

COV&R 2018: After Truth

July 11-14, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC 20064

"After Truth" immediately suggests the supposedly "post-factual" cultural moment, having particular resonance with recent anxieties over "fake news," "alternative facts," and other pathologies of the contemporary political sphere. Yet "After Truth" also indicates "the pursuit of truth," and it prompts us to think about where we are and who(se) we become both when truth is obscured and after it is disclosed. Truth, deception, and indifference to truth are foundational concerns of René Girard's Mimetic Theory, and the moment is apt to revisit them. The 2018 meeting of The Colloquium on Violence & Religion invites scholars and practitioners to share research and experience related to this theme, engaging with Mimetic Theory across the disciplines. Our aim is a fruitful exchange of ideas exploring, developing, critiquing, and applying Girard's Mimetic Theory in relation to this pressing contemporary matter.

Paper and Presentation Proposals

Paper and presentation proposals could take up matters such as:

- How can Mimetic Theory cast light on the purportedly 'post-truth' conditions of contemporary political discourse?
- How can Girard's thought explain the engagement of religious groups in "post-truth" politics?
- How do contemporary religious and political discourses blind their participants to the truth of mimetic desire and its consequences?
- How do contemporary media technologies accelerate mimetic contagion and abet the scapegoat mechanism?
- How do works of art disclose truth, its counterfeits, and their (mis)-appropriation?
- In the post-truth moment, are the ideological left and right mimetic doubles?
- What is the fate of the victim in a post-truth culture?
- How have historical truth and untruth functioned as objects of mimetic contention?
- How can mimetic theory shed light on satire's place in "post-truth" political culture?

In addition to these suggested topics, papers are welcome on any other topic related to the conference theme or related to the work of René Girard.

Workshops

The organizing committee also welcomes proposals for practitioner-focused, interactive workshops that relate to the work of Girard or the conference theme. Such sessions could take different forms (e.g., workshop-style, forum, discussion group, practicum) and may cover areas such as:

- Truth and lies in peace-making and conflict resolution
- The epistemology of radicalization
- Truths and untruths in inter-faith dialogue
- Girard and preaching or pastoral practice
- Mimetic theory in youth education

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- Girard and psychotherapy
- Girard and medical practice
- Girard and the natural sciences

This list is merely suggestive, not exhaustive. In submitting proposals, please provide a description and rationale for an interactive workshop on a particular topic to be facilitated for no more than 90 minutes by appropriately qualified persons, as well as a description of the contribution of co-participants/workshop leaders.

Submission Guidelines for Papers and Workshops

Participants should submit proposals/abstracts of to 2018COVR@gmail.com by April 15, 2018. A separate Word attachment is preferred but not required—proposals may be in the body of the email. Individual proposals should be no more than 250 words. Proposals for panels of related papers should include a cover sheet explaining the rationale for the panel, followed by individual abstracts of not more than 250 words each.

IMPORTANT: All submissions should include a statement at the end of the proposal listing technology needs. If needs are not stated at the time of submission, the host institution may be unable to accommodate them.

Schwager Award

To honor the memory of Raymund Schwager, SJ (1935-2004), the Colloquium on Violence & Religion offers an award of \$1,500.00 shared by up to three persons for the three best papers given by graduate students at the COV&R 2018 meeting. Students presenting papers at the conference are invited to apply for the Raymund Schwager Memorial Award by sending a letter to that effect and the full text of their paper (in English, maximum length: 10 pages) in an e-mail attachment to COV&R 2018, 2018COVR@gmail.com. Due date for submission is the closing date of the conference registration, June 1. Winners will be announced in the conference program. Prize-winning essays should reflect an engagement with mimetic theory; they will be presented in a plenary session and be considered for publication in *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture*.

Travel Grants

Travel grants to attend COV&R 2018 are available to individuals who meet the following criteria:

1. They are grad students or practitioners of mimetic theory (e.g., NGO/non-profit staff; journalists, government employees).
2. They are giving a paper
3. They are attending their first conference.

Further, the grants are awarded by COV&R officers on a first come, first served basis. Preference is given to graduate students; however, practitioners of mimetic theory are also encouraged to apply.

To apply, write a letter of application to the Executive Secretary, Martha Reineke [martha.reineke@uni.edu] until the closing date of the conference registration. The board will sponsor the attendance of up to 6 persons with a maximum amount of \$500 USD each.