

# SOVEREIGNTY & STRANGENESS

CALL FOR PAPERS



OCTOBER 19-21, 2018  
EVANSTON, IL

A GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE PRESENTED BY THE  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY DEPT. OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

# CALL FOR PAPERS

The Religious Studies Department of Northwestern University invites graduate student papers for a conference on

## **Sovereignty and Strangeness**

to be held in Evanston, Illinois on October 19-21, 2018.

**We request abstracts by May 13, 2018.**

This conference aims to explore the constitutive relationship between sovereignty and that which is strange, queer, or illegible. How might the language of sovereignty be useful for thinking about power in religious or secular contexts when spiritual communities, charismatic individuals, and state institutions make claim to and perform supreme authority over populations and territories? And how might the language of strangeness help trace the disruptive potential of places, practices, and bodies that exceed the logic of sovereignty? Such questions converge in talking about queer and trans\* materialities, racialized cosmologies, gender troubles, cultic communities, and liberation theologies, to name just a few examples. This conference hopes to put two intellectual currents -- studies of sovereignty and studies of strangeness -- into conversation in ways that open these terms up to new and unexpected meanings.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**Ashon Crawley** Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and African American and African Studies at the University of Virginia

**Melissa M. Wilcox** Professor and Holstein Family and Community Chair in Religious Studies at the University of California, Riverside

# POSSIBLE PAPER TOPICS

- Cults, Fanaticism, and the Surveillance of "Dangerous" Religions
- Homophobia and Homonormativity in the War on Terror
- Queer Futurity and Dystopian Desires
- Celebrity Worship and the #MeToo Movement
- Monstrosity and the Fantastic in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein
- Black Lives Matter and the Limits of Liberalism
- The Glass Closet and Black Sexual Cultures
- The Women's Marches and the Politics of Pussy Hats
- Tibet and the Religious Affects of Self-Immolation
- Ceremonies of Possession and Protest at Standing Rock
- Spiritualized Nationalisms and Eschatologies of Occupation
- Disability, Debility, and Capacity
- Feminist Killjoys and Complaint Biographies

We seek burgeoning scholars from all academic disciplines, including but not limited to:

Religious Studies African/African-American/Black Studies  
Anthropology Chicana/o/LatinX Studies Comparative  
Literature Cultural Studies Gender/Women's/Sexuality  
Studies History Indigenous Studies Media Studies  
Performance Studies Sociology

Please send a 500-word abstract, along with your name, institution, and year of study to **NUReligiousStudiesConference@gmail.com** by **May 13, 2018**. Decisions will be communicated by the beginning of June. Presentations should not exceed fifteen minutes in length and may approach the topic from any discipline or methodology.

<https://sites.northwestern.edu/sovereigntyandstrangeness/>