

The Case for Scandology: International Relations in an Age of Outrage.

Victoria Basham, University of Cardiff. Email: BashamV@cardiff.ac.uk & Jamie Johnson, University of Leicester. Email: jmj14@le.ac.uk

This workshop invites contributions from those seeking to generate insights on the role that scandals are playing (and have played) in (re)producing relations of international order, power, violence and inequality. Though global politics of the 21st century is plagued by scandal (financial crises, corruption, sexual violence, economic exploitation, child abuse, racism, torture, unlawful killing and illegal war), very little attention has been given to the nature and function of scandal *itself*. This is a lacuna for IR, especially when there is burgeoning literature on scandal in other disciplines (Haller et al, 2018). We thus propose a ‘scandology’ of IR and seek contributions to three main lines of inquiry:

1. Understanding the international topography and variation of scandal. Where are scandals found in global politics? Are there different scandal tropes in European, Anglosphere, Non-Western or Postcolonial contexts? Are similar practices and allegations scandalous in different ways depending on the socio-political locales in which they occur?

2. Developing conceptual and methodological tools required to grapple with scandals. These include questions of:

aestheticism and visibility – scandals are contingent moment of social and political contestation over how a particular moment can be seen (or made seen)

affect - scandals are tied to public outrage and feelings (such as shame, embarrassment, disgust and excitement) about the scandalous event

labour and economy. There is a media industry devoted to ‘unearthing’ scandals as infotainment. How are scandals co-constitutive of global political economy? What labour is involved in producing a scandal? And who is performing such labour?

3. Understanding what kind of a (progressive) politics is possible through scandal. How can (and how have) scandals produce positive political outcomes? Or should scandal politics be avoided?

The workshop is thus concerned with the following questions:

1. What insights do scandals offer us to the (re)production of international order?
2. How are scandals made sense of? What are the features of *scandalisation* as a sense-making process?

3. What do scandals tell us about particular social and political cultures? How do scandals vary across different socio-political locales?
4. What is the relationship between scandal, emotion and community?
5. How are scandals responded to or resolved?
6. How could scandals be responded to differently? Do we need to move beyond the imaginaries, possibilities and temporalities 'scandal' as an event?

Interrogating scandals also raises questions about the power relations, structures and social practices that sustain this violence and inequality – including the role of gendered and racialized cultures; historical memory, remembrance and commemoration; labour roles and economic structures; visual, aesthetic and material assemblages; vernacular and 'everyday' knowledge; to name but a few. We welcome interdisciplinary submissions that interrogate the challenges, possibilities and insights of 'scandology' in International Relations, whether empirically and/or theoretically driven.