

Call for Proposals

This Group offers an interdisciplinary and international forum for analytical scholars of religion to engage the intersection of critical theory and methodology with concrete ethnographic and historical case studies on religious life and institutions. Critical theory draws on various methods employed from the fields of sociology, anthropology, history, literary criticism, and political theory in order to bring into scrutiny all kinds of discourses on religion, which span from academic to nonacademic as well as from religious to nonreligious. We invite proposals on the following topics:

- Discursive formation of categories in the study of religion (e.g., magic, shamanism, spiritualism, ritual, the secular, and fundamentalism)
- Theorizing vision and sound/conceptualizing touch and smell — aesthetics of religion and the uses of the senses in religious discourse and practice
- Media coverage of Islam and public discourses on the Middle East — the cases of Syria, Iran, and Palestine
- Religious (re)possessions and the doctrines of destiny — repatriation cases, stewardship claims, and the makings of “tradition”
- Politics of secularism and religious education in public institutions
- For a cosponsored session with the [Sociology of Religion Group](#) and the [Study of Religion as an Analytical Discipline Workshop](#), the ethics of fieldwork in the study of religion
- The rhetoric of war propaganda and the discourses on religion
- American secularism in historical and theoretical perspectives
- Original attempts to identify the core political assumptions of American secularism
- Investigations of how theological discourse may have impacted the development of basic secular legal doctrines, such as “separationism,” “nonpreferentialism,” “disestablishmentarianism,” and “noncoercion”
- Studies of unrecognized or underappreciated thinkers whose work influenced American secular traditions (e.g., William Penn, Samuel von Pufendorf, Issac Backus, French radical Enlightenment philosophers)

- Examinations of what the astonishingly multivalent word “secular” may have meant to situated Americans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and how its semantic range may have expanded or constricted
- Sociohistorical studies that seek to identify longitudinal patterns and/or disruptions across nearly four centuries of American “secularism”

Mission

This Group seeks to provide a forum in which scholars of religion from a wide range of disciplines can examine and question their disciplinary presuppositions. The work of this Group can be placed under three main rubrics:

- Critical investigation of the categories generated and employed by the discourses on religion, such as experience, the sacred, ritual, and the various other ‘isms’ that can be found in classic and contemporary studies of religion
- Analysis of new and neglected theorists and works central to the critical study of religion, including those produced in cognate fields such as anthropology, political science, or literary theory
- Theoretically-informed examination of elided and often neglected themes in religious studies, including class, race, gender, violence, legitimation, and the material basis of religion

Anonymity of Review Process

Proposals are **anonymous** to Chairs and Steering Committee members during review, but **visible** to Chairs **prior** to final acceptance or rejection.

Questions?

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Method of Submission

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