

'Religions in the Americas' section: Vision & Introduction

The study of American religions has recently begun to acknowledge and broaden its multi-disciplinary character. This section of *Religion Compass* hopes to rigorously engage in methodological self-scrutiny and theoretical creativity by encouraging scholarship that moves beyond traditions-based approaches. We welcome a wide variety of topical, theoretical, and methodological perspectives. In suggesting this, we certainly don't reject traditions-based foci, but encourage thinking beyond their implicit boundaries. We also see the study of religions in the Americas as necessarily moving beyond the boundaries of the nation-state. While our articles may still focus predominantly on the United States and its influence on other parts of the Americas, we want to stress how immigration, border crossings, and the combinativeness and hybridity of American religions require that we look beyond national boundaries.

We wish to provoke questions without codifying answers. Structurally, the work of this section will likely proceed with "virtual issues" that gather together reflections on particular areas and subjects of religious expression (the sensorium of American religions, American political religions, the combinativity of American religions, the eroticism of American religions, and so on). In this manner, we will strive to thematically merge scholarly reflections and stimulate new modes of discussing and thinking about religions in the Americas.

Just as it is the mission of *Religion Compass* to summarise the state of the field for the educated non-specialist, so the articles and issues in this section will provide a valuable 'way in' for advanced students, junior teaching faculty and experienced researchers alike. We seek to promote connections between sub-disciplines, and to provide a comparative look across boundaries.

Signed,

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