

## Re-considering accuracy, verisimilitude and truth (RSA, New York, 27-29 Mar 14)

New York, NY, Mar 27-29, 2014

Deadline: Jun 1, 2013

Ruth Noyes

Call for papers

Re-considering accuracy, verisimilitude and truth claims in the early modern period across disciplines

Session at the Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting 2014

This interdisciplinary session (or, potentially, series of sessions) takes up the question of issues of accuracy, verisimilitude and truth claims for scholars of early modern art, historiography, science, and philology. This period is associated with the production of images and texts characterized by facticity and exactitude, and by overt or implicit claims to authority based upon their utilization of authenticated sources, accurately reconstituted by precise methods. The session considers the implications of Gabrielle Spiegel's directive: "one might hypothesize that those instances in which truth-claims for history are most boldly asserted are precisely those in which ideological partisanship is most actively at play."

While Spiegel referred to medieval literature and historiography, this session undertakes to reconsider early modern works in light of this hypothesis. Do open and implied assertions of truthfulness abounding in texts and images of this period actually bespeak their producers' desire to answer a demand for new forms of written and visual discourse relevant to their particular partisan needs? Greater realism and accuracy, though perhaps consequences of early modern ostensibly veristic methods, were not necessarily identical to the initial motives impelling the use of such methods. The substitution of self-professed methodological truthfulness for purportedly less accurate means of producing images, maps, texts, scientific models, etc., represents the displacement of mediation towards a low mimetic or "realistic" mode, not for increased realism, but to enhance the credibility of motivating ideologies, by grounding them in the language of apparent factuality, in contradistinction to overt use fantasy and figural language, which were no longer ideologically sufficient.

Please send title and keywords, abstracts of no more than 150 words and

a CV of no more than 300 words, to Ruth S. Noyes, University of Massachusetts Amherst and the American Academy in Rome, [ruthsnoyes@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthsnoyes@yahoo.com), by June 1.

Reference:

CFP: Re-considering accuracy, verisimilitude and truth (RSA, New York, 27-29 Mar 14). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 26, 2013 (accessed Dec 18, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/5209>>.