The Indiana University Center for Eighteenth-Century Studies announces its eighteenth annual Bloomington Workshop (May 9-11, 2019).

**Falsehood, Forgeries and Fraud: The Fake Eighteenth Century**

Among eighteenth-century concerns, a desire to protect against fraud ranked very high. Indeed—and perhaps inevitably—a greater emphasis on originality, authenticity, and truth gave rise to an increasing wariness of inauthenticity, falsehood, and forgery. New forms of mass communication, especially a burgeoning print culture, and the concomitant emergence of a public sphere, created a receptive media environment for fake news, conspiracy theories, propaganda, and gossip mongering. With scientific results widely reported and discussed, issues of proof, evidence, and their fabrication became topics of general concern both for the scientific community and for the wider public. Imposters, false prophets, mountebanks, and charlatans of various stripes thrived in the royal courts, the boudoirs of the grand monde, and the streets of the new democracies. They also materialized on stage and between book covers, tantalizing the audiences of plays and operas as much as the increasing number of avid novel readers. Naturally, they also provided much grist for the gossip of the day.

We invite scholars from all disciplines to address all facets of the “fake eighteenth century” from 1688 to 1832. Potential questions guiding the examination include: When and how did the distinction of authentic and inauthentic start to govern different discourses? How does the concept of falsehood facilitate the understanding of truth and the Enlightenment? Do “falsehood” and the “inauthentic” matter in a different way than in previous centuries; and if so, why? Which new practices of forgery and creations of falsehoods emerge and to which effect?

Topics of discussion might include, but are not limited to:

- Emergence of discourses of authenticity, falsehood, fakery
False evidence, deception
The art of illusion, trompe l’oeil
Counterfeiting, economic manipulations
Conspiracies, hoaxes
Circulation of fake news
Legal practices, including copyright and literary or musical piracy
Tricksters, imposters, false prophets
Authenticity of expression in actors or musical virtuosi
Cross-dressing
Selfhood and masquerade in public and private spaces

The Indiana University Eighteenth-Century Studies Workshop has been an annual event since 2002. Our usual format consists of intense discussion of pre-circulated papers and an occasional lecture, interspersed with ample opportunities for socializing and refreshment. Participants are selected by an interdisciplinary committee. The Workshop covers most travel costs for those who are chosen to present papers and the local accommodations.

Please submit a 1-2 page description of your proposed contribution along with a brief CV (up to 3 pages) by January 2, 2019, to Dr. Barbara Truesdell at voltaire@indiana.edu. Decisions will be announced in January. For general inquiries, please contact Fritz Breithaupt, Acting Director of the Center for Eighteenth-Century Studies, at fbreitha@indiana.edu. For more information about the Center, see http://www.indiana.edu/~voltaire/index.html.