What is heresy? Who is a heretic? These are old questions, mobilized by twinned legacies of religious violence and normative, routinized scholastic inquiry. The answers are familiar—the heretical is a belief, a lay practice, or an individual that threatens orthodoxy. Heresy is thus a mode of negotiating boundaries and managing disturbance. Rather than disposing of the concept of “heresy,” this conference ponders whether and how heresies might be leveraged with renewed analytic, historical, and ethical force. Further, we will explore how scholars of religion might study heresies while resisting its conceptual containment or banalization.

Heresies: Dissonance and Disturbance invites graduate students to present research that unsettles traditional notions of the heretical, and expands considerations of heresy within Religious Studies. New heresies might be (de)constructed, strategically employed, or destabilized by collective questioning: How are claims of heresy made in diverse contexts? How do such claims produce cultural Others in interaction with other forces of oppression? Does heresy maintain, modify, or destroy borders between languages, regions, and religious traditions? How might heresy be understood outside of the linguistic or the conceptual? Is it more heretical to deny the power of a political leader, or Beyoncé?

We aim to consider claims, practices, and effects of heresies in:
- Material and visual culture
- Civil religion
- Ritual and devotional practice
- Pop culture
- Texts and textual interpretation
- Ethics
- Pasts and futures of Religious Studies
- Embodiment and identity

We encourage abstracts from all academic fields and disciplines. Submissions may utilize diverse approaches and methods, including but not limited to the visual, musical, and performance arts.

Please submit a 250-word abstract and academic CV in PDF format to: iugradconf@gmail.com by December 1, 2018.

Participants will be notified of decisions via email by December 14, 2018. Those accepted will have 20 minutes to present. Each panel will be followed by a faculty response. Full papers will be due February 28, 2019.

Please email iugradconf@gmail.com with questions.