

Responding to Outrage 1: Apologies, Inquiries, Commemoration, Scandal, and Truth and Reconciliation

Wednesday 21 June 2023 09:00 (1h 30m)

In the aftermath of public revelations of harms, wrongdoing or scandal, political actors and institutions have a number of mechanisms available to them in the process of reputation management, re consolidating legitimacy, and re-establishing political and social order. Such mechanisms include public inquiries, expressions of contrition, memorialisation, and the establishment of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs).

While each of these devices have been the focus of considerable academic research in recent years, it is noticeable that such literatures are often disconnected from one another and do not sufficiently build on each other's findings. This is a missed opportunity, not least because they share many of the same concerns, including the power dynamics within transgression management; questions of who does and does not have voice within such processes; and the class, gendered and racialised aspects of supposedly reparative processes.

As such, the goal of this roundtable is to bring together researchers on public inquiries, remorse, memorialisation, TRCs, and scandal with a view to building connections between these literatures and considering how each other's empirical and theoretical insights may mutually enhance our understandings of the politics of responding to harm, wrongdoing and scandal.

Participants on this panel will address the following questions:

- How is wrongdoing rendered legible through particular narrative techniques?
- What techniques do actors employ in responding to wrongdoing? How do these techniques function to order and domesticate harmful violations?
- Who is authorised to identify and respond to transgression?
- What potential is there for a range of actors within society to challenge, contest and disrupt dominant attempts to manage harms?
- What are the principles which guide and are reproduced by the management of scandals, wrongdoings and violations?
- What temporalities are at play in the identification and response to scandal? How do these temporalities structure and define public inquiries, remorse, memorialisation and TRCs?

Track Classification: Post-Structural Politics Working Group