

Time: Tuesdays, Noon–1:00 p.m.  
Location: 124 Sparks Building  
Lunch will be provided.

# The Humanities Institute Presents: The Spring 2024 Faculty Scholars in Residence

## “Carried Away? Belief, Truth, and Trauma in the Alien Abduction Phenomenon”

Talk Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2024

**Greg Eghigian**

Professor of History and Bioethics



### About the Talk:

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, a growing number of people came forward claiming to have been abducted by terrifying extraterrestrials. The phenomenon sparked an often acrimonious debate about how best to weigh the fidelity of extraordinary claims, the trustworthiness of witnesses, and the legitimacy of personal beliefs.

Observers on all sides turned to the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and psychotherapy to alternately support and undermine the claims being made. In a situation where fantastic assertions were buttressed by heartfelt convictions, many looked to the concept of trauma to resolve matters, seeing in its presence or absence a way to decide on the authenticity of aberrant experiences and memories. What might the case of alien abduction offer by way of insights into the possibilities and limitations of using trauma and science to arbitrate subjective truths?

