

# Call for Papers: Canadian Journal of Sociology Special Issue on The Elementary Forms of Religious Life Centenary: Contemporary Engagements

## **Guest Editors:**

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Since its publication in 1912, Emile Durkheim's magnum opus, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (EFRL), has inspired vigorous discussion, reflection, controversy and even scandal within sociology and allied disciplines (including religious studies, anthropology, philosophy and mythology). Making the case for the social foundation of religion and the constitutive and enervating forces of collective forms of life, this complex and compelling text continues to stimulate research and open up new avenues for questioning in all major fields within and beyond sociology. From concerns with epistemology, symbolization and ritual reaffirmations of social order, to the volatile, creative and transformative powers of collective life, Durkheim's EFRL has demonstrated its enduring importance.

As concerns contemporary global sociality, the ostensibly modernizing thrust of economic and political development has been accompanied by circumstances in which religion has returned with a vengeance. Arguably, this is a consequence of substantial changes in global sociality since the Iranian revolution 1978-79 and end of the Cold War. Like current global (and economic) conflicts (e.g. the 'War on Terror'), resurgent neo-nationalisms have frequently had religious underpinnings. As EFRL vividly develops, sacralization is a constitutive and hence inherent part of social life; from Trudeau to Obama, social members feel profound attraction and respect towards idealized representations of the collective; yet, they can as quickly become objects of repulsion and disdain. The sacred, as conceptualized by Durkheim, is intimately and inextricably connected with phenomena as varied as politics and security, conceptions of justice and equality, systems of inclusion and exclusion, liminality, symbolic exchange, modes of celebration, collective trauma, rituals of mourning and socially ordered ways of navigating the major events that punctuate the life-course, such as birth, convocation, marriage and death.

In celebration of its centenary, this special issue invites original submissions that meaningfully engage with Durkheim's classic text. We are particularly interested in contributions that develop its fecundity in relation to the contemporary social world and/or theoretical issues pertinent to contemporary sociology. Primarily theoretical or more empirically oriented submissions are equally welcome.

Areas of focus could include, but are by no means limited to:

- formal religion(s), contemporary nationalisms and/or transformations in global sociality
- collective effervescence and social transformations (e.g. social movements, revolutionary politics and struggles, modes of celebration, festivity and the carnivalesque)
- civic religiosity and the place of ritual, sacred symbols, belief and sacrifice in contemporary societies  
social forms of embodiment
- collective suffering, ritual mourning, processes of reconciliation and (contested) forms of memorialization
- media, communication, and new social formations/affiliations
- profanity, abjection and waste
- the sociology of knowledge in the 21st century

Notes for Prospective Authors:

Interested authors should first submit an abstract to the guest editors for consideration. Successful authors will subsequently be asked to submit a full manuscript. Papers submitted must not have been previously published nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere, as they will undergo a peer-review process.

Important Dates:

- The editors request a 250 word abstract by **August 15, 2011**
- Selected authors will be invited to submit full manuscripts of 7,000 - 8,000 word by **August 31, 2011**
- Final manuscripts will be due on **February 3, 2012**.
- All articles will undergo a process of external peer review

Please email your abstracts to both guest-editors:

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