

[Call for Papers: Motherhood and Mothering across Religious Traditions: A Comparative Roundtable - Comparative Studies in Religion unit, American Academy of Religion's Annual Meeting 2019, San Diego](#)

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Call for Papers

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Religious Studies and Theology, Women's & Gender History / Studies

Call for Papers: Motherhood and Mothering across Religious Traditions: A Comparative Roundtable - Comparative Studies in Religion unit, American Academy of Religion's Annual Meeting 2019, San Diego

This roundtable welcomes short papers (5-7 minutes) that examine the intersection between motherhood and religion, and more specifically, that take into account Adrienne Rich's distinction between motherhood as a patriarchal institution and mothering as women's experience and methodological issues.

While mothers, motherhood and mothering are only marginally addressed in Religious Studies, and the significance of religion has only recently started to be considered in the field of motherhood studies, motherhood as a social and cultural construction beyond the biologically determined processes of sexual reproduction is undeniably part of religious institutions and practices. In parallel, mothering as an experience and practice can be inscribed within a religious context or "spiritualized" by mothers. Both the institution of motherhood and the experience of mothering are shaped and influenced by religious beliefs, discourses, texts, and practices, and are to a greater or lesser extent present in these same beliefs, discourses, texts, and practices. Building on the insights offered by the presenters, this roundtable seeks to bring together scholars working on motherhood and religion from all fields and geographical, historical contexts in order to examine theoretical and methodological issues within a comparative and inter-disciplinary framework.

We particularly welcome contributions that seek to address the following themes:

- The distinction and tension between motherhood as an institution and mothering as women's experience, in particular how (and whether) religious texts can be re-read from mother-centered approaches.
- Epistemological and methodological issues related to the study of mothering especially such as access to the relevant sources and to women's voicing of their experience.
- Gender equality, feminist ideals and religious feminism with an emphasis on motherhood, whether they are based on maternalist ideals or motivated by a matricentric perspective (O'Reilly, 2016).

- Maternal roles not directly tied to biological reproduction - keeping in mind Sara Ruddick's description of maternal thinking and practice (Ruddick, 1989).
- The relationship between highly idealized images of mothers and motherhood in religious texts and discourses with the reality of mothers' lives and experience.

Please send a short abstract of your paper (150 words) and a brief bio (150 words) highlighting your scholarly interests and field of study to Pascale Engelmajer at pengelma@carrollu.edu no later than February 24th. If you have any question about the roundtable or the application process, please contact Pascale Engelmajer (pengelma@carrollu.edu) or Florence Pasche Guignard (fpasche@ryerson.ca).

Contact Info:

Pascale Engelmajer

Contact Email:

pengelma@carrollu.edu