The Science, Religion, and Culture program at Harvard Divinity School announces the 7th annual “Ways of Knowing: Graduate Conference on Science and Religion at Harvard Divinity School.” Inaugurated in 2012, this multi-day event is made up of thematic panels that cross areas of science studies, religious traditions, academic disciplines, and theoretical commitments. In addition, the conference features special panels on professionalization, addressing both academic and non-academic careers, and a keynote address. The conference aims at promoting lively interdisciplinary discussion of prevailing assumptions (both within and outside the academy) about the differentiation, organization, authorization, and reproduction of various modes of knowing and doing science and religion.

Last year, more than 100 students and early career scholars representing over 60 graduate programs worldwide gathered to present their research. Following the success of our previous conferences, we invite graduate students and early career scholars to submit paper proposals from a variety of theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary perspectives.

General Call for Papers

We seek papers that explore scientific and religious practices and modes of knowing, especially in relation to this year’s central theme, “Race and Indigeneity”. We welcome the use of all sorts of theoretical tools, including discourse analysis, gender theory, queer theory, race theory, disability theory, postcolonial theory, performance theory, and ritual theory. Papers may focus on any period, region, tradition, group, or person. We welcome papers from a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, history, sociology, religious studies, Science and Technology Studies, history of science and intellectual history among others.

Possible approaches include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Explorations of a specific way of knowing, being, and engaging the world in relation to scientific and/or religious traditions and their interactions.

2. Historical, sociological, and/or anthropological analyses of the cultural processes that support a specific scientific or religious discourse or practice, its authoritative structures, and/or its strategies of inclusion and exclusion.

3. The cultural and historical discourses, articulations and developments of scientific, technological and medical knowledge, institutions, agents, exchanges, etc.
4. The cultural and historical discourses, articulations and developments of religious practices, knowledge, institutions, agents and exchanges, etc.
5. Analyses of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, sexuality, and/or gender with respect to scientific or religious texts, practices, or performances.
6. Comparative examinations of scientific and religious texts and/or their interpretations, with attention to the historical, sociopolitical, cultural, and/or intellectual contexts that mediate and delimit different interpretative strategies and practices.
7. Analyses of the interplay between religion and scientific, moral, and/or legal discourses, practices, and authorities.
8. Critical analyses of the scholarly production and dissemination of knowledge on science or religion.

Central Theme: Race and Indigeneity

The central theme for this year’s conference is “Race and Indigeneity.” We seek papers that engage the ways in which science and/or religion have shaped and been shaped by the concepts and political realities of race and indigeneity across diverse traditions, disciplines, times, and regions. Papers might focus on Indigenous knowledges and the ways in which they have been construed and taken up as science and/or religion; the role of race in the development and practice of different religious traditions and scientific disciplines; legacies of scientific racism, science and empire, and colonial missionary activity; the relationship between race and indigeneity as they relate to knowledge production. Proposals might also interrogate the role of racial identity or Indigenous sovereignty in competing claims to religious and scientific authority, religious texts or scientific theories that deal with construction of race or the Indigenous, and methodological approaches to the study of science and religion as they relate to race and indigeneity. We welcome a broad range of papers that address the theme of race and indigeneity from a range of methodological approaches and in the context of various traditions, disciplines, historical periods, and geographic regions.

Submission Instructions

Individual Papers: Please submit a 300-word abstract explaining the topic, main argument, and methodology of the project. You will be asked to specify whether you are submitting your proposal to the General Call or to one of the Special Call modules. Individual papers will be organized into panels and should not exceed 20 minutes in delivery.

Pre-O rganized Panels: Proposals for panels on a particular topic may also be submitted to either the general or special calls. These should include three to five papers, including a respondent paper. Please submit: 1) a 300-word summary of the focus and purpose of the panel, specifying how each paper contributes to the overarching theme; 2) a 300-word abstract for each paper explaining the topic, main argument, and methodology of the project; 3) the name and contact information of the panel organizer/chair.

Proposals are due by Friday, May 18 through the WOK 2018 Submission Portal: http://bit.ly/wok18

All inquiries can be directed to
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