

Theorizing Crisis Imaginaries

24 Nov 2020 | Joint Online Research Workshop

UCD Humanities Institute and Institute of Modern Languages Research, University of London

The Covid-19 pandemic has produced a global crisis imaginary that permeates daily life: the highly infectious virus has crossed continents, disrupting economic activity, education, cultural life, and everyday social interactions. On one level, the Covid-19 crisis dramatically stages the vulnerability of all life, while also drawing attention to the limits of human planning. On another level, it illustrates the pivotal role of the social imaginary in the dramatisation and management of crises: crises are not just objective occurrences that happen independently of the historical, social, and cultural frames through which they are mediated, narrated and understood. Using the idea of a 'crisis imaginaries' as a springboard, our workshop investigates the social, political and historical functions of crisis narrations from interdisciplinary perspectives.

Programme

15:30 Welcome and Introduction

15:40 **Panel I**

Prof Janet Roitman (Anthropology; New School of Social Research, New York): Crisis Today

Prof Ansgar Nünning (English and American Literature; University of Gießen): 'Crisis compared to what?' Competing Narratives of the Coronavirus Pandemic as an Epistemological Crisis

Dr Joseph Ford (French Studies; IMLR, University of London): Reimagining 'Crisis' for Multilingual Community Engagement During Covid-19

16:40 Break

17:00 **Panel II**

Prof Sarah Churchwell (Public Understanding of the Humanities; School of Advanced Study, University of London): The American 'Brown Scare,' 1936-46: A Case Study in Historiography and Crisis

Prof Anne Fuchs (German Studies; Humanities Institute, University College Dublin): Precarity and the Normalization of Crises

Prof Marek Tamm (History; Institute of Humanities, Tallinn University): Future in Crisis? Exploring the New Modalities of the Future

18:00 End