

Truth Makes a Comeback

Michael Sean Winters | Aug. 31, 2012 Distinctly Catholic

Maybe all those years reading French Deconstructionists has finally run its course. A concern for truth is returning to our political life, and not a moment too soon.

[This morning, Kathleen Parker](#) [1], who is hardly a screaming leftie or Dem partisan, chastises both Mr. Romney and Mr. Ryan for running as someone they aren't, or at least as someone they have never been before.

[And, Melinda Henneberger](#) [2] also jumps into the discussion of facticity with a column about the need for all of us to become fact-checkers.

Congressman Paul Ryan's speech seems to have been something of a "tipping point" on the need for veracity. Politics has long been in the business of mischaracterizing an opponent's record. I recall working on a campaign in which our candidate had, several years earlier, not received the service fee bill for trash collection in his home town. The fee was paid to the city and he paid it the next quarter when the bill did arrive. This became a campaign ad for our opponent who charged our candidate with failing to pay his taxes on time. That sort of thing is ugly, to be sure. But, Ryan's speech spoke to something deeper, the tendency of partisans of both left and right to buy into whole narratives that make false claims believable. If you only watch Fox, you will find just about any outrageous claim about Obama plausible. If you only watch MSNBC, you will believe just about anything about Romney and Ryan. It is time for some truth-telling - and some soul-searching.

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Links:

[1] http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/kathleen-parker-romney-and-ryan-running-against-themselves/2012/08/30/62d852f8-f2e4-11e1-892d-bc92fee603a7_story.html

[2] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/we-are-all-fact-checkers-now/2012/08/30/b019fc26-f300-11e1-adc6-87dfa8eff430_story.html