

Creation and Destruction: Beginnings and Ends in Religious Thought

Duke University

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Keynote Speaker: Dr. Jeffrey Pugh

Whether in the sweeping narratives of history and literature, tales of myth and legend, or personal accounts of religious experiences, religion often revolves around story — but to every good story, there is both a beginning and an end. From creation mythos, to beliefs and rituals surrounding birth and death, to efforts to prevent (or encourage) the end of religious practice, forces of creation and destruction are a pervasive theme in the field of Religious Studies. The Third Annual Master's Conference of the Duke Department of Religious Studies invites papers that explore how religion has considered, been affected by, and established these forces.

We encourage applicants to submit papers that consider topics such as, but not limited to:

- Myth and belief surrounding creation and destruction (i.e. doomsday prophecies, origin mythos)
- How religious concepts come to be formed or dispelled over time (i.e. the creation of religious myths, beliefs, or theories of religion)
- Religious response and reaction to that which humanity creates and destroys (i.e. ecological action, medical advancement, war in the name of religion)
- The life-cycle of religious practice (i.e. creation of new religious movements or rituals, how one comes to or leaves religion)
- Conflicts over theological concepts of creation and destruction (i.e. as debates over abortion and the death penalty)
- Religious apocalyptic ideas in literature and popular culture (i.e. in fiction, movies, and TV shows)

We also welcome papers with broad interpretations of creation and destruction as they pertain to religious thought and theory, and encourage applicants to approach this topic from diverse methodological and disciplinary perspectives.

Please submit paper abstracts of no more than **300 words** (and any inquiries) to **religionmaconf@duke.edu** by **Sunday, December 10th**. Decisions will be made within a week of the deadline, and final accepted papers will be due January 21st.

We look forward to reading your research!

If accepted, participants will be compensated for lodging and travel expenses.