

DISTINGUISHED VISITING PROFESSOR LECTURE SERIES

WANDERING IN A TIMELESS WILDERNESS:

A Feminist Scientist's Journey Through the Anthropocene

BYPASSING *the* GREAT DIVIDE

The Undisciplinary Science of the Anthropocene

This lecture will consider the scientific controversies over the notion of the Anthropocene. The idea of the Anthropocene as a formalized epoch on the geologic time scale defined by rigorous stratigraphic standards is debated vigorously in the geoscientific community today. Critics of a formalized Anthropocene epoch in the geologic time scale assert that it cannot be defined stratigraphically across the globe; that human activity is already a consideration in other geologic time periods; that it is better to view the Anthropocene culturally than geologically; and finally, that the word Anthropocene is semantically troubling for science. To counter these criticisms, proponents in the geoscience community produce global stratigraphic evidence to delineate the Anthropocene from the current geologic time period; argue for the distinction of the Anthropocene from other neighboring time periods; emphasize the need for a multidisciplinary approach to the question of an Anthropocene epoch; and defend the usage of the word, particularly in the practice of stratigraphy. Scholars from academic realms beyond the geosciences are also engaging in lively debate about the suggestion to designate as the Anthropocene the geological epoch in which we currently live. Numerous theorists have highlighted the limitations of the proposed nomenclature and have contemplated the possibility of other monikers for a new epoch of geological time. As Professor Schneiderman will argue, social concerns, too, constitute legitimate matters in the debate.

JILL SCHNEIDERMAN

Distinguished Visitor from Vassar College

Jill Schneiderman is Professor of Earth Science at Vassar College. Previously a Fulbright scholar at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies, and advisor to the former Senate minority leader (Tom Daschle--South Dakota) she works at the intersection of social justice studies and science. In 1997, funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation, she taught a first-in-the-nation interdisciplinary course on earth science and environmental justice. Dr. Schneiderman has edited or co-edited three books, *The Earth Around Us: Maintaining a Livable Planet*, *Liberation Science: Putting Science to Work for Social and Environmental Justice*, and *For the Rock Record: Geologists on Intelligent Design*. Her current research takes up feminist approaches to critical science studies to engage in debates about the proposed designation of a new geological epoch called the Anthropocene.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 15:30 - 17:00
HUMANITIES CENTRE L-1



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Women's and Gender Studies



women in scholarship, engineering, science & technology