

<b>Title:</b>	The Devil who Saves Christianity: Exploring Netflix's <i>Lucifer</i> 's Portrayals and Solutions to the Crisis of Christian Faith in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
<b>Name:</b>	Ho Hei Ting Bibiana
<b>Supervisor:</b>	Professor Eddie TAY

## Abstract

Religion has long been a means for humans to make sense of their experiences on Earth. Nevertheless, considering that religions – especially the ones that were established before the Enlightenment – mostly turn to divine forces when trying to explain abstract concepts such as human existence, one can observe over time the tension between religious beliefs and modern values, in which the more society becomes inclined to scientific reasoning, the more severely religion is marginalized through secularization. Such incompatibility is even more evident in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as modern society's endeavor to a 'smarter' lifestyle via technological advancement has further accelerated secularization, thus threatening the survival of religion in today's world.

To understand the way secularization endangers a wide range of religions, this capstone project focuses on dissecting the circumstances of Christianity through the lens of Netflix's television series *Lucifer* (2016-) which, by being set in the modern context, can also be regarded as a contemporary response to the ongoing secularization phenomenon. Although the show's featuring of the Devil as the protagonist had stirred controversies among Christian communities, and even triggered the American Family Association (AFA) to launch a petition calling for cancellation of the show, it is discernable that *Lucifer* conveys an affirmative attitude toward Christian teachings, including the utmost importance of love. In view of an interesting approach as such, this paper therefore aims to examine the ways in which *Lucifer*, while illustrating the perceptible clashes between Christian beliefs and the modern values in the 21<sup>st</sup> century on complex notions such as morality and free will, also argues that above all, one's adherence to the core Christian values could be an enduring solution to this seemingly irreconcilable relationship between religion and modernity; *Lucifer*'s medium as a television series is also discussed in terms of its significance in offering new perspectives on Christianity amid the prevalent secularizing atmosphere.

## Reflection

As someone who joined the English Department without knowing much about English literature, my four years of experience here have been nothing but rewarding. It had truly been an exciting intellectual journey as I explored the realms of language, culture, history, and even philosophy through studying various literary works, during which I also learned how to view the world from different perspectives. But more importantly, I am beyond thankful for the great degree of freedom the program has granted me throughout the years, such that I was able to apply my passion for popular culture to my education – I believe this capstone project would be the perfect example of it.

I would also like to sincerely thank my supervisor Professor Eddie Tay for his patience and guidance along the way. While this project was a tremendous challenge for me as it was my first time working on a theological topic, Professor Tay's insightful feedback was incredibly helpful to my development of ideas, and without him this project could not have been satisfactorily completed.