**Interdisciplinary Scholars of Race and Religion**

**Annual Symposium**

**Philadelphia, PA**

**August 20, 2023**

Studies of race and religion have produced valuable insights since DuBois wrote on the Souls of Black Folk. These insights have only become more important with present political and social upheavals that are coded as religious but are deeply racial, including the rise of Christian Nationalism, responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and battles over reproductive rights. Religion provides schemas by which people make sense of the world, but these schemas don’t operate in isolation. They are profoundly influenced by social location, with race as perhaps the most relevant to the formation and maintenance of religious identities, communities, and ideologies.

Although knowledge creation in the area of race and religion is robust, it has been hampered by disciplinary silos. Sociology, religious studies, anthropology, psychology, and theology each inform understandings of how religion is raced, yet, too often, these scholarly initiatives operate in isolation.

To bridge these divides, and in cooperation with the Religion and Public Life Program at Rice University, we invite submissions to our first annual Race and Religion symposium. This symposium provides a full day of paper sessions and networking in the context of the annual meeting for the Association for the Sociology of Religion. Our goal is to continue building a network of scholars for collaboration and mutual edification in the study of race and religion.

Interested participants should submit an abstract of no more than 250 words via this [link](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=bC4i9cZf60iPA3PbGCA7Y2cRW7env-tHiynGeC6LsOFURTFKS1dTRUI3WUZRWFA1MTdBM09WTUI0MC4u). The deadline for submissions is 11:59pm on March 10th.

Thank you and see you in Philadelphia!

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Please choose one of the following sessions for your submission:

**Method and Theory in Social Scientific Approaches to Race and Religion**

We invite papers that foreground discussion of theoretical and methodological approaches to the race-religion interface. This may include focus on foundational or consequential paradigms and theories that remain important to the study of race and religion; discussion of existing methodological/theory limitations; and examples of emerging paradigms that may be useful for current and future research in the study of race and religion. We specifically invite papers that address the following questions: what theoretical or methodological tools can help scholars better understand how race informs religion and how religion informs race? Given that religion has been less discussed in critical race scholarship, what theories and methods help account for the role of religion in producing/reproducing racial inequality, hierarchies and/or addressing systemic injustice, especially in contemporary social life? What lessons have scholars learned in the process of research about the challenges and opportunities of studying the race-religion nexus? What are the unanswered theoretical questions and analytic tools that religion scholars, especially those informed by the social sciences, are uniquely poised to contribute to the study of race?

**Race, Religion, and Antiracism Mini-paper Session**

As a key organizing element of social life, religion plays an essential role in how possibilities for antiracism develop. Do the ways that religion is racialized inhibit its potential for promoting antiracism and ultimately racial justice, or is there potential to find new ways forward? In this session, we invite papers exploring how religion intersects with issues of race to support or hinder movements toward antiracism and how those possibilities are affected by social location. A variety of papers are welcome, including social scientific investigations of antiracism in religious settings, theological reflections on religion and social inequality, and practitioner research on effective action. This session will consist of multiple, short paper presentations, followed by an open forum integrating perspectives from the papers.

**Race and Religion in a Global Context**

Race and religion have deeply shaped the United States, both historically and in the present. At the same time, it is important that study of the US and US racial paradigms not overdetermine our understanding of race and religion, and the ways that religion is connected to processes of race-making (and un-making). Moreover, it is important for scholars to understand how race and religion interact in different national contexts and across national contexts, as well as how race and religion in contemporary social life are informed by transnational processes such a colonialism, religious missionary activity, neoliberalism, and ethno-nationalisms. We, therefore, invite papers that examine race and religion in a global frame, that consider how religion is raced in national contexts outside the United States, and/or how American religion might inform global racial inequalities and dynamics outside of the US.

**Race, Religion, and Intersectionality**

Intersectionality refers to the way race, class, gender, and more are not mutually exclusive, but mutually constitutive of social inequality. Intersectionality is an analytical tool for understanding social domination and a form of critical praxis that aims towards justice. Despite an overwhelming growth of literature on intersectionality and the travel of intersectionality across disciplines and subdisciplines, the study of intersectionality and religion remain woefully undertheorized. How do religious institutions, identities, and practices intersect with race and other social categories to create complex social inequality? How does religion facilitate systems of power and oppression? What are the possibilities of intersectional justice through religion? These are just some questions the study of race, religion, and intersectionality provoke. We invite submissions that theoretically and empirically engage race, religion, and intersectionality in creative ways.

**Closing Salon: Race, Religion, and Identity**

As a tenet of Critical Race Theory, counter-storytelling is essential to magnifying the experiences of marginalized communities and to disrupt dynamics of power and exclusion. In the study of race and religion, standards of scholarship have at times artificially created silos between social categories that keep us from engaging with holistic social realities. As a corrective to these divisions, we invite stories at the intersection of race, religion, and identity, broadly construed. These stories may be autoethnographic or derived from current research but should be told in a skillful and engaging way. Selected stories will connect to each other and catalyze the salon with all attendees that will conclude our day.