

## Leisure Sciences

### Special issue: Leisure and the Anthropocene

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Climate change is an existential, multi-species crisis. It is, arguably, the most severe symptom of planetary transformations that are accelerating due to anthropogenic impacts on, and interferences with, the environment. The suite of changes includes widespread contamination of lands, waters, and atmosphere; decimation of forests and aquifers to satisfy humanity's resource needs; mass extinction of insect, animal, and plant life; and intense mineral and fossil fuel extraction and consumption that propel everything from war to transport to smartphones. The Anthropocene, introduced by scientists to name the current geological epoch (Cruzen & Stoermer, 2000), designates that the scale of these anthropogenic changes is so intense that they are now omnipresent and undercutting life-sustaining foundations of the planet.

Within the social sciences and humanities, scholars have often engaged with the Anthropocene less as a geological fact and more as concept and discourse that *does* certain things. Erickson (2020) argues, for instance, that the discourse of the Anthropocene serves to justify the assertion of colonial state, environmentalist, and corporate jurisdiction over land in the name of conservation. Others, such as Fletcher (2019) and Moore (2019), illustrate how the Anthropocene is mobilized as an environmental crisis to further extract and accumulate capital – an archetype of what Klein (2007) calls “disaster capitalism”. Concurrent with such critiques are compelling and multifaceted objections to how the Anthropocene places liability for ecological devastation and collapse on the shoulders of all of humanity. According to Yusoff (2016), the “anthropos” of the Anthropocene supposes a unified, collective human subjectivity that obscures difference and histories of systemic oppressions. The “we” of the Anthropocene – those responsible and feeling at risk – is a particular modern and liberal conception that is tied to whiteness, colonization, and capitalist expansion (Davis & Todd, 2017; Erickson, 2020; Yusoff, 2016). Accordingly, the “Capitalocene” and the “Plantationocene” have been proposed as alternative terms that understand planetary transformation in relation to, respectively, uneven processes of global capital accumulation (Moore, 2016) and modern projects of homogeneity and control (Haraway, 2015).

Despite concerns about its appropriateness as a concept, the Anthropocene has clearly mobilized a range of intellectual tensions that have stirred critical reflexivity and imagination (Valtonen & Rantala, 2020; Zylinska, 2014). To contribute to conversations about planetary transformations and the environmental and justice-oriented risks these present, scholars are invoking theoretical repertoires, concepts, methodologies, and metaphors that disrupt the predominant divisions between human and non-human, society and nature, subject and object (see e.g., Büscher & Fletcher, 2019; Mol, 2021; West et al., 2020). These innovations are creating greater awareness and understanding of how human practices – including leisure and research in all their diversity – are always entangled with planet-shaping, ecological consequence (Gren & Huijbens, 2014; Rose & Carr, 2018).

This special issue orients towards immersing the field of leisure studies more deeply in urgent and ongoing conversations about global environmental change and the intersections of justice and sustainability (see also Jamal 2020; Rose & Carr, 2018). The general purpose is to prompt

and assemble scholarship with an intentional focus on understanding, critiquing, and (re)imagining relations between leisure and the Anthropocene. How is the field of Leisure Studies grappling with global environmental change? How does leisure matter in the Anthropocene? How has leisure been complicit in producing the Anthropocene? How might leisure help heal, or inflict further damage to, human and more-than-human relations with planet systems?

The guest editors invite submissions from emerging and established researchers and encourage critical, creative, theoretical, conceptual, and empirical contributions that engage with diverse inter/trans/post-disciplinary perspectives. Potential themes orienting contributions may include, but are not limited to:

- Leisure, climate change, and climate justice
- Leisure as a planet-shaping practice
- Theoretical and methodological disruptions or imaginings in the Anthropocene
- Storytelling and creative knowledge practices in leisure and the Anthropocene
- Critical leisure studies and political ecologies of leisure in the Anthropocene
- Politics and ethics of leisure research
- Explorations and reflections on nature-society relations in leisure studies
- Moral, political, and philosophical inquiry of leisure and human and non-human flourishing
- Leisure's relationship to uneven distribution of harm and risk associated with the Anthropocene
- Community, organization, and institutional responses to the Anthropocene
- Sustainable and just transitions
- Cultural protocols and grassroots activism that address the Anthropocene?

### **Key Dates and Publication Schedule**

- Abstracts of approximately 300 words submitted via email ([bgrimwood@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:bgrimwood@uwaterloo.ca)) to guest editors by May 31, 2022
- Full papers invited June 2022
- Full papers submitted for peer review through the *Leisure Sciences* ScholarOne portal, January 2023
- Final revised papers submitted August 2023
- Publication of special issue December 2023

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