

Call for Papers Special Issue of *Organization*

ORGANIZING AND THE ANTHROPOCENE

Deadline: February 28, 2017

Guest Editors:

James Freund, University of Lancaster (UK)
Daniel Nyberg, University of Newcastle (Australia)
Lauren Rickards, RMIT University (Australia)
Christopher Wright, University of Sydney (Australia)

'Human activities have become so pervasive and profound that they rival the great forces of Nature' (Steffen, et al., 2007)

Through the rapacious consumption of fossil fuels, industrial activities and the destruction of forests, oceans and natural resources, humans have fundamentally changed basic Earth systems. This has occurred at such a scale and pace that Earth System scientists argue we are leaving the Holocene geological epoch and entering the more volatile 'Anthropocene'. This is a period in which human activity has discernibly affected the Earth's global functioning to such an extent it is now operating outside the range of any previous natural variability (Crutzen, 2002; Hamilton, 2015; Steffen, et al., 2007). These changes reduce the 'safe operating space for humanity' (Rockström, et al., 2009), and include: a likely step-change in the average temperature of the planet this century of around 4 degrees Celsius (New, et al., 2011); the sixth great species extinction in the geological record (Kolbert, 2014); the acidification of our oceans; the disruption of the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles; and the pollution of air and water with a range of chemical toxins (Whiteman, et al., 2013). Extreme weather events, sea-level rise, food and water shortages, and accompanying political conflicts and wars suggest that life this century for much of the planet's population will be ugly, violent and precarious (Dyer, 2010). The implications for organizations and organizing could not be more profound.

Recognising that human activity has discernibly changed the Earth's global functioning has revolutionary implications for our understanding of ourselves and the globally-integrated growth-based, fossil-fuelled organizations on which we rely. While organizational scholars have focused on the natural world as a context for business activities (see e.g. Bansal and Hoffman, 2012), far fewer have sought to adopt a critical approach to the way in which changing Earth systems affect how we understand organizing and organizations (for exceptions see Gosling and Case, 2013; Whiteman, et al., 2013; Wright and Nyberg, 2015). For instance, this new epoch exposes the fallacies and dangers of anthropocentric thinking that prevail in economics, accounting and finance, management and

other areas of social science. Within the Anthropocene the critique of contemporary capitalism takes on a new urgency and radical potential in the need to respect the reality of the living planet that is our only home (Klein, 2014).

In this special issue, we invite submissions that explore the concept of the Anthropocene and its radical implications for organizations and organizing. We are interested in submissions that engage critically with the broad implications of the Anthropocene for organization studies. Some potential areas for investigation include:

- The role of global capitalism, corporations and neoliberal organizing in driving Anthropogenic change in Earth systems as well as justifying 'solutions' such as geoengineering;
- New forms of governance, surveillance and securitization in an age of eco-social and institutional crises;
- What different framings (and refutations) of the Anthropocene suggest about contested ontologies, identities, affects and modes of operation of power at this time of planetary change;
- Storytelling, sense making, cultural and organizational responses to an age of radical unpredictability;
- The Anthropocene as a potential catalyst or stimulus for increasing resistance and alternatives to neoliberal organizing;
- Advocacy for a 'Good Anthropocene' and ecomodernist arguments for human mastery over the planet;
- The scientific production of the 'Anthropocene' concept and responses to it, including the role of global summits and 'Earth System governance';
- The roles various academic disciplines and management functions have played in naming, interpreting and (not) responding to the Anthropocene, and what this means for the evolution of inter- or post-disciplinary thought and practice.

Submission

Papers may be submitted electronically from January 30, 2017, until the deadline date of February 28 2017 (final deadline) to SAGETrack at: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/organization>
Papers should be no more than 8000 words, excluding references, and will be blind reviewed following the journal's standard review process. Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines published in Organization and on the journal's website:

<http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal200981/manuscriptSubmission>.

Further Information

Please contact the guest editors for further information:

James Freund, Lancaster University (UK) Email: j.freund@lancaster.ac.uk

Daniel Nyberg, Newcastle Business School (Australia) Email: daniel.nyberg@newcastle.edu.au

Lauren Rickards, RMIT (Australia) Email: lauren.rickards@rmit.edu.au

Chris Wright, University of Sydney (Australia) Email: christopher.wright@sydney.edu.au

About the guest editors

James Freund is a Lecturer at Lancaster University Management School. His research explores what official and critical organizational images reveal about the corporate persona and corporate unconscious. This research also explores how people use organizations in relation to financialization, Gaia and planetary change. James has a BSc in psychology and an MA and PhD in creative writing. He previously worked for environmental charities Earth 2000 and Greenpeace as well as in industry and communications.

Daniel Nyberg is Professor of Management at Newcastle Business School. His research investigates how global and societal phenomena are translated into local organizational realities. He is currently pursuing this on projects relating to how corporations respond to climate change, the politics of 'fracking', and corporate political activities influencing public policy. He has led major research projects funded by the European Commission and the Australian Research Council. In addition to a broad range of international journal articles he is the co-author (with Christopher Wright) of the monograph *Climate Change, Capitalism and Corporations: Processes of Creative Self-destruction* (CUP, 2015).

Lauren Rickards is a Senior Lecturer from the School of Global Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University, where she also co-leads the Climate Change and Resilience research program of the University's Centre for Urban Research. Prior to that she was at the University of Melbourne's Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute, and an Associate Partner at RM Consulting Group. A Rhodes Scholar Lauren has a MSc. and D.Phil. from the University of Oxford. Her current research focuses on the political, social and cultural dimensions of the Anthropocene and its attendant disasters.

Christopher Wright is Professor of Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney Business School. His current research explores organizational and societal responses to climate change, with a particular focus on how managers and business organizations interpret and respond to the climate crisis. He has published broadly in the area of critical management studies and is the author of *Management as Consultancy: Neo-bureaucracy and the Consultant Manager* (CUP 2015 with Andrew Sturdy & Nick Wylie) and *Climate Change, Capitalism and Corporations* (CUP 2015 with Daniel Nyberg).

References:

Bansal, P. and Hoffman, A.J. (eds). (2012) *The Oxford Handbook of Business and the Natural Environment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crutzen, P.J. (2002) 'Geology of Mankind: The Anthropocene', *Nature* 415(6867): 23.

Dyer, G. (2010) *Climate Wars: The Fight for Survival as the World Overheats*. Oxford: Oneworld.

Gosling, J. and Case, P. (2013) 'Social Dreaming and Ecocentric Ethics: Sources of Non-Rational Insight in the Face of Climate Change Catastrophe', *Organization* 20(5): 705-21.

Hamilton, C. (2015) 'Getting the Anthropocene So Wrong', *The Anthropocene Review* 2(2): 102-07.

Klein, N. (2014) *This Changes Everything: Capitalism Vs. The Climate*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Kolbert, E. (2014) *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. New York: Henry Holt.

New, M., Liverman, D., Schroeder, H. and Anderson, K. (2011) 'Four Degrees and Beyond: The Potential for a Global Temperature Increase of Four Degrees and Its Implications', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences* 369(1934): 6-19.

Rockström, J., Steffen, W., Noone, K., Persson, Å., Chapin, F.S., Lambin, E.F., Lenton, T.M., Scheffer, M., Folke, C., Schellnhuber, H.J., Nykvist, B., de Wit, C.A., Hughes, T., van der Leeuw, S., Rodhe, H., Sörlin, S., Snyder, P.K., Costanza, R., Svedin, U., Falkenmark, M., Karlberg, L., Corell, R.W., Fabry, V.J., Hansen, J., Walker, B., Liverman, D., Richardson, K., Crutzen, P. and Foley, J.A. (2009) 'A Safe Operating Space for Humanity', *Nature* 461(7263): 472-75.

Steffen, W., Crutzen, P.J. and McNeill, J.R. (2007) 'The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?', *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36(8): 614-21.

Whiteman, G., Walker, B. and Perego, P. (2013) 'Planetary Boundaries: Ecological Foundations for Corporate Sustainability', *Journal of Management Studies* 50(2): 307-36.

Wright, C. and Nyberg, D. (2015) *Climate Change, Capitalism and Corporations: Processes of Creative Self-Destruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.