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Religion and Society

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John Thatamanil

Enlightenment: Cause or Cure for the Post-Truth Crisis?

A veritable cottage industry of books examines our current post-truth crisis—the sheer disregard for truth reflected in widespread political lies, misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories. This literature contends that post-truth is caused by a fall away from Enlightenment rationality. This talk, following Foucault, suggests matters may be more complicated and that the Enlightenment is as likely to be the cause of the crisis, not its cure. Truth requires more than logical procedure; it requires love for the truth.

John Thatamanil is Professor of Theology & World Religions at Union Theological Seminary. His current book project is provisionally titled *Desiring Truth: Comparative Theology and the Quest for Interreligious Wisdom*.

October 9, 2025
CLE B017
5:00–6:00pm PT

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