



Call for Papers: **Media, Religion and Public Scholarship**

Conference of the International Society for Media, Religion, and Culture

Conference location: Boulder/Colorado, United States

Conference dates: 8-11 of August 2018

Deadline for Panel and Paper proposals: 4 of December 2017

Notification of acceptances: Mid February 2018

The new visibility of religion in public life is a theme of growing relevance in academic research as well as in public policy making. This increasingly visible trend emphasizes the societal impact of research and invites scholars of media and religion to actively take part in public debate and negotiation over the meaning and significance of religion in contemporary society. Consequently, new possibilities for dialogue with academia, media and society emerge and may result in better understandings of the role of religion in present public life.

However, new challenges also appear. In some societies scholars face serious risks if and when they voice views that contradict dominant political, ideological and/or religious interests in those societies. Hence, it is equally important to recognize those mechanisms of explicit and implicit silencing that prevent researchers from taking on roles as public scholars in society.

In addition, the present digital age provides new communicative opportunities to contribute to the public debate beyond local and national contexts. Global digitalization also challenges academic expression and related free speech as messages travel across a variety of media platforms and interpretive communities.

All of these perspectives call for the need to re-think the relationship between media, religion and public scholarship. We need a framework that better acknowledges the cultural, historical and societal contexts in which research occurs and may have influence.

The conference will explore the theme of public scholarship in the study of media and religion from a variety of different perspectives. Some of the questions that may be addressed in panel, workshop/roundtable and paper proposals include:

- Religion and mediatized public life
- Media, ethics and public scholarship
- Public scholarship, gender/race and religion
- Religion, media and politics/public policy
- Media, religion, and authority
- Religious conflict, media representation and public opinion/public policy
- Journalism and public religion
- Free speech, religion and public scholarship

- Hate speech, religion and public scholarship
- Religious audiences and public scholarship
- Public religiosity: spirituality in popular culture
- Theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religion, media and public scholarship
- Public theology and media
- Digital religion, global and transnational trends

We invite proposals of up to 350 words for panels, workshops and/or roundtable sessions as well as for individual papers. Panel and workshop/roundtable proposals should include the following: a) title for the panel or workshop/roundtable, b) 100 word abstract for panel or workshop/ roundtable, c) 150 word abstracts for each paper, d) names, contact details and titles of up to four participants, and e) names, contact details and titles of proposed moderator and/or respondent.

The conference, the biennial meeting of the International Society for Media, Religion, and Culture (<http://www.colorado.edu/ismrc/>) will explore these issues from a range of disciplinary perspectives. International participants will represent disciplines including media studies, journalism, politics, religious studies, the anthropology and sociology of religion, history, the study of literature and public policy. The conference, since its first meeting in 1996, has become the leading international gathering for the discussion of research in religion, media and culture.

The conference will be held at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in the United States. The university is home for the Center for Media, Religion and Culture, which is dedicated to building knowledge and expertise in the emerging field of media and religion studies. The Center draws on resources from a broad range of disciplines and seeks to engage scholars, professionals, students and interested publics to explore the ways that religion and media are interacting and evolving in contemporary global cultures.

Proposals for should be sent to: cmrc@colorado.edu and johanna.sumiala@helsinki.fi

Details about registration, the venue, housing and transportation for the conference will be available on the conference webpage <http://www.colorado.edu/ismrc/>

Queries may be sent to the local organizing committee at erin.ashbaugh@colorado.edu

To receive updates on the conference, like us on Facebook!

We warmly welcome you to Boulder and ISMRC 2018!

Johanna Sumiala, Professor, University of Helsinki, Conference Program Planner and Vice President, International Society for Media, Religion, and Culture: johanna.sumiala@helsinki.fi

Professor Stewart Hoover, University of Colorado, Boulder, Chair, local host committee: hoover@colorado.edu

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