

CALL FOR PAPERS

'Living on the Edge'

**The Fourth International Conference of the International Society for the Study of Religion,
Nature and Culture**

University of Western Australia, Perth

16-19 December 2010

The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, in association with La Trobe University, Melbourne, is organising its 4th International Conference, which will be held between 16 and 19 December 2010 in Fremantle, Western Australia.

The theme of the conference is 'Living on the Edge'. Questions arising point to the edge as a place of transition and transformation, a launching place for change and action to counter ecological degradation and regenerate communities and ecosystems.

The conference asks how human and nature ecologies are affected by the environmental crisis. It covers the variety of challenges and approaches to change – scientific, social, psychological, spiritual and cultural – that emerge through living on the edge.

Through a multi-disciplinary framework of religion, nature and culture, the conference explores the relationships between people and nature, social and ecological systems, local and global economies, art and ecology, science and religion, and cultural diversity and biodiversity.

Edge spaces, like ecotones, are places of rich fecundity. Using the metaphor of the meeting of two ecosystems, the edge represents the meeting place between disciplines where different modes of knowing and working are shared. It interweaves personal stories of environmental, social and spiritual change with theoretical discussion from a range of disciplines in dynamic interchange. It transcends the boundaries to move to new possibilities of mutual understanding, research and action.

The following questions serve as guidelines for exploring the themes of 'living on the edge'. There are more of course and we would welcome hearing about them.

1. How is living on the edge defined in a local, regional or global context?
2. What features and qualities are reflected in an environmental, social, psychological, economic and spiritual sense?
3. Are we living on the edge of extinction? What are the tipping points?
4. How do local histories and cultures distinguish living on the edge?
5. Can the 'edge' be integrated with the 'centre'? And what are the implications?
6. How do the natural sciences deal with edge issues? Do the social sciences hinder or help? Is there a meeting point?

7. How do individuals and communities cope with the awareness of ecological deterioration? Is there a relationship between social, psychological and ecological resilience?

8. Predictions of rising rates of environmentally displaced or affected people in the coming decades raise some important psycho-spiritual themes. What sorts of social and psychological distresses are anticipated? How does secularism or religiosity contribute to or alleviate these experiences?

9. How are Indigenous cultures affected and how are they effecting change?

Other important issues concerning the 'edge' may include: the rural-urban interface; the sea-land interchange; the problem of water resources; the nexus between peace and warfare; dichotomy tame-wild, male-female, East-West.

ISSRNC FREMANTLE CONFERENCE 2010

Fremantle, Western Australia, located on the edge of land and sea, is a perfect site at which to discuss the notion of 'Living on the Edge'. We welcome contributions from a wide range of critical perspectives and from all disciplines.

We invite proposals from scholars exploring the intersection and edges of religion, nature and culture. It is also highly likely that a special issue (or two) of the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture may be published on the theme and associated ideas, drawn from excellent and original scholarly papers arising out of this conference.

The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture (ISSRNC) was formed in 2006. It is a democratically governed international scholarly association open to scholars from all disciplines interested in the religion/nature/culture nexus.

Information about the conference, the society and its affiliated journal are available at <http://www.religionandnature.com>.

More information about the 4th international conference of ISSRNC can be found at <http://www.religionandnature.com/society/conferences.htm>.

Guideline for submission of abstracts

Proposals for individual paper presentations, sessions, panels, posters should be submitted directly to the conference email address. It is not necessary to be an ISSRNC member to submit a proposal.

Proposals should include, in a single, attached word or rich text document, the name and email of the presenter(s), session and/or presentation title, a 250-300 word abstract of the session and/or presentation, and a brief, 150 word biography (including highest degree earned and current institutional affiliation, if any). Session proposals must include a title and abstract for the session as a whole as well as for each individual paper. Panels and roundtables should include a title and abstract and a 150 word biography that includes information that will help the scientific committee evaluate the strength of each panelist for the theme of the session. Proposers are encouraged to be creative, including with regard to formats. They should also provide information about ideal and acceptable lengths for proposed sessions, and whether any technology, such as image projectors, are desired. Most paper presentations will be scheduled at 15-20 minutes and a premium will be placed on discussion in all sessions.

The Deadline for submitting proposals is 30 July 2010. Notification as to whether proposals have been accepted will be no later than 30 August 2010 and delivered to the email address provided in the proposal attachment.

All presenters at the ISSRNC conference must become members by 30 September 2010. Soon after this date the program will be finalized and made available here.

Conference abstracts must be emailed at issrnc2010@gmail.com.

Deadline for submission of abstracts – 30th July 2010

The Conference Director is Dr. Yamini Narayanan, La Trobe University, Melbourne. The official email address of the conference organisation is issrnc2010@gmail.com.