Rethinking the Environment for the Anthropocene

Political Theory and Socionatural Relations in the New Geological Epoch

Edited by Manuel Arias-Maldonado and Zev Trachtenberg

This book brings together the most current thinking about the Anthropocene in the field of Environmental Political Theory ("EPT"). It displays the distinctive contribution EPT makes to the task of thinking through what "the environment" means in this time of pervasive human influence over natural systems. It will be of interest to scholars already engaged in EPT, but it will also serve as an introduction to the field for students of Political Theory, Philosophy, Environmental Studies, and related disciplines. The text will help readers interested in the Anthropocene from any disciplinary perspective develop a critical understanding of its political meanings.

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"A sophisticated rejoinder to any simplistic notion that nature is dead under the new regime of the Anthropocene. This collection of essays demonstrates the value of environmental political theory to broader discussions of power, justice, and the roles of scientific expertise, technological intervention, and democratic practice in times of increasing socio-ecological stress and disruption. A thoughtful entry into the normative and political dimensions of the Anthropocene accessible to broad audience."
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- John Dryzek, Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow and Centenary Professor, Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance, University of Canberra, Australia

"This book is a major new contribution to the Anthropocene discussion in the humanities, deepening and foregrounding the sociopolitical complexities of Earth’s first human epoch. From democracy to ecomodernism to geoengineering, the politics of the age of humans are explored by a range of scholars, opening up new ways of interpreting what it means to be human in an increasingly human planet. Highly recommended."
- Erle C. Ellis, Professor of Geography and Environmental Systems, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, USA

"This insightful volume etches in sharp relief the rich and distinctive contribution of Environmental Political Theory to understanding and responding to the Anthropocene. With a keen eye on power (in its many guises), an expanded understanding of agency (human and nonhuman) and a commitment to pluralism, the editors have assembled a great cast of established and new voices to shed light on a new object of inquiry: neither humanity nor nature but rather the complex network of sociocultural relations that have reshaped Earth systems processes."
- Robyn Eckersley, Professor of Political Science, University of Melbourne, Australia

"Geologists are debating the entry of the Anthropocene as a formal unit in the canon of Earth history. It is a purely objective process, but the response to it has been anything but. Arias-Maldonado and Trachtenberg bring together a wonderful set of essays that help us understand why this is. Here are the values, the fears, the optimism, the arrogance, and the meanings embedded in the concept of the Anthropocene. This is where we understand the real power of words and concepts."
- Michael A. Ellis, PhD, British Geological Survey, UK

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