

CFP: Women : A Cultural Review

Proposed Special Issue on Religion and Gender

Religion, and conflicts about religion, have long been a part of human history and the three Abrahamic religions have all played central parts in the creation of both nations and national – and globalised – moralities. Until recently, however, it was supposed that all societies – and certainly much of the global north – were moving towards various forms of secularisation. In this, it was supposed, religion and religious observance would become both an increasingly rare social characteristic as well as part of the created and imagined world. This view (always a problematic reading of the past as much as about the present or the future) has become demonstrably false in the past decade and this special issue is designed to investigate the ways in which specifically gendered engagements with religion continue to inform and structure our lives. It is also hoped that contributors will examine critically the ways in which the impact of religion on women has often been read as negative. Without refusing the many explicitly patriarchal aspects of religious teaching and interpretation we invite contributors to enter that more contentious space of examining the emancipatory possibilities of religion as well as those resistant to it.

The Special Issue does not intend to follow any one view about the impact (negative or otherwise) of religion and religious practices on women. Thus it is hoped that the material in this issue will discuss not just the various forms of formal participation which women and men have in religion (as observants, opponents, clergy) but also the way in which religion both reproduces and challenges differences of gender, particularly in terms of the working of the imagination and its presence in various forms of representation and epistemology.

We invite contributions on all these themes and very much welcome contributions which articulate ways of engaging with religion and religious practices which recognise the complexity of both. We assume that many contributors will wish to write about the major religions 'of the book' (and their various forms) but in all cases it is the meeting of religion and gender that we encourage you to consider.

We ask that possible contributors send their abstracts, of no more than 1,000 words, to the editors (Mary Evans at m.s.e@lse.ac.uk, Jane Gledhill at jane.gledhill@lichfield.anglican.org and Sian Hawthorne at sh79@soas.ac.uk) by the 31 October 2015. We will inform you whether we will invite you to submit a paper by the end of December 2015 and the final date for the receipt of papers is 31 October 2016. Papers should be no more than 6,000 words in length and details of the format for submission are given inside the cover of Women.

We look forward to hearing from you.