



In no discussion of freedom in the period since the Enlightenment was there ever any awareness of the geological agency that human beings were acquiring at the same time as and through processes closely linked to their acquisition of freedom ... The mansion of modern freedoms stands on an ever-expanding base of fossil-fuel use.

Dipesh Chakrabarty

From "The Climate of History: Four Theses" (2009)

The History Center would like to thank the many co-sponsors of this event, including the Provost Visiting Scholar Institute, the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society in Munich, Germany, the Walker Institute for International and Area Studies, the School of Earth, Ocean and Environment (SEOE), and the Departments of English and Geography at the University of South Carolina.

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College of Arts and Sciences
History Center/Provost Visiting Scholar Institute
University of South Carolina

Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Climate of History

February 26-March 3, 2015



Schedule of Events

Wednesday, February 25

5:30PM - Gressette Room, Harper College

History Center Reception for all USC faculty & graduate students.

Welcome remarks by Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies Lacy Ford

Thursday, February 26

12:30-2:00PM - Gambrell Hall, Room 431

Seminar: "The Climate of History: Four Theses"

Robert Greene, Ph.D. Candidate in History
Victoria Chandler, M.A. Candidate in English
Katie Crosby, Ph.D. Candidate in History
A vigorous introduction to the Four Theses of Climate History and the environmental humanities. Open to all USC faculty and graduate students. Lunch will be served.

6:30PM - Law School Auditorium

Public Lecture: The Environmental Humanities and Climate Change: An Evening with Dipesh Chakrabarty. Introduction by Vice Provost and Director of International Affairs Allen Miller

Friday, February 27

9:00AM-3:30PM - Inn at USC

Workshop: "After Nature: Politics and Practice in Dipesh Chakrabarty's Four Theses on Climate History."

Open to all USC faculty and students.

Catered lunch in Gambrell Hall at 12:30PM.

3:45-4:45PM - Inn at USC

Forum on the Future of the Environmental Humanities
Carol Boggs, Director of USC School of Earth, Ocean and Environment

Rob Emmett, Director of Academic Programs, Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society

Moderator: Thomas Lekan, Dept. of History

Monday, March 2

4:30-5:45PM - Gambrell Hall, Room 431

Seminar: "Climate Change and Capitalism"

Moderator: Anthony Jarrells, Dept. of English

A discussion of Dr. Chakrabarty's article "Climate and Capital: On Conjoined Histories" in the context of contemporary debates about climate change, political economy and environmental justice. Open to all USC faculty and students.

Tuesday, March 3

8:30AM - Green Quad Learning Center for Sustainable Futures

Breakfast Colloquium: "Teaching Across Disciplines: Environmental Studies at USC"

Katherine Robinson, Dept. of Philosophy

Conor Harrison, Dept. of Geography/Environment & Sustainability Program

David Kneas, Dept. of Geography/Environment & Sustainability Program

Lara Ducate, Dept. of Languages, Literatures & Cultures



Dipesh Chakrabarty, Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History at the University of Chicago, will join USC as a Provost Visiting Scholar for a multidisciplinary series of seminars,

workshops, and lectures that explore how our vision of humanity is changing in the age of global warming.

Human beings have become, as Dr. Chakrabarty writes, a geophysical force capable of determining the course of climate for millions of years. A force of this magnitude is like the cyanobacteria that breathed oxygen into our atmosphere over 2.5 billion years ago, making life as we know it possible, or the asteroid that triggered the extinction of the dinosaurs 66 million years ago. The Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul Crutzen proposed in 2002 that a new geological period has dawned, one dominated by human activities at all scales: the Anthropocene. Dr. Chakrabarty examines the idea of the Anthropocene in context of history and philosophy. "In equating the problem of global warming with the crucial but techno-economic question of transitioning from fossil-fuel based sources of energy to renewables," Dr. Chakrabarty writes, "we sometimes lose sight of how the scientific understanding of 'anthropogenic global warming' signals a very fundamental and irreversible shift in human history and human capability."