

# Critical Theories and Liturgical Studies

**Convener:** Sarah Kathleen Johnson is Assistant Professor of Liturgy and Pastoral Theology at Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada.

**Members in Attendance:** Tony Alonso, Kimberly Belcher, Stephanie Budway, Bryan Cones, Benjamin Durheim, Hansol Goo, Sarah Kathleen Johnson, Layla Karst, Richard McCarron, Tom McLean, Hyemin Na, Gabriel Pivarnik, Audrey Seah, Kristine Suna-Koro, Dave Turnbloom

**Visitors in Attendance:** Carl Bromley, Megan Effron, Chris Fahrenthold, Clayton Faulkner, Mirella Klomp, Benita Lim, Jordan Sandrock, Erik Sorensen, Marileen Steyn, Mykayla Turner, Byron D. Wratee, Joshua Zentner-Barrett

**Description of Work:** In 2025, the Critical Theories and Liturgical Studies seminar explored two themes—consumerism and trauma—in addition to welcoming work in progress. The first day focused on liturgy and consumerism with a panel on *Commodified Communion* by Antonio Alonso and a paper emerging from the SOIL project. The second day focused on liturgy and trauma with three papers at this intersection. It also included work in progress that coalesced around the theme of whether and how certain people and perspectives are marginalized in or through liturgical practices. The Critical Theories Seminar held a joint session with the Liturgy and Cultures Seminar that included two papers of interest to both groups. Several papers presented in the seminar incorporated qualitative theological methods.

## Papers and Presentations:

### *Consumerism*

- Marileen Steyn and Mirella Klomp: “Liturgies of Soil in a Consumption Culture: Challenging *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*.” Respondent: Bryan Cones.
- Book Discussion: Antonio Alonso, *Commodified Communion: Eucharist, Consumer Culture, and the Practice of Everyday Life* (Fordham University Press, 2021). Tony Alonso, Framing and Response.
- Gabriel Pivarnik, Chapter 1: The Resistance; Hansol Goo, Chapter 2: Listening for the Cry in a Consumer Culture; Tom McLean, Chapter 3: The Limits of Eucharistic Resistance.

### *Joint Session with Liturgy and Cultures*

- Lorenzo Penalosa and Audrey Seah: “50 Years of the Misa Ng Bayang Pilipino.” Respondent: Ricky Manalo.

- Sarah Kathleen Johnson and Joshua Zentner-Barrett: “Germinal Ritual: Can Liturgical Practices Seed Social Transformation?” Respondent: Kai Ton Chau.

### ***Trauma***

- David Turnbloom: “Liturgy and Trauma.” Respondent: Mykayla Turner.
- Stephanie Budwey, “Trauma Informed Liturgy.”
- Kristine Suna-Koro: “Silence as Liturgical Space for Lament.”

### ***Work in Progress***

- Erik Sorensen: “Conflating Unity with Uniformity: Celebrating the Eucharist in the Context of Indigenous-Settler Reconciliation.” Respondent: Layla Karst.
- Benjamin Durheim: “Public Christianity and Hijacked Victimhood: Liturgical-Ethical Implications of a Socially Toxic Rhetoric.” Respondent: Hyemin Na.
- Layla Karst: “Knowing Her Place: Ritualizing Lay Catholic Eucharistic Preaching.”

**Other Work and Plans for the Future:** In addition to affirming a commitment to welcome work in progress, we identified two themes for 2026. First, we selected *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* by Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh (Duke University Press, 2018) as a common read (<https://www.dukeupress.edu/on-decoloniality>). Second, we identified *hospitality* as a theme to explore. We continue to welcome contributions in different forms including papers, short papers, and lightning talks.