

Contending Modernities Blog Guide to Publication

The Academic Mission of the Contending Modernities Blog

The Contending Modernities blog brings together scholars from across the humanities and social sciences to engage with the themes of religion, modernity, and secularism. Our more specific aim is to move beyond the Euro-American boundaries that have often been the site of such engagement, bringing in voices from a variety of cultural, religious, social, and political traditions. In keeping with this aim, we are especially interested in how religion, modernity, and secularism can be analyzed through a decolonial approach that provincializes, critically investigates, and thinks beyond Euro-U.S. epistemological frameworks.

General Guidelines

Standard Posts

- A good post says one thing but says it precisely and succinctly. Posts that attempt to summarize in 1000-1500 words an author's larger book project or an argument that would generally require article-length treatment are less successful. The strongest posts nonetheless reveal a fluency in the relevant scholarly literature that informs the author's argument. We invite you to review some of the following blogs as exemplary models.
 - Shaul Magid, "[On Disloyalty and Dual Loyalty: Is President Trump a Brandeisean Zionist?](#)"
 - Robert Orsi, "[Painted into a Corner by the Blood of the Lord](#)"
- Keep in mind that while we encourage posts that respond contemporary events, we aim for our posts to have a long-shelf life. Thus, please clearly indicate dates on which events happened (i.e. July 14, 2020 as opposed to "last week") and provide necessary context so that readers who engage the post at a later date are able to follow the argument.
- Authors are also encouraged to offer suggested reading to guide interested readers to additional literature on the subject matter of the post.

Book Symposium Posts

- If you are writing a contribution for a book symposium, we ask that you not imagine your piece as a typical book review, but rather as an engagement that thinks through how the book might change how you approach your work, imagine the shape of the field that it contributes to, or push you to rethink the conceptual problems within your discipline. In other words, you are not duty-bound (or even requested to!) rehash the argument of the book chapter-by-chapter for readers. Rather, you are invited to think broadly about the effects that the book has had on your thinking and will perhaps have on others as well. See, as an example, Rachel Smith's engagement with Angie Heo's *The Political Lives of Saints* [here](#).

Audience

Our blog seeks to be a source for rigorous scholarly investigation that is nonetheless accessible to intellectually curious, but non-specialist audiences as well as to undergraduate students. As such, we maintain rigorous standards for the scholarly practice of citation and reference while also seeking to communicate complex ideas in a manner accessible to members of the wider public and to undergraduates in the classroom. We request that authors limit the use of jargon, and where it cannot be limited, explain clearly the meaning of the terms that they utilize.

Formatting and Style Guide

- In general, the CM blog follows the Chicago Manual of Style. To maintain the readability of the blog for online audiences, we seek to limit the use of explanatory footnotes and to include them only when absolutely necessary. We ask that authors include all page numbers for directly quoted material, along with links to the publishers' sites for the journals or books cited.
- *Example*
 - From Joseph Winters's, "[Sovereignty, Blackness, and the Decolonial Task: Thought Experiments](#)":

“[Walter Benjamin anticipates some of these contemporary discussions](#) when he writes, ‘The tradition of the oppressed teaches us the state of emergency in which we live is not the exception but the rule’” (392).
- We also request that descriptions of particular news events be accompanied by a link that can guide readers to trusted media outlets for their own review.
- The capitalization of terms related to race and ethnicity is debated. In general, we follow the [MacArthur Foundation guide](#), capitalizing White, Black, Brown and Indigenous. Terms such as “whiteness,” however, can remain lowercase.
- Following Cecelia Lynch, we do not capitalize “western.” [She writes](#), “I do not capitalize ‘west’ or ‘western’ as a gesture toward rejecting their global hierarchy” (p. 4, fn.8).
- All posts will be accompanied by a brief biography and a headshot provided by the author.

Images

- We will work with you to locate 1-3 images to accompany your essay (depending upon length). You are welcome to send images or ideas for images that you would like to include as a part of this process.

- Please do keep in mind that we are unable to use copyrighted items unless we are given permission by the owner of them. For most essays, we will utilize a search engine such as Flickr or Wikimedia Commons to locate images that are marked as creative commons. In some exceptional cases, we can reach out to Notre Dame's general counsel to confirm whether a copyrighted image could be used under a "fair use" argument.

Right not to Publish

Contending Modernities takes an anti-racist approach to the study of religion, secularism, and modernity. We reserve the right not to publish any material—solicited or unsolicited—that fails to meet this standard.