

PUBLIC
POSITIONS
SERIES
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Contemporary political attempts at navigating the Anthropocene are interwoven with technoscientific equipment. The current pandemic is just the tip of an iceberg. Yet, against its modernist promise, this equipment does not offer the certainty and guidance its protagonists have promised. Nor does it relieve humanity from the burden of reworking systems without knowing where that will lead. Much of the technoscientific

equipment, including digital technologies, is produced in the wealthier Northern countries but also in China and India and aims to encompass the world, often reproducing older forms of geopolitical inequality. This series assembles talks that demonstrate the importance of knowing how to better interweave projects of political order with technoscientific equipment to maintain planetary life for all.

CONVENED BY
PROFESSOR RICHARD
ROTTENBURG

STS, POLITICAL ORDER AND MAINTAINING PLANETARY LIFE

Respondent:
Achille Mbembe (WiSER)

6 APRIL, 14.30–16.00

SHEILA JASANOFF
(Harvard Kennedy School)

MEMORY,
RECALL, AND
REPAIR: THE
POLITICS OF
TIME IN THE
ANTHROPOCENE

The turn toward sustainability in environmental policy and the identification of the Anthropocene as a new geological age have forced human societies to think about the future and the past on scales that were not previously accessible to either individual or social knowledge. Using ideas from science and technology studies and examples from environmental law, this talk will explore sites of temporal friction, where traditional ways of knowledge-making

and erasure are being challenged by the invitation to loosen the temporal limits of our imagination. How has the move toward timeless memory and unbounded prediction affected the politics of planetary knowledge: who knows, by what means, subject to what authorization, and with what implications for responsibility and repair?