



strata: art and science collaborations in the anthropocene

SYMPOSIUM AT ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY, ARTS CENTRE

FRIDAY 15th JANUARY 2016

CP Snow's Rede lecture of 1959 ('The Two Cultures') considered the humanities and sciences to be two separate strata. Arguably, a large degree of separation has remained ever since. Yet with the subsequent rise in awareness of the need to manage human impacts on the Earth, there have been calls for more integrated, holistic modes of thinking that involve greater engagement between multiple strata in academia and wider society. Such calls have been brought into sharp focus by debate over the Anthropocene, a proposed new geological time interval that suggests that humans are now the dominant influence shaping the Earth system. Are human activities such as agriculture, mining and urbanisation leaving distinctive 'footprints' in the Earth's strata that will endure into the future and so enter the long-term geological record? What are the practical, cultural, ethical and moral implications of such a proposal?

To examine these and other questions, we welcome proposals for oral or poster presentations that illustrate the theme of collaboration between the arts and sciences (both broadly defined) in addressing the concept of the Anthropocene. The symposium's principal remit is to consider the ways in which art and science collaborations are responding to the Anthropocene debate by representing the past, present and future impacts of human activity on the Earth system. We anticipate that proposals will be submitted by those interested in, or already pursuing, projects that cross the fine arts, humanities, and social, physical and applied sciences.

Chaired panel discussion sessions will be focused around the following themes:

Session 1: AIR: Possible contributions may address: climate change; atmospheric geo-engineering; visualisation of future weather and climate uncertainties; imagined climatic futures.

Session 2: EARTH: Possible contributions may address: the stratigraphic legacy of agriculture, urbanisation or industrialization; the earth moving capacity of mining; new sediment deposits such as plastic waste.

Session 3: WATER: Possible contributions may address: glacier retreat and sea ice loss; sea level rise; water abstraction and river damming; flood and drought impacts under a warming climate; river and coastal pollution; ocean acidification.

Session 4: ECOSYSTEMS/LIFE: Possible contributions may address: species and biodiversity loss; habitat fragmentation; human modified and novel ecosystems; changes in human populations and associated environmental footprints.

Proposals for oral or poster presentations should be no longer than 300 words and ideally should target one of these specific sessions, although proposals that may cut across one or more sessions are also welcome. Please state whether you would prefer an oral or poster presentation. Applicants are also requested to provide a 50-100 word biography in addition to their abstract. The deadline for abstract submission is Nov 10th 2015. Following receipt of abstracts, the programme will be finalised and participants notified by Dec 1st 2015.

Registration is £25 (£5 for registered students), and will include refreshments and lunch (details to follow).

The symposium is concurrent with the exhibition 'Stranded' by Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey at the Arts Centre, and is a collaboration between the School of Art (SoA) and the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences (DGES), organised by Julian Ruddock (SoA) and Stephen Tooth (DGES). Support is provided by the British Society for Geomorphology's 'Visualising Geomorphology' Working Group.

All abstracts and biographies should be sent to Julian Ruddock at julianruddock@btinternet.com as should any other enquiries regarding the symposium.