



Etymology of the word Anthropocene

- The word is descended from the Greek - Anthropos meaning human and cene, which originated from the Greek word kainos meaning recent or newso the Anthropocene is the new epoch of humans



Anthropocene

The proposed current geological age in which humans have been a major influence on climate and the environment



Eugene Stoermer



Paul Crutzen

IRONICALLY, IN THIS GAME, THE LAST ONE STANDING...



...LOSES.

Are We in the Midst Of a Sixth Mass Extinction?

A Tally of Life Under Threat

The International Union for Conservation of Nature has evaluated 52,205 species, depicted here, for their ability to survive. [Related Article »](#)

Each symbol represents 100 species assessed:





▲ Composite:
ESA/AFP/Getty/Alamy/VCG/USGS

The long read

The Anthropocene epoch: have we entered a new phase of planetary history?

Human activity has transformed the Earth - but scientists are divided about whether this is really a turning point in geological history.

By [Nicola Davison](#)

Thu 30 May 2019
06.00 BST

It was February 2000 and the Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen was sitting in a meeting room in Cuernavaca, Mexico, stewing quietly. Five years

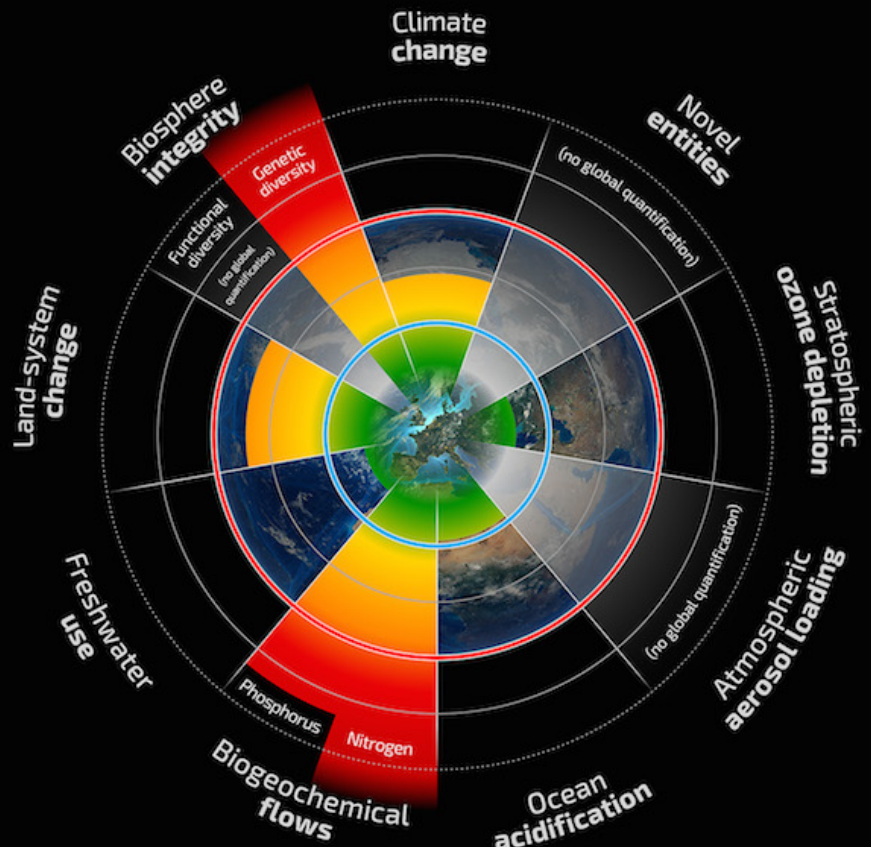
The Anthropocene as a point of ideological provocation

The term has become a shorthand that captures concerns about the magnitude of contemporary human influence on the wider natural world.

The concept challenges ideas of progress, growth, modernity

Planetary Boundaries

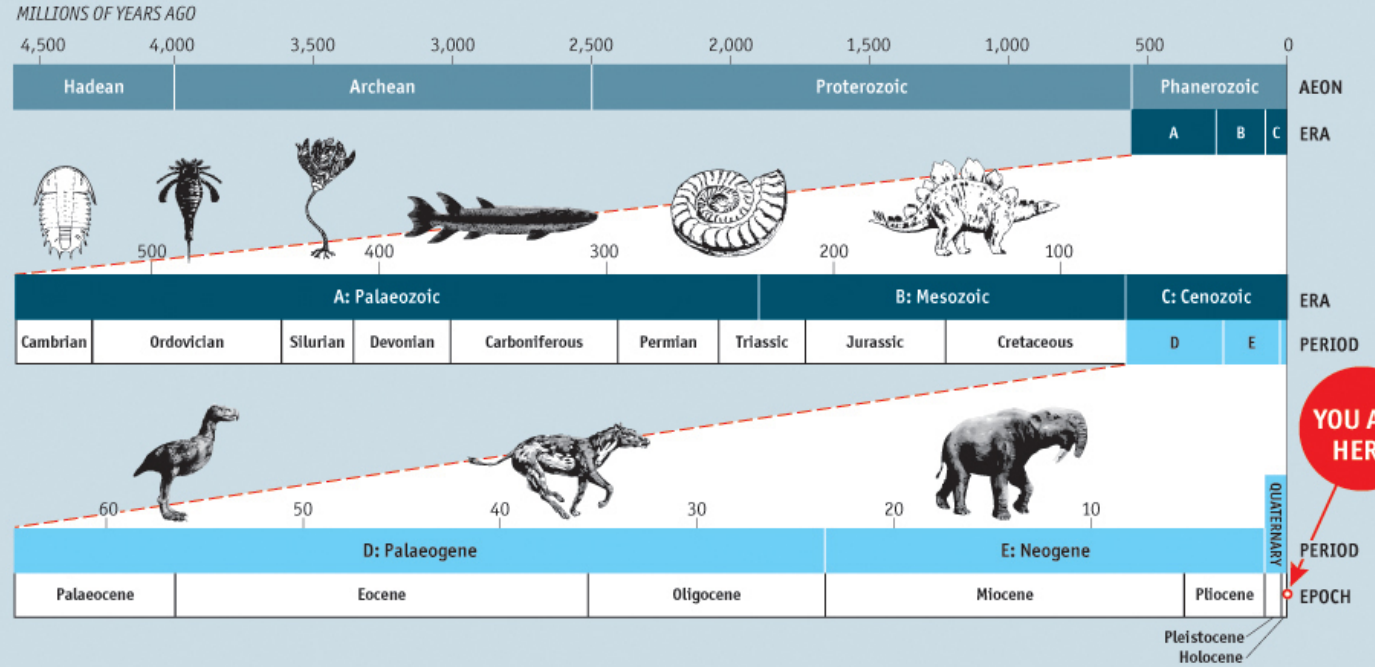
A safe operating space for humanity



- Beyond zone of uncertainty (high risk)
- In zone of uncertainty (increasing risk)
- Below boundary (safe)
- Boundary not yet quantified

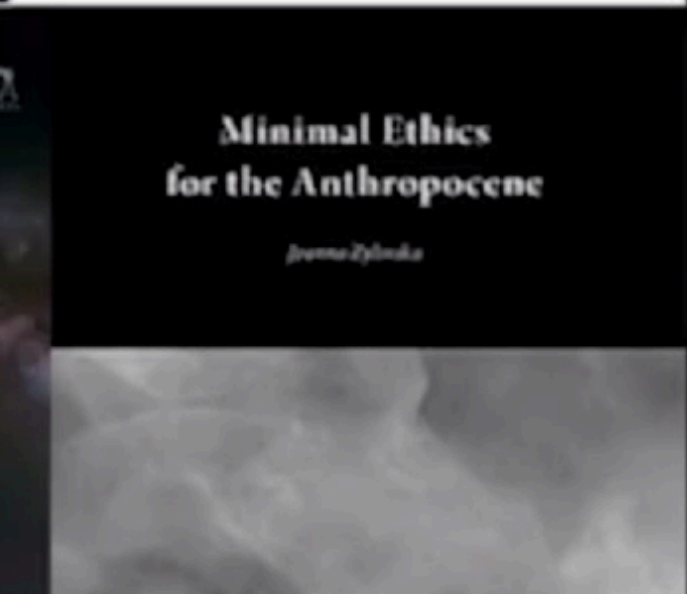
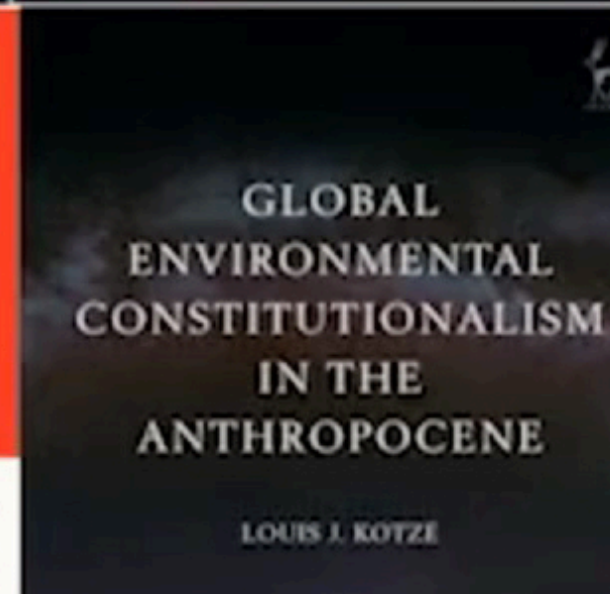
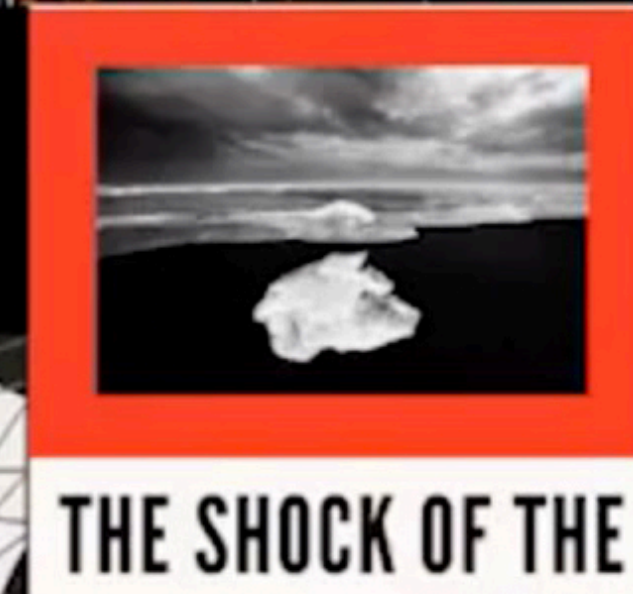
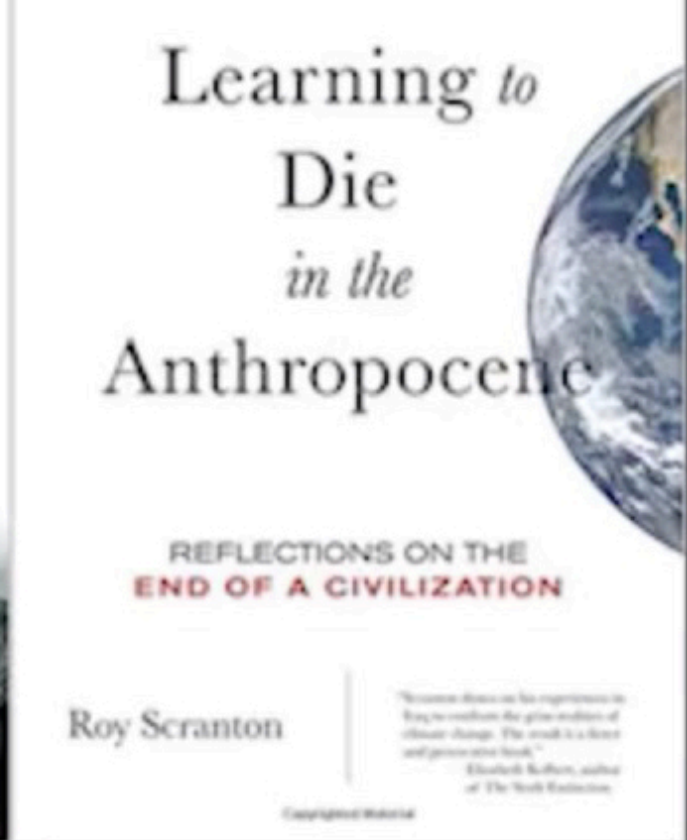
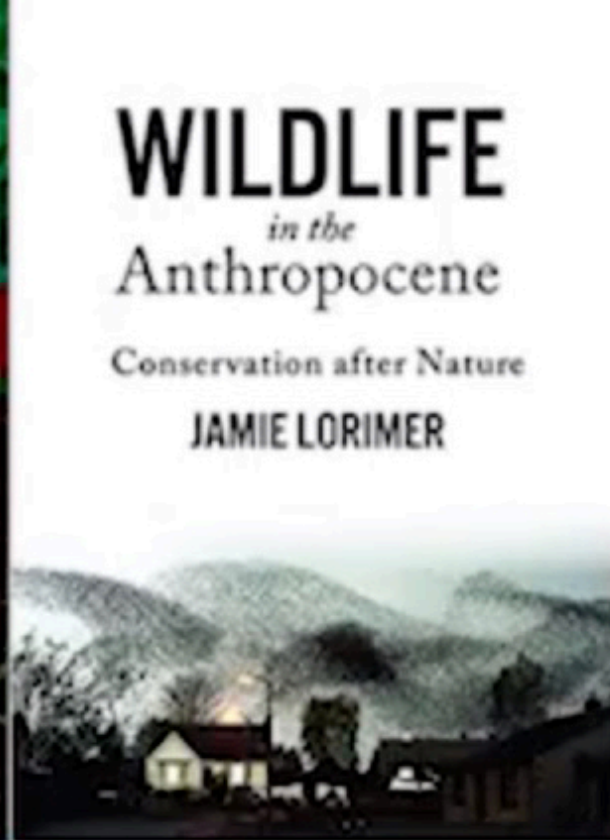
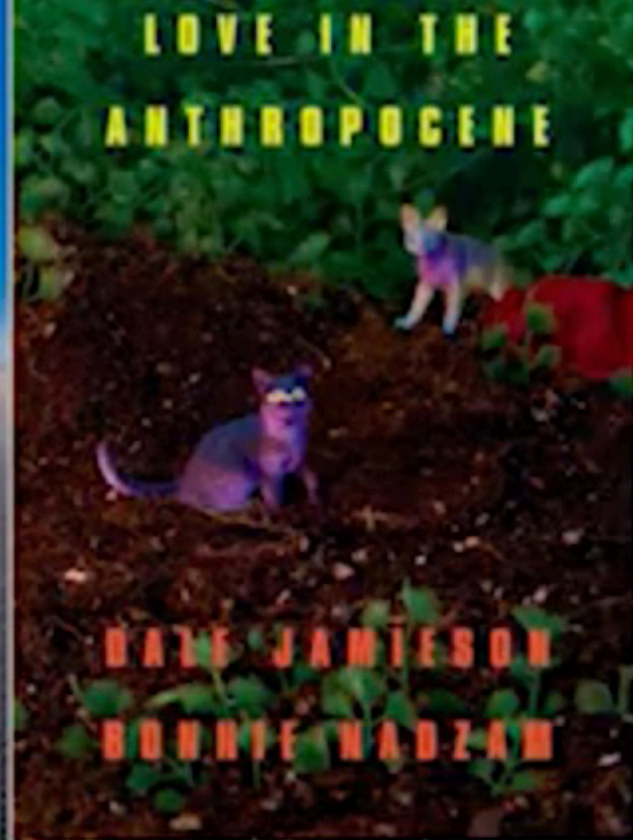
Source: Steffen et al. Planetary Boundaries: Guiding human development on a changing planet, Science, 16 January 2015.
Design: Globaia

A geological timeline of the Earth



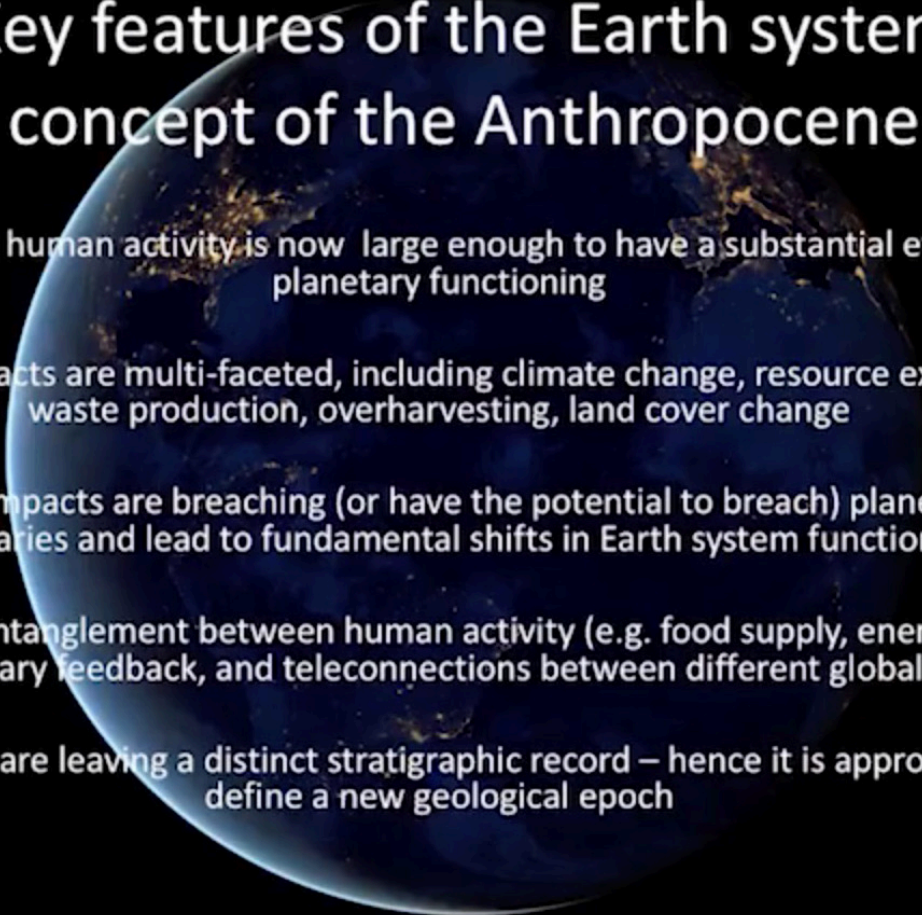
From a January 2015 *Science* article, “Planetary Boundaries” by 18 international experts led by Will Steffen. Researchers find 4 of 9 planetary boundaries have been crossed: climate change, loss of biosphere integrity, land-system change, altered biogeochemical cycles (phosphorus and nitrogen).

CREDIT: Steffen et al, Science 2015. Design: Globaia.



The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?





Key features of the Earth system concept of the Anthropocene

Combined human activity is now large enough to have a substantial effect on planetary functioning

Human impacts are multi-faceted, including climate change, resource extraction, waste production, overharvesting, land cover change

These impacts are breaching (or have the potential to breach) planetary boundaries and lead to fundamental shifts in Earth system functioning

There is entanglement between human activity (e.g. food supply, energy use) and planetary feedback, and teleconnections between different global regions

The effects are leaving a distinct stratigraphic record – hence it is appropriate to define a new geological epoch

The Great Acceleration

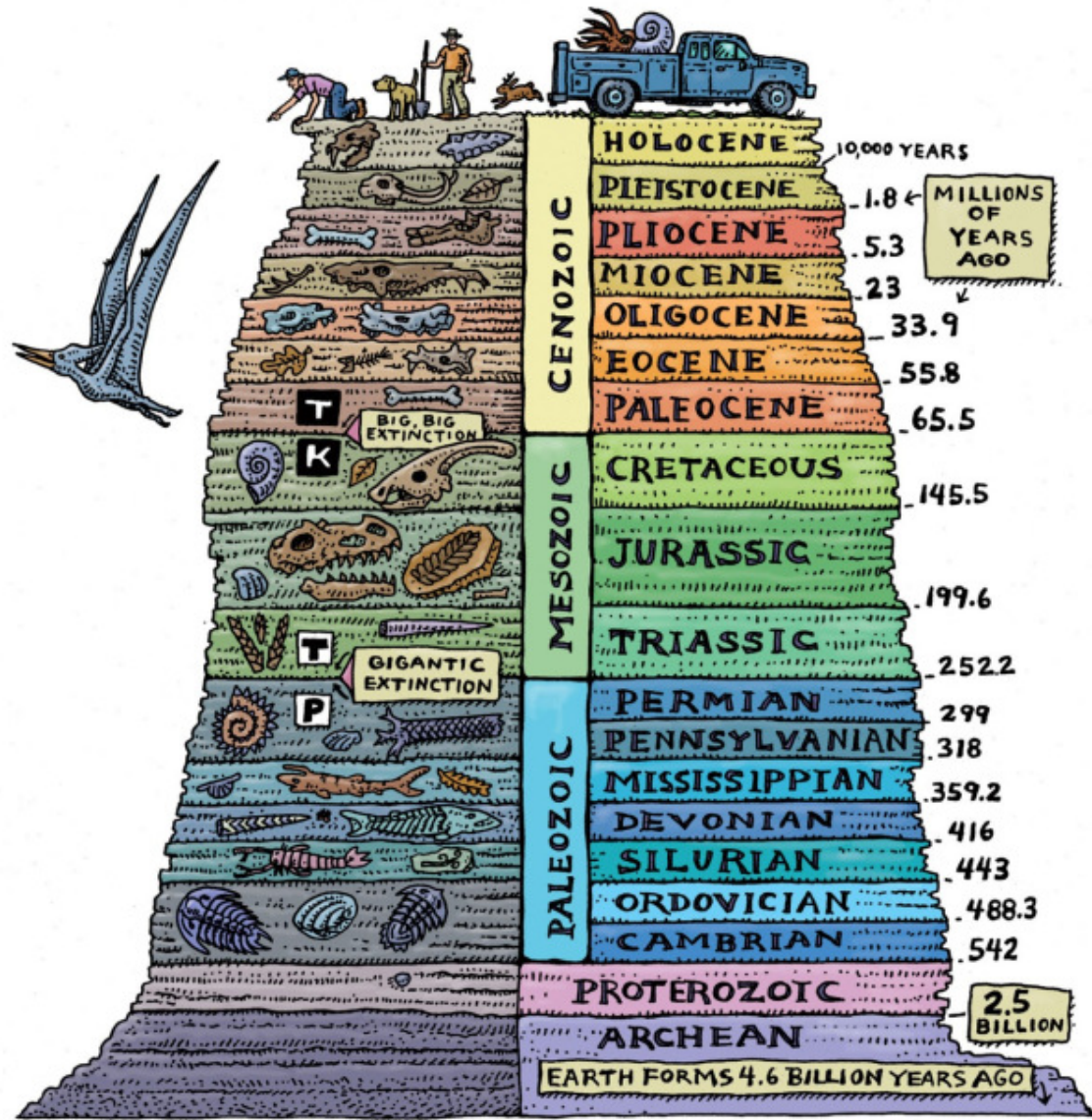


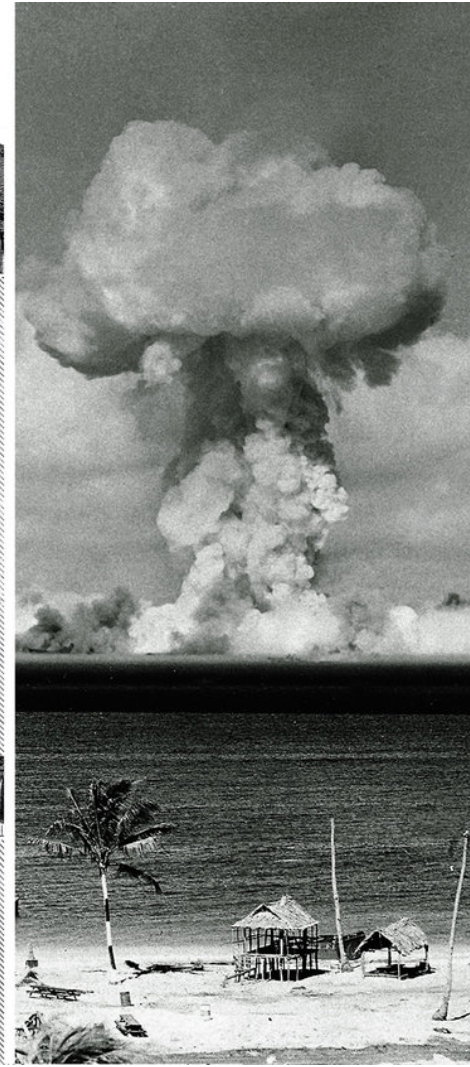
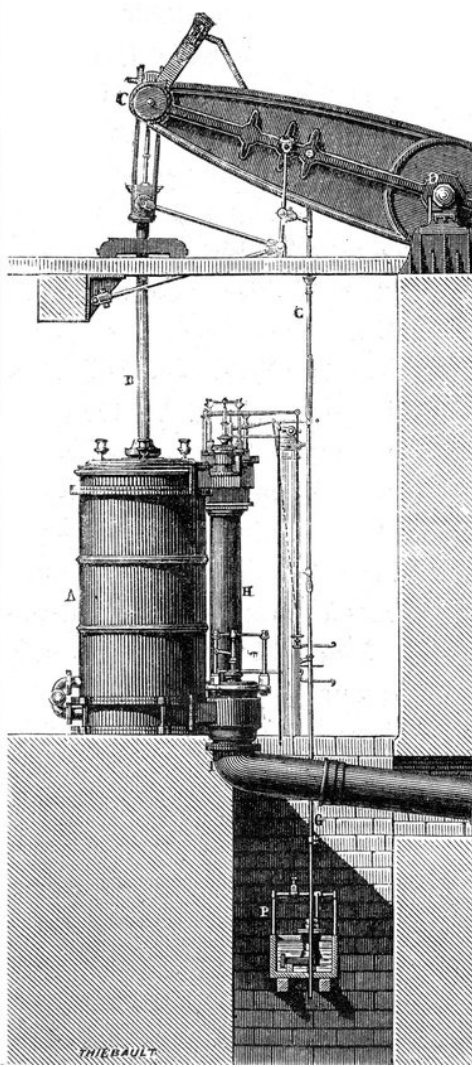
A dark blue Earth at night, showing the outlines of continents and numerous bright yellow and orange lights representing city lights. The text "A Geological Perspective" is overlaid in white in the center.

A Geological Perspective



Geologist Jan Zalasiewics





Humans have influenced Earth's history for thousands of years, though some scientists count changes of the last two centuries as especially notable.
(Left to right) Universal History Archive/UIG via Getty Images; Hulton Archive/Getty Images; Liszt Collection/Heritage Images/Getty Images; Joint Task Force One/AP

Critiques from the social sciences and humanities

The concept encourages a large-scale, technocentric framing of the world that has very strong Western origins

What is this *anthropos* that humanity is collectively merged into? Lumping all of humanity into a single anthropos ignores that particular economic and power configurations are responsible for the Anthropocene

Science



Researchers look at their operations and the environmental influences that developed Earth's living

Involve social scientists in defining the Anthropocene

The causes of Earth's transition are human and social, write Erik Ellis and colleagues. So scholars from these disciplines must be included in its formalisation.

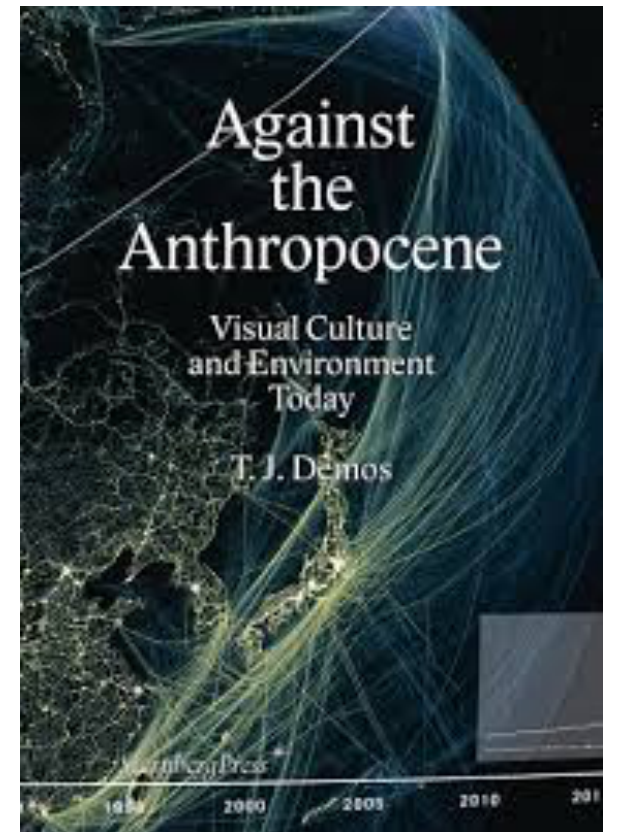
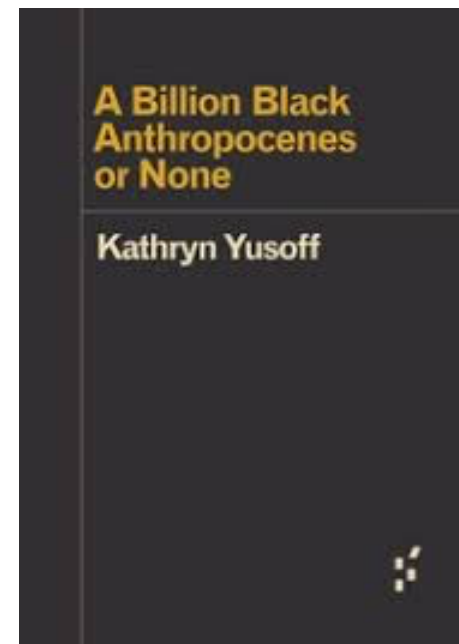
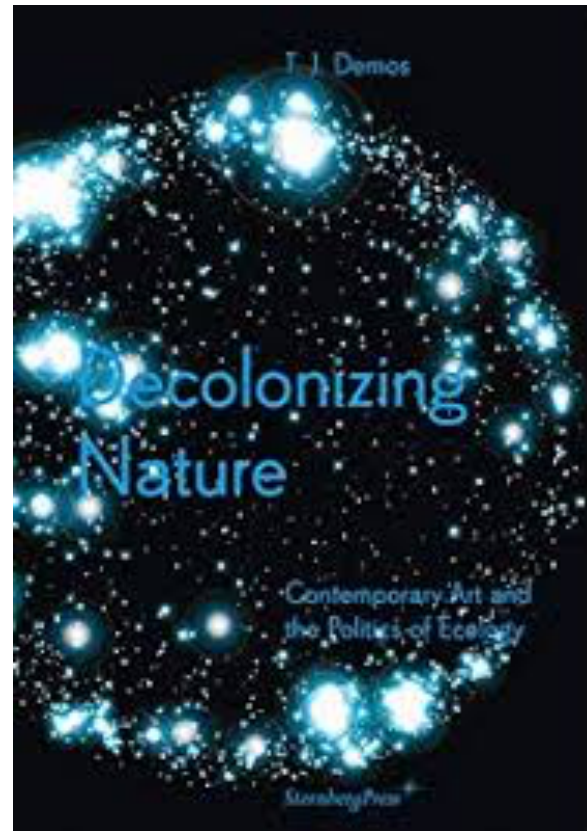
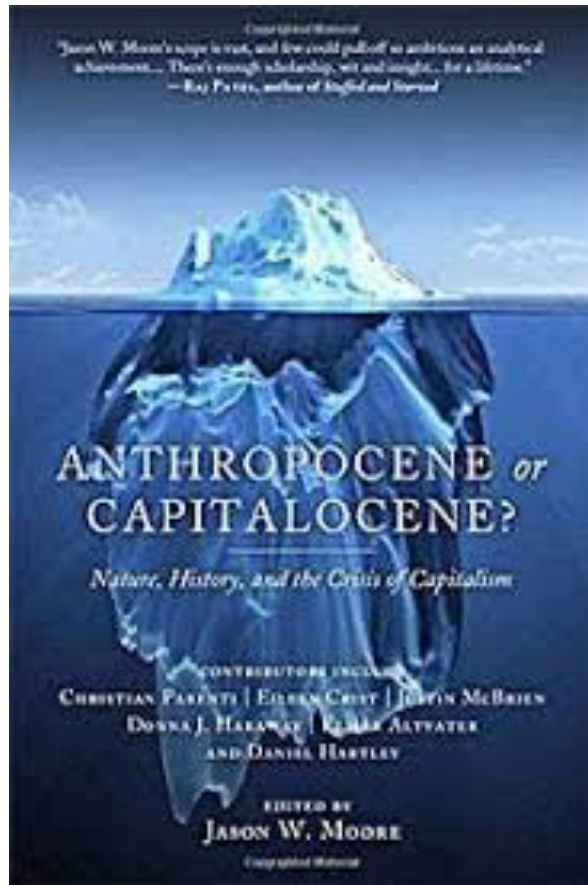
The Anthropocene is a geological epoch that began in the mid-20th century, according to a new report from the Anthropocene Working Group. The group, which includes scientists from a range of disciplines, has identified the mid-20th century as the start of a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, which is defined by the presence of human activity. The group's report, published in the journal *Geology*, states that the Anthropocene is a geological epoch that began in the mid-20th century, and is defined by the presence of human activity. The group's report, published in the journal *Geology*, states that the Anthropocene is a geological epoch that began in the mid-20th century, and is defined by the presence of human activity.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

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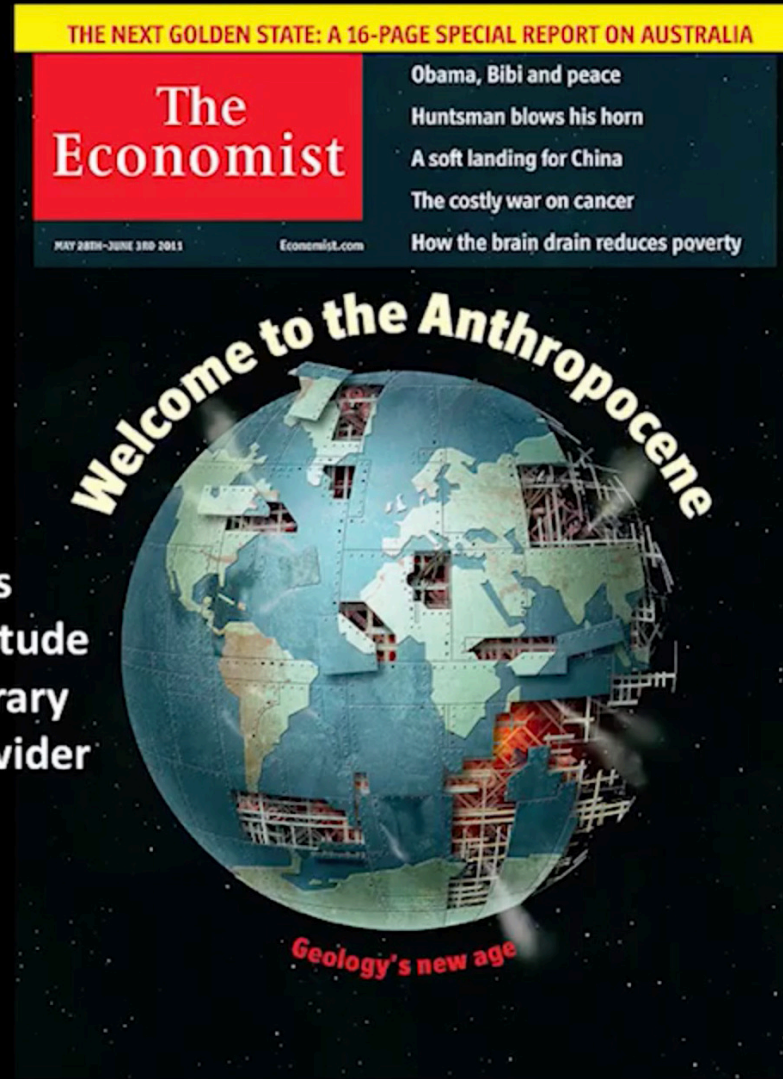


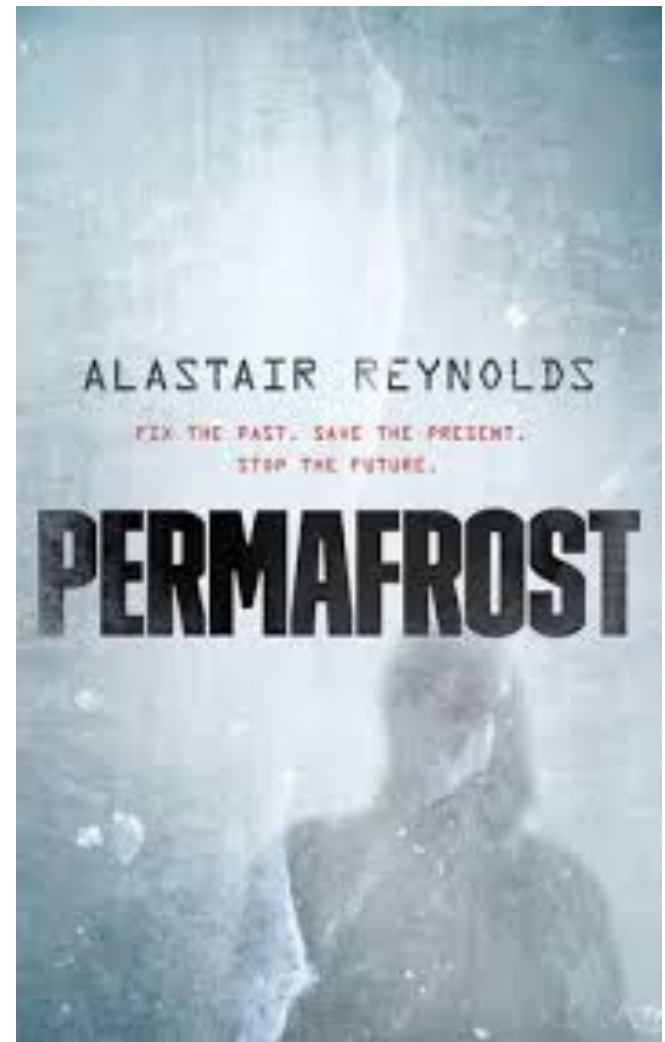


Rivers, Rights and Revolution: Learning from the Māori, 2017

A charismatic mega-category

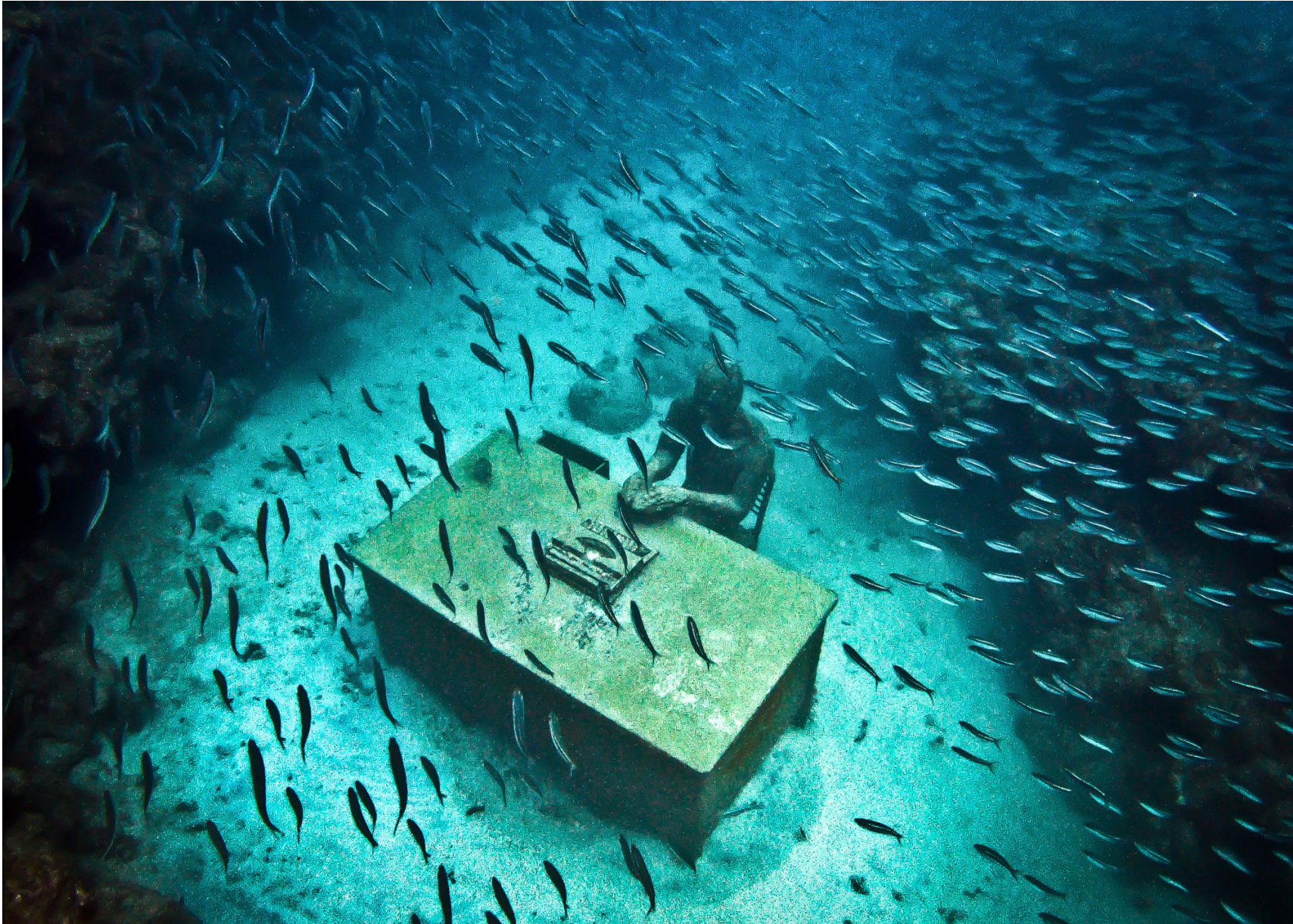
A shorthand that captures
concerns about the magnitude
and breadth of contemporary
human influence on the wider
natural world







Alexis Rockman, *Manifest Destiny*, 2004, oil and acrylic on wood, Smithsonian American Art Museum



Jason deCaires Taylor - underwater coral reef sculpture



Jason deCaires Taylor – underwater coral reef sculpture



Fabrice Monteiro, *Untitled 2*, 2014, Archival digital print



Fabrice Monteiro, *Untitled 1*, 2014, Archival digital print



Graeme Atkins, Alex Monteith, Natalie Robertson, with work by Kahurangiariki Smith and Aroha Yates-Smith*Te rerenga pōuri o nga parawhenua ki Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, 2019 (install view)*



Graeme Atkins, Alex Monteith, Natalie Robertson, with work by Kahurangiariki Smith and Aroha Yates-Smith *Te rerenga o Waiorongomai ki uta, ki Waiapu ki tai—*
The journey of Waiorongomai inland to Waiapu at the coast, 2019 (install view)
four-channel video projection



Tuan Andrew Nguyen *The Island*, 2017 (film still) 5.1 surround sound; 42 min



Swamp and Pipeline, Geismar, Louisiana 1998 from "Revisiting the South: Richard Misrach's Cancer Alley"



Edward Morris and Sussanah Sayler Canary project <https://sayler-morris.com>



On Air: Tomas Saraceno
2019, Palais de Tokyo



On Air: Tomas Saraceno
2019, Palais de Tokyo, Paris



Tomás Saraceno, 'ON AIR' solo exhibition at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2019



I find this picture so incredibly moving. This is Greta Thunberg aged 15, sitting alone outside the Swedish Parliament Aug 2018 - the first school strike. In just one year, she's created a wave that will change the whole world. Never underestimate the power of one young person.



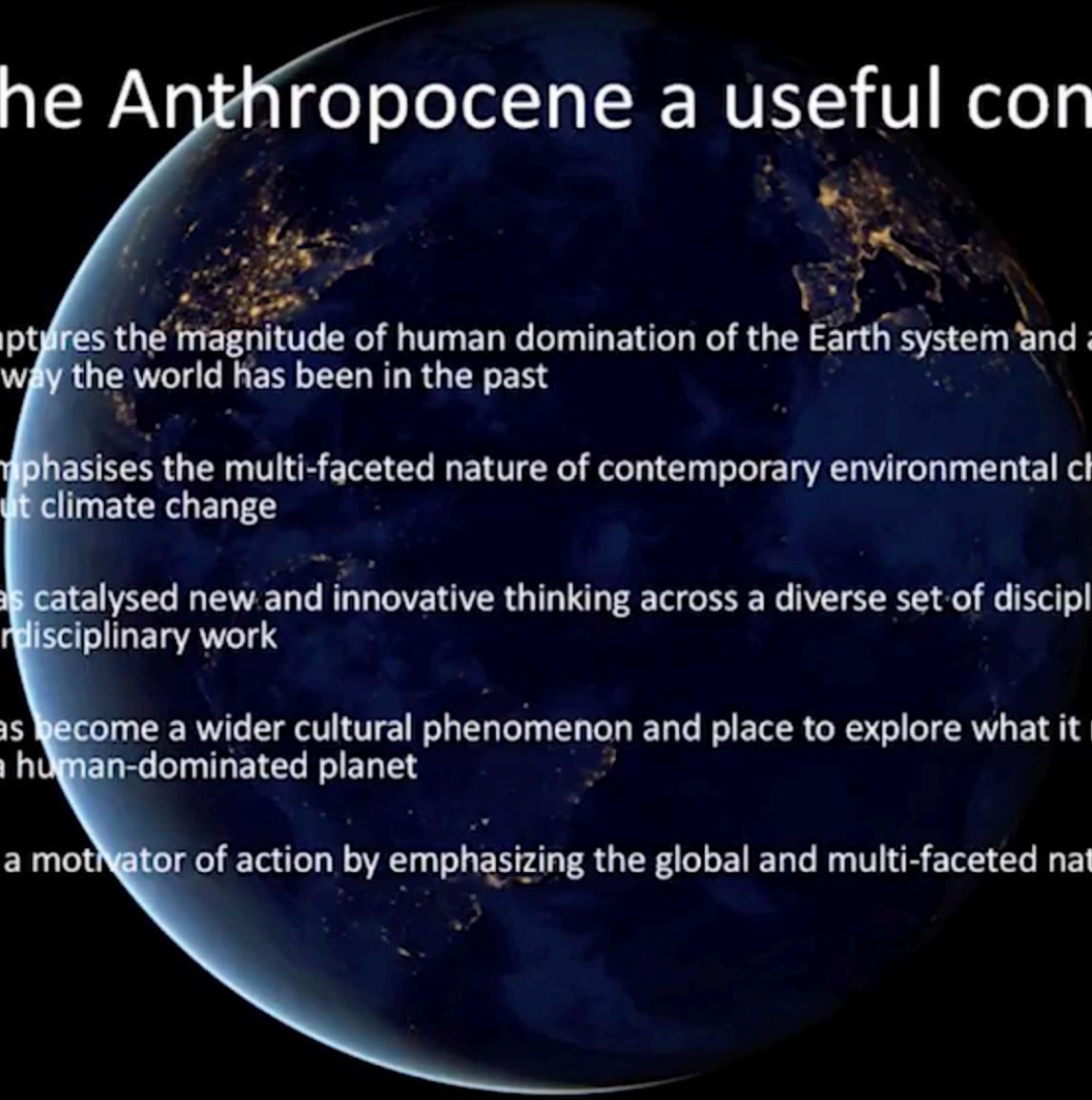
Elizabeth Peyton, *Greta Thunberg*, 2019



DINOSAURS

ASTEROID

Is the Anthropocene a useful concept?



Yes

It captures the magnitude of human domination of the Earth system and a distinct rupture from the way the world has been in the past

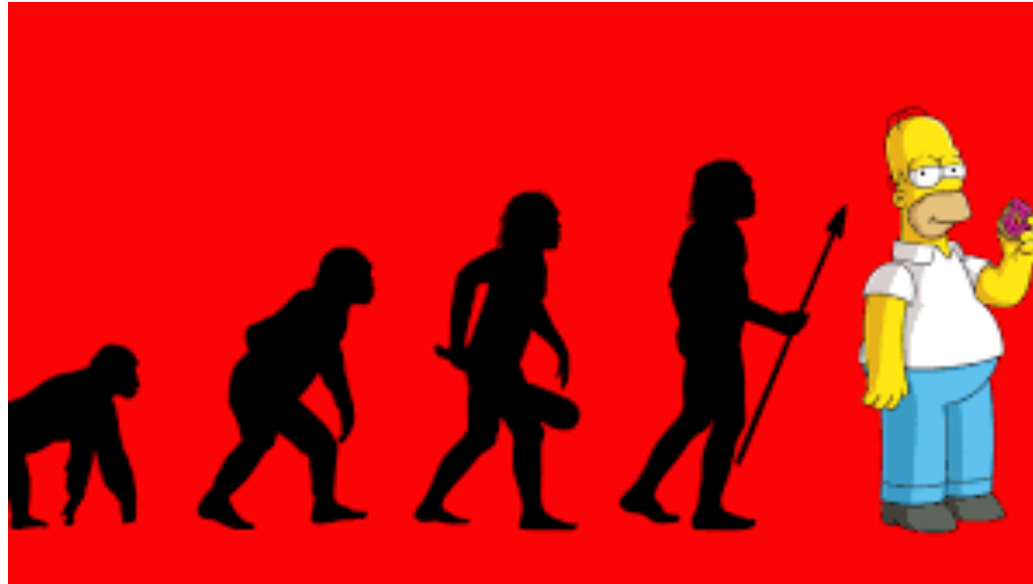
It emphasises the multi-faceted nature of contemporary environmental change – it is not just about climate change

It has catalysed new and innovative thinking across a diverse set of disciplines, and encourages interdisciplinary work

It has become a wider cultural phenomenon and place to explore what it means to be human on a human-dominated planet

It is a motivator of action by emphasizing the global and multi-faceted nature of current change

The End



Thank You