



Boston University and The Journal of Religion & Film
cordially invite you to



The 2025 International Conference on Religion & Film to be held on the campus of Boston University School of Theology May 29-31, 2025



Boston, Massachusetts

Conflict and its resolution are at the heart of most movies. As Wes Anderson put it, “There’s no story if there isn’t some conflict.” From its beginnings, cinema has offered us compelling visions of interpersonal discord and international conflict, social struggle and division, terrorism and genocide—but also stirring portrayals of reconciliation and forgiveness. Religion has often stood at the center of these stories, serving both as a source of conflict and division and a motivation and resource for peace, understanding, and healing.

We invite papers that explore the role of religion in the cinematic construction of conflict and reconciliation, war and peace, hostility and forgiveness. How, for example, has religion been portrayed as instrumental in constructing violence as redemptive? Or how has religion been portrayed as offering a salvation that is achieved through suffering and violence? We are especially interested in scholarly discussion of films that highlight the ways religion has helped provide an imaginative vehicle or pathway for moving from conflict to reconciliation.

General Call

The International Conferences on Religion & Film are gatherings held to foster intellectual stimulation, build networks, and advance scholarship related to Religion and Film Studies. Every conference invites papers that explore the intersection of religion and film through the analysis of individual films, genre studies, religious themes in films, the representation of religion in film, and functionalistic approaches of film as religion. Although there is a thematic emphasis on our location this year in Boston, papers are not restricted to this theme, and we heartily welcome papers that include films from around the world and that consider the role of race and gender in the intersection of religion and film.

Please submit a 350-word abstract of your proposal by **January 30, 2025 (extended)** ~~January 20, 2025~~ to sthodaa@bu.edu with the subject line “2025 International Conference on Religion & Film.” Please include 2 documents: 1) your anonymous 350-word abstract; 2) a document with your name and institution. Your abstract will undergo academic blind peer-review. Paper acceptances will be announced by March 1, 2025.

From its early revolutionary history to conflicts around busing and desegregation, to the Boston Marathon bombing, Boston has seen its share of violence and conflict. But it is also a city that has been the home to peacemakers, such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who earned his PhD at Boston University, and his mentor, Rev. Howard Thurman, former Dean of Boston University’s Marsh Chapel. The University is also home to the Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground and the Tom Porter Program on Religion and Conflict Transformation.

We invite you to join us **May 29-31, 2025** for a stimulating International Conference on Religion & Film! More details regarding conference schedule, discount hotel options, and tours including Boston’s historic “Freedom Trail,” “Black Heritage Trail,” and Boston Movie Tours will be published in late 2024.

For more information, housing, and registration, please visit the Conference website: bu.edu/sth/2025IRFC

Eventbrite Registration site: <https://2025IRFC.eventbrite.com>.

Discounted Early Bird registration deadline: March 15, 2025
Regular registration deadline April 15, 2025.

For further questions you may contact Dr. Bryan Stone at bpstone@bu.edu.



Scene from *Good Will Hunting* (1997) with bench now turned into Robin Williams Memorial at the Boston Public Garden.