

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS:

Philosophy and the Age of the Anthropocene

29th Annual DePaul University Philosophy Graduate Student Conference
September 29-30, 2023, Chicago, IL
Submission Deadline: July 1, 2023

Keynote Speaker:
Marjolein Oele, University of San Francisco



The term “Anthropocene” was coined by geologists in the latter half of the 20th century and popularized in the early 2000s to propose a new definition of the current geological era as one in which human activity has become the most dominant factor in the earth’s processes. The claim, proponents argue, is evidenced by phenomena such as anthropogenic climate change, loss of biodiversity, ocean acidification, and more. At the same time, philosophers have increasingly utilized the term to pursue related questions. What is the human? What is nature? Where does responsibility lie for the current ecological crisis? Would a category other than the human—such as capitalism, industrial technology, colonialism, or anthropocentric thinking itself—be more fruitful for these analyses? This work also dovetails with questions about the current relationship between philosophy and science more generally, such as questions about the legitimacy of using and expanding the meanings of scientific terms in extra-scientific contexts. Moreover, if we accept the term’s use, we are faced with practical and ethical questions: Can living in the Anthropocene be sustainable in the long term, or would moving beyond the Anthropocene even be possible? This conference aims to develop these and related questions.

We welcome abstract submissions from all academic disciplines, approaches, and traditions. Presentations will be 20 minutes long with a 15-20 minute Q&A to follow each presentation. Potential paper topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The history of the term Anthropocene
- The dating of the Anthropocene

- Weighing the risks and urgency of various potential existential threats, including nuclear technology, superintelligence, artificial intelligence, climate change, nanotechnology, and gene editing technology
- Proposed definitions of the Anthropocene from different disciplinary perspectives
- Critical perspectives (including feminism, philosophy of race, decolonial thought, Marxism, deconstruction, and critical theory) on the Anthropocene
- Alternative proposed names for the Anthropocene, such as the Capitalocene (Moore), Chthulucene, Plantationocene (Haraway), Eurocene , and/or Entropocene (Stiegler)
- Philosophical approaches to humans, nature, and technology from figures in the history of philosophy
- Topics in philosophical anthropology related to the meaning of the human and the relation of the human to nature, non-human animals, and technology
- Topics in environmental philosophy related to the meaning of terms such as nature, ecosystem, environment, biodiversity, and sustainability
- Topics in the philosophy of science related to the use and expansion of meanings of scientific terms in extra-scientific contexts
- Practical, ethical, and political questions concerned with the possibility of living in or exiting the Anthropocene (such as Stiegler's notion of the *Neganthropocene*)

Please send 300-500 word abstracts prepared for anonymous review in PDF format to:
depaulconference2023@gmail.com.

In the body of your email, please include 1) Name, 2) Institutional Affiliation, 3) Title of Paper, and 4) Contact Information (Email and phone number).

While we are unable to provide any assistance with travel costs, the conference organizers will do our very best to find free accommodation for conference presenters who do not receive institutional funding for travel to conferences.