

[ANN: Newberry Seminar on Religion and Culture in the Americas, October 14, 2022](#)

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Religion and Culture in the Americas Seminar

Friday, October 14, 2022

3:00-4:30 pm Central Time

Virtual Seminar, Register for link

Toward Spiritual Motherhood and Racial Affirmation: Whiteness and Mexico's Upper-Class Católicas, 1937-38

Ricardo Alvarez-Pimentel, Baylor University

This paper examines how, during the late 1930s, Mexico's upper-class laywomen used Catholic magazines and religious pedagogical materials to construct a collective sense of whiteness grounded in racial paternalism. It analyzes moralization campaigns geared toward indigenous domestic workers and demonstrates how elite women used the language of morality, religious orthodoxy, and spiritual "motherhood" to develop a uniquely "feminine" white identity. By adopting racialized perceptions of Catholic social action, Mexican católicas affirmed their power within the domestic sphere. At the same time, they used the unspoken language of race to assert themselves as spiritual agents before the Church.

Respondent: Maggie Elmore, Sam Houston State University

This event is free, but all participants must register in advance and space is limited. To register and request a copy of the pre-circulated paper, click [here](#). Please do not request a paper unless you plan to attend.

Sponsors: the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame, the McGreal Center at Dominican University, the History Department at Loyola University, the University of Chicago Divinity School, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Wheaton College