplexed that Sister Mary is pregnant with his child regardless of the fact that he has never had sexual relations with her; hence, a sort of "virgin birth" if you will. Thus, one could easily characterize Jesus's feelings at this moment, as well as what proceeds throughout the rest of the near-death experience, as being queer because, as Cutrara elaborates, "While Jesus is tempted by domesticity, he appears to find little pleasure in it" (180) throughout his near-death dream hallucination.

To add further queerness to the divine equation, more perplexity to the near-death last temptation dream hallucination, is yet another facet of queer heterosexuality: polyamorous polygamy, in which Jesus participates with casual indifference. In an exterior late afternoon country landscape with a freestanding stone archway to what was once a centrally located large building, the camera slowly moves toward it.

Girl Angel narrates: "This is the way the Savior comes."

The image then cuts to a rock and block exterior structure with no roof as the camera slowly moves forward toward an open passageway to reveal Sister Mary, now with blondish hair, hanging clothes over the stone wall in the background facing away from the frame:

Girl Angel narrates: “Gradually, from embrace to embrace; from son to son. ... This is the road.”

Martha looks around the corner of a block wall in the foreground toward but past the proceeding camera moving toward Sister Mary, who still has her back turned toward the wall as she hangs her laundry.

Jesus narrates: “I understand.”

Martha: “Mary, look.”

The camera stops moving on a medium shot of Martha on the left side of the frame and Sister Mary in the right background. Sister Mary walks up beside Martha and they both continue looking toward the frame off-screen with joy in their eyes. The shot reverses to a close-up of Jesus standing before them. Sister Mary places her hand on his shoulder:

Sister Mary: “Rabbi, I just wanted to see if it’s really you.”

Martha touches his other shoulder:

Martha: “He’s real, like us. Don’t you see?”

Jesus turns to his left away from the screen and the image cuts to a close shot from behind the Girl Angel on the left of the frame in the foreground and the three of them on the right a few yards in the background. Jesus turns to the Girl Angel:

Jesus: “Come in.”

Girl Angel: “Come here.”

Jesus approaches her:

Girl Angel: “Master, I want to tell you one thing. I’m sorry about Magdalene. I won’t ever leave you alone again. I’ll always protect you. I don’t want you to take the wrong road and get lost again.”

Martha approaches them:

Martha: "Come inside. I'll cook for you and your friend."

Hence, as Lloyd Baugh affirms, "Scorsese creates a strange, lethargic Jesus, a lackluster, inert figure, whose actions and attitudes are a vague echo of those of the zombie-like Lazarus after he is raised from the dead" (68). Jesus just goes with the flow. He doesn't question and he doesn't resist, he merely accepts things as they are without any emotional investment.

Thus, in a later exterior day full shot Jesus lays against the wall asleep and the Girl Angel leans against the wall beside him staring at the ground before her. Martha approaches Jesus and crouches down beside him. Jesus wakes:

Jesus: "Where's Mary?"

Martha: "She won't be back till this evening."

She clasps his hand:

Martha: "Come inside. It's too hot out here."

She rises and the camera follows her as she returns toward the house, stopping to look back at Jesus momentarily before proceeding inside:

Martha: "Come inside."

The camera pans back to Jesus and the Girl Angel:

Girl Angel: "There's only one woman in the world. Go inside."

Jesus casually rises and exits the frame toward the house. Hence, as Stephenson Humphries-Brooks concludes, "[Mary] Magdalene as the symbol of temptation, of bodily happiness and existence reduced to sexual pleasure and family life, can easily be replaced by [Sister] Mary and then her sister Martha in Jesus' temptation, in what effectively amounts to a domestication of the femme fatale" (88), which is orchestrated by the Girl Angel who we later learn is actually Satan.

Consequently, Scorsese's Christ-narrative Jesus emblemizes queer heterosexuality through his "last temptation," his near-death dream hallucination in which he attempts to fulfill a desire for heteronormativity. Put another way, Jesus lives a queer heterosexuality because his inner conflict is not just between the duality of his humanity and divinity but, as well, between the dichotomy of gender and sexuality.

The Divine Visionary Dream Hallucination

After the sleeping-disciple-cuddle night scene in the olive garden, when Judas walks toward the background of the frame, the scene cuts to a medium shot of Jesus as he sits under an olive tree that is situated to the left foreground. He stares toward the center of the frame. Judas enters the frame from the right and sits beside Jesus under the tree so that they form a 90-degree right angle:

Judas: "Rabbi, can I talk to you?"

Judas looks over at Jesus, who stares off-screen:

Judas: "I'm not like these other men. I mean, they're good enough, they're good men.

But they're weak. One's worse than the other. Where'd you find them? Look at me. If I love somebody, I would die for them. If I hate somebody, I'd kill them. I could even kill somebody I loved if they did the wrong thing. Did you hear me?

Do you understand what I said?"

Jesus: "Yes, I understand."

The implication by Judas is that these men are not strong enough to kill or be willing to be killed, that "they're weak" and therefore not worthy of being Jesus's disciples. Judas has positioned these disciples as "Other," and thus he stigmatizes them as "weak," or, inadvertently, (or not), as queer since, historically, and certainly within the context of the film's decade of production,

referring to a man as “weak” implied homosexuality, which was then, and still is today for many homophobic heterosexuals, characterized, derogatorily, as queer.

Within this continuous intimate dialog scene between Jesus and Judas under the olive tree wherein they discuss their future aims as a social and political movement, both men hear the sound of the rustling of footsteps approaching, which mirrors those of the invisible follower of Jesus, the “Other” by the lake. Judas quickly turns to look behind them:

Judas: “Who’s there?”

The camera pans up to show Andrew approaching them:

Andrew: “It’s me, Andrew. Is everything-?”

Jesus: “It’s all right. Go back to sleep. Judas and I are talking.”

Andrew turns and walks back toward the campfire in the background as Judas condescendingly smirks over at Jesus:

Judas: “There’s an example.”

Apparently, the “example” for Judas is that Andrew has demonstrated his weakness by showing concern for the overheard arguing between Jesus and Judas. Judas’s hyper-masculinity, his more than willingness to kill, forbids any concern for the well being of others, for men within his homosocial environment, men about whom he perceives and characterizes as “weak.” In other words, they are stigmatized as “Other”: Queer.

The intimate scene between Jesus and Judas continues as they both stare contemplative in a gentle sweeping pan from facing Jesus around to facing Judas:

Judas: “You know the Zealots ordered me to kill you.”

Jesus: “Why’d you change your mind?”

Judas: “I decided to wait.”

Jesus: “For what?”

Judas: “I thought maybe you were the one to unite us. I didn’t want to destroy that.”

Jesus: “How do we know? How could I be the Messiah? When those people were torturing Magdalene, I wanted to kill them. And then I opened my mouth, and out comes the word ‘love.’ Why? I don’t understand.”

Judas: “You can’t look to the others for answers, all they do is follow you.”

Jesus leans back against the tree:

Judas: “We’ll go to Judea and see John the Baptist. Every day he tells hundreds of people the Messiah is coming. He’ll know. He’ll know.”

Then, gently, Jesus places his hand upon Judas’s arm.

Jesus: “Judas. I’m afraid. Stay with me.”

Jesus looks at Judas, troubled, as they stare into each other’s eyes: Homosocial and homoerotic.

The next scene jumps ahead to later that night as the image cuts to a high angle full shot looking down on Judas and Jesus sleeping under the tree, as if the image is God looking down on them. The camera slowly floats down toward them as Jesus sleeps with his head and body snuggled in and on Judas’s sleeping body. Judas has his arm wrapped around Jesus’s back and his hand rests on his shoulder. The image recalls the classic romantic cuddling composition that Hollywood marks for two people in love. Ironically, for Judas it is also his self-actualized moment of truth within his most vulnerable state. After all Judas’s posturing and accusations of weakness, of “Other,” of an implied queerness of the disciples, it is Judas who is the one physicalizing his queer love for Jesus in this sleeping configuration. For the audience, Jesus and Judas are cinematically presented in this angelic slow-floated landing from God’s point of view as queer, homosocial, homoerotic, and, at the very least, queer heterosexual.

When the shot rests on Jesus his eyes slowly open as light illuminates his face and he sits up and out of frame. The image cuts to a medium close-up on Jesus's hand as he removes an apple from under his shirt's chest. The camera follows the apple up to Jesus's mouth as he takes a bite from it. The camera then follows the apple down to his lap as Jesus splits it in half and he removes the seeds. The image cuts to a medium shot on Jesus as he tosses the seeds out onto the ground before him off-screen. The camera cuts back to the apple and pans up to Jesus's face. He looks in awe as the light before him from off-screen illuminates his face. The image cuts to a reverse full shot over Jesus's shoulder with Jesus on the right side of the frame in the unfocused foreground and an irradiate full grown apple tree with ripe red apples on the left in the focused background. "Although Genesis (2:15-3:24) makes no explicit mention of an apple," as Kathleen Martin notes, "[...] Through Eve, both the apple and woman herself were stigmatized by medieval Christians as temptingly beautiful but with concealed wiles, which Christianity balances by its belief that paradise was restored through [the Virgin] Mary and her legendary gift of the tree upon which Christ was hanged as a figurative apple (168). For Scorsese, the apple, its seeds, and the visually glowing abundance of the apple tree's immediately manifested growth and production of fruit is, therefore, referencing the biblical symbolisms inherent to God and the Bible; and Scorsese manifests the apple tree sequence as a condoning, as a reproduction of the bountiful fruit of queer love sprung from the intimacy between Jesus and Judas.

Further symbolism involved in this scene's symbiotic juxtaposition of the cuddled sleeping image of Jesus and Judas with its climax of a mystical representation of the apple is exhibited first in the apple itself, removed from Jesus's chest, which foreshadows the *Sacratissimi Cordis Lesu* (Most Sacred Heart of Jesus), of which the Sacred Heart itself represents Jesus's divine love for humanity; the biting of the apple, which enacts the Judaic

eating of the fruit from the עץ הדעת טוב ורע (Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil); and the tossing of the apple seeds by Jesus as symbolic of his ejaculation, his masturbation as a result of his loving queer sleeping embrace with Judas, because, as Martin points out, “The Greek word *sperma* (seed) derives from *speirein* (to sow), reflecting archaic notions of the active male role in generating life in the passive feminine earth” (410). Thus, Scorsese’s Christ-narrative personifies Jesus symbolically as God’s endorsement of queer through the cuddle-sleep with Judas and its relationship with the divine visionary dream hallucination, which infers an unconscious sexual desire for Judas while consciously resisting a heterosexual “want” of Mary Magdalene “for God,” and this ultimately accomplishes Jesus’s divine queer: Queer Heterosexuality.

Hence, the first of the visionary dream hallucinations divined by God in edited symbiotic juxtaposition with the homoerotic cuddling sleep between Jesus and Judas is the keystone to the triptych lens of Christ the queer in Scorsese’s Christ-narrative. As dually divine *and* human, Jesus lived a gendered and sexualized life that personifies a queer identity. Thus, in Scorsese’s Christ-narrative, Jesus’s desire for gender and sexuality are dichotomized through his dual relationships between Judas and the multiple Mars. Moreover, the humanizing subplots of gender and sexuality become the impetus for the near-death hallucination that inevitably impels Jesus to fulfill his role of divinity as the ordained Messiah. Ultimately, however, it is through the triptych lens of queer, homosocial, and queer heterosexuality that, in oath and in a divined affinity with Judas, Scorsese’s Jesus enacts and illuminates a queer Christ.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the “*Tendencies*” of gender and sexuality, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick proposes and of which is enacted throughout Martin Scorsese’s Christ-narrative, is “one of the things that ‘queer’ can refer to: the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone’s gender, of anyone’s sexuality are made (or *can’t* be made) to signify monolithically [emphasis in the original]” (8). In other words, Scorsese’s subplots involving Jesus & Judas and Jesus & the multiple Marys humanize the Christ-narrative of Jesus in ways that fluidify, fold, and conflate gender and sexuality so that, as Sean Griffin indicates, “When everything – including normative heterosexuality – is considered queer, the terms of sexual identity (as well as concepts of normal or abnormal sexuality) will cease to have meaning [emphasis in the original]” (5). Ultimately, and ironically, as Kathryn Lofton speculates, “it seems obvious that the history and present of Christianity are filled with queer possibilities. These possibilities seem so abundant that a strange new question arises. Is anything Christian *not* queer [emphasis in the original]?” (195). And I would add, are *any* religions of the world *not* queer? Because gender and sexuality are, by their very nature, and in terms of the canonical Bible’s commitment to the Book of Genesis, fraught with desire, then the terms for gender and sexuality in biblical religion are inherently queer.

Queer Christ ... so what? What difference does it make? To begin, if gender and sexuality are defined by the creation of Adam and Eve, and these dualities are two sides of the same coin, a coin defined as God, and then, in biblical narrative terms, gender and sexuality are inherently a queer exposed to humanity as a result of Adam and Eve eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden, then it stands to reason that gender and sexuality are the first of the deadly sins, which subsequently makes eight deadly sins rather than

seven. However, for Christians, baptism relinquishes humankind from this original sin of Adam and Eve but it doesn't negate the fact that gender and sexuality are inherently queer regardless of the original sin since the original sin is defined as the eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which produced an abrupt awareness of the queer of gender and sexuality. And, moreover, if Jesus's divinity is based on God manifesting his Son, Jesus, as human so that he may serve as Messiah, as Savior of humankind so that humankind may be forgiven for their sins, then it stands to reason that the Divine Jesus Christ encompassed human gender and sexuality prior to his crucified death. Therefore, Scorsese's interpretation of the Christ-narrative is not outside the bounds of human gender and sexuality as enactment of the life of Jesus, which was a queer life. Hence, and according to the canonical text of the Bible, Jesus was dually divine and human and, therefore, subject to human experience, which involves a psychology of gender and sexuality. Furthermore, and finally, Jesus's divinity is based on his belief that he was the Son of God, which he then taught was also true with regard to humankind as children of God. Thus, the idea of Christ, like humankind, is really best understood as queer.

WORKS CITED

- Baugh, Lloyd. *Imaging the Divine: Jesus and Christ-Figures in Film*. Kansas: Sheed & Ward, 1997. Print.
- Britton, Dana M.. "Homophobia and Homosexuality: An Analysis of Boundary Maintenance." *The Sociological Quarterly* 31.3 (Summer, 1990): 423-439. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Jan., 2016.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.
- Cuttrara, Daniel S.. *Wicked Cinema: Sex and Religion on Screen*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014. Print.
- Denby, David. "Time on the Cross." *New York* 29 Aug. 1988: 50+. Print.
- Duggan, Lisa. *Making it Perfectly Queer. Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture*. Ed. Duggan, and Nan D. Hunter. New York: Routledge, 1995. 155-172. Print.
- Eschrich, Joey. "'Behold the Man!': Constructing the Masculinity of Jesus of Nazareth in Mainstream American Film, 1961-200." *Men and Masculinities* 14.5 (2011): 520-541. *SAGEpub*. Web. 3 Jan. 2016.
- Fauteux, Kevin. "The Final Portrait of Christ." *Journal of Religion and Health* 28.3 (1989): 195-206. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Jan. 2016.
- Field, Syd. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. 1984. New York: Dell Trade Paperback, 2005. Print.
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage, 1990. Print.

- Griffin, Sean. Introduction. *Hetero: Queering Representations of Straightness*. Ed. Griffin. New York: SUNY Press, 2009. 1-17. Print.
- Holderness, Graham. “‘Half God, Half Man’: Kazantzakis, Scorsese, and ‘The Last Temptation.’” *The Harvard Theological Review* 100.1 (Jan., 2007): 65-96. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Jan. 2016.
- Humphries-Brooks, Stephenson. *Cinematic Savior: Hollywood’s Making of the American Christ*. Connecticut: Praeger, 2006. Print.
- Jagose, Annamarie. *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. New York: New York UP, 1996. Print.
- Kazantzakis, Nikos. *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Trans. P. A. Bien. 1960. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2015. Print.
- Kitzinger, Celia, and Sue Wilkinson. “Virgins and Queers: Rehabilitating Heterosexuality?” *Gender and Society* 8.3 (Sep., 1994): 444-462. *JSTOR*. Web. 16 Feb. 2016.
- Lindlof, Thomas R.. *Hollywood Under Siege: Martin Scorsese, the Religious Right, and the Culture Wars*. Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 2008. Print.
- Lipman-Blumen, Jean. “Toward a Homosocial Theory of Sex Roles: An Exploration of the Sex Segregation of Social Institutions.” *Signs* 1.3 (Spring, 1976): 15-31. *JSTOR*. Web. 6 Mar. 2016.
- Lofton, Kathryn. “Everything Queer?” *Queer Christianities: Lived Religion in Transgressive Forms*. Ed. Kathleen T. Talvacchia, Michael F. Pettinger, and Mark Larrimore. New York: NYU Press, 2015. 195-204. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Lopate, Phillip. “Fourteen Koans by a Levite on Scorsese’s *The Last Temptation of Christ*.” *Tikkun* 3.6 (Nov/Dec, 1988): 74-78. Print.

- Martin, Kathleen, Ed. *The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images*. Germany: TASCHEN, 2010. Print.
- Maslin, Janet. "'Last Temptation,' Scorsese's View of Jesus' Sacrifice." *New York Times* 12Aug. 1988: C1+. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*. Web. 3 Jan. 2016.
- McKee, Robert. *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*. New York: Regan, 1997. Print.
- Meagher, Robert Emmet. *The Meaning of Helen: In Search of an Ancient Icon*. Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2002. Print.
- Musser, Charles. *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990. Print.
- Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Is it banal or brilliant?: Critics opinions of 'Temptation.'" 13 Aug. 1988: 4-C. Print.
- Schlichter, Annette. "Queer at Last?: Straight Intellectuals and the Desire for Transgression." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10.4 (2004): 543-564. *Project Muse*. Web. 16 Feb. 2016.
- Scorsese, Martin, dir. *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Universal, 1988. DVD.
- . *Scorsese on Scorsese*. Eds. Ian Christie and David Thompson. New York: Faber and Faber, 2003. Print.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia UP, 1985. Print.
- . *Queer and Now. Tendencies*. Ed. Barale, Michele Aina, Jonathan Goldberg, Michael Moon, and Sedgwick. CA: University of California Press, 2008. Print.

Sharrett, Christopher. Rev. of *The Last Temptation of Christ*. *Cineaste* 17.1 (1989): 28-29.

JSTOR. Web. 3 Jan. 2016.

Smith, Clyde. "How I Became a Queer Heterosexual." *Beyond Boundaries. An International Conference on Sexuality*. Univ. of Amsterdam. July 29 – Aug. 1, 1997. Address.

Taormino, Tristan. "The Queer Heterosexual." *The Village Voice* 6 May, 2003. Web. 16 Feb. 2016.

Vatican. "The New American Bible." United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 11 Nov. 2002. Web. 31 March 2016. http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_INDEX.HTM

Warner, Michael. Introduction. *Fear of a Queer Planet*. Ed. Warner. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1993. Print.

Wright, Melanie J. *Religion and Film: An Introduction*. New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007. Print.

Zeffirelli, Franco. Letter. *Variety* 9 Aug. 1988: 5. Print.