

Call for Papers

THE WORD AND THE WORLD: PUBLIC THEOLOGY IN AN AGE OF GLOBAL MEDIA

Global Network for Public Theology

Riverside Innovation Centre, University of Chester Sept 2nd - 6th, 2013

GNPT's 2013 triennial meeting considers the relationship between the media and global public theology. In particular, the conference will explore the extent to which media, information and communication technologies have become a new, largely autonomous, 'public' sphere with global reach and an increasingly influential (and not necessarily benign) role to play in mediating religious and spiritual concerns and representing religion to a wider public. The consultation will explore the ways in which electronic media function as powerful means by which religious organizations mediate their presence and message into wider society; and some of the ethical and theological dimensions of the production and consumption of media and popular culture.

Topics for the Consultation will include:

- How established and emerging forms of media and mass communication shape the ways in which religious organizations and movements communicate with the wider public sphere;
- How electronic media shape public perceptions of religious belief, practice and representation;
- How mainstream media – news and entertainment - report and represent religious belief, practice and affiliation in pluralist, secularising and multi-cultural societies;
- The role of media in impeding or facilitating wider 'religious literacy' within societies;
- How media technologies are working to reconfigure the very relationship between 'private' and 'public', and reshaping our concepts of selfhood, privacy, community;
- How new media assist in developing what Birgit Meyer and Annelies Moors term the 'alternative politics of belonging' – within or alongside conventional structures of democratic participation
- The re-emergence of the idea of 'the sacred' as applied to public discourse, especially within fields of popular culture, media and popular spiritualities;
- Issues of media ethics: sex and violence, ownership and control, freedom and censorship, representation of minorities, commercialism and the use and abuse of information and communications technologies;
- How patterns of globalisation affect the theory and practice of communication; how new forms of broadcast, network and social media affect practices of faith amongst global diasporas.

Short papers will be grouped into the following themes:

1. Media, Public Life and Public Theology
 2. Globalization and Public Theology
 3. Learning, Teaching and Researching in Public Theology: methods, innovations and case studies
 4. Theological Sources and Resources for Global Public Theology
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Proposals for short papers are invited on any aspects or themes related to the above. Papers should be 30 minutes in length with an additional 15-20 minutes discussion.

Applications to submit a paper should include:

- Proposer's name, institutional affiliation and contact details (preferably email);
- Title of the paper;
- 200-word abstract;
- Details of any audio-visual equipment you will need to deliver your paper.

[Applications to be sent to: trs@chester.ac.uk](mailto:trs@chester.ac.uk)

Deadline for abstract submission: 30 April 2013.

Further details about the consultation and how to register may be found at:
<http://www.chester.ac.uk/node/15313>

email: e.graham@chester.ac.uk or c.mcevoy@chester.ac.uk

Please DO NOT send abstracts to these addresses.

March 2013