



## Part I: The History Of How We Think About Truth

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We kickoff our series on truth – how we use it, how we abuse it, what it means and what it's worth to us.

**Beth Daley**, editor and general manager of The Conversation U.S. ([@BethBDaley](#))

**Joel Christensen**, a professor of classical studies at Brandeis University. Author of "[The Many-Minded Man: The Odyssey, Psychology and the Therapy of Epic.](#)" ([@sentantiq](#))

**Mustapha Akyol**, senior fellow at the Cato Institute's Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity. Contributing opinion writer for the New York Times. ([@AkyolinEnglish](#))

### From The Reading List

**The Conversation:** "[The ancient Greeks had alternative facts too – they were just more chill about it](#)" — "In an age of deepfakes and alternative facts, it can be tricky getting at the truth. But persuading others – or even yourself – what is true is not a challenge unique to the modern era. Even the ancient Greeks had to confront different realities.

"Take the story of Oedipus. It is a narrative that most people think they know – Oedipus blinded himself after finding out he killed his father and married his mother, right?

"But the ancient Greeks actually left us many different versions of almost every ancient tale. Homer has Oedipus living on, eyes intact after his mother Jocasta's death. Euripides, another Greek dramatist, has Oedipus continue living with his mother after the truth is revealed."

**Cato Institute:** "[A New Secularism Is Appearing in Islam](#)" — "For decades, social scientists studying Islam discussed whether this second biggest religion of the world would go through the major transformation that the biggest one, Christianity, went through: secularization. Would

Islam also lose its hegemony over public life, to become a mere one among various voices, not the dominant one, in Muslim societies?

"Many Westerners gave a negative answer, thinking Islam is just too rigid and absolutist to secularize. Many Muslims also gave a negative answer, but proudly so: Our true faith would not go down the erroneous path of the godless West.

"The rise of Islamism, a highly politicized interpretation of Islam, since the 1970s only seemed to confirm the same view: that 'Islam is resistant to secularization,' as Shadi Hamid, a prominent thinker on religion and politics, observed in his 2016 book, *Islamic Exceptionalism*."

*This program airs on February 24, 2020. Audio will be available after the broadcast.*