

Protestant Perspectives on the Natural Law*Galerie 2***"Jonathan Edwards as Resource for Protestant Natural Law"****Elizabeth Cochran, Duquesne University**

Jonathan Edwards develops a rich and multifaceted account of the created world's natural goodness that human beings can pursue apart from receiving God's justifying grace. But Edwards is equally clear that this pursuit falls short of true virtue. Elizabeth Cochran navigates these tensions in Edwards's thought to explore Edwards's specific contribution to contemporary reflection on natural law. She argues that Edwards resists an overly spiritual and arbitrary understanding of true virtue and establishes a natural law ethic in which beauty and perception are central. The final section of her paper builds on this consideration of Edwards to articulate and explore broader methodological challenges that textual interpretation and textual authority pose for constructive Christian ethics.

Conveners: Neil Arner, University of Notre Dame
Paul Martens, Baylor University

Restorative Justice*Studio 8***"Reforming and Transforming Criminal Justice: Case Studies from Angola State Prison"****Kevin J. Brown, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**

This interest group session will focus on the roles of religion and faith in the American corrections system, with a focus on the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola and the seminary program run by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. This program and other religious programming has been part of a significant reduction in violence at Angola over the last few decades as studied in the recent book, *The Angola Prison Seminary* by Michael Hallett et al (Routledge, 2016). Discussion will focus upon the pro-social and transformative capacities of religious practices, institutions, and beliefs.

Conveners: Elizabeth M. Bounds, Candler School of Theology, Emory University
Amy Levad, University of St. Thomas

9:30-11pm "What Just Happened? Making Ethical Sense of the 2016 Vote"*Studio 8*

Presenters: Jana Bennett, University of Dayton
M.T. Davila, Andover Newton Theological School
David Gushee, Mercer University
Irene Oh, George Washington University
Asante Todd, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

November U.S. election results caught scholars and pundits alike by surprise. The Christian vote in particular was divided; the divided votes of ethnic and racial minorities and women also demand analysis; and a further population of voters who feel left out and marginalized has emerged. In a few short presentations, SCE scholars will dissect what occurred, providing groundwork for a discussion of how this knowledge might shape our contributions to teaching, scholarship, and public engagement.

Convener: Alex Mikulich, Loyola University New Orleans