

THE FUTURE AS A PRESENT CONCERN | NUIG – IPS – BSP | ONLINE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE | 1-3 SEPTEMBER 2021

Online international conference between the [National University of Ireland Galway](#) / Ollscoil Na Héireann Gaillimh, The Irish Philosophical Society / Cumann Fealsúnachta Na Héireann, and the [British Society for Phenomenology](#).

Call for Papers: The organisers invite abstracts for the online international conference 'The Future as a Present Concern'. Due to the long-term and ongoing effects of the pandemic, the event will be online to facilitate forward planning and avoid all kinds of uncertainties for speakers and delegates.

Abstract submission deadline: Wednesday 31 March 2021 (midnight UK / Ireland)

This conference explores the question of the future from phenomenological and other philosophical perspectives. We encourage papers on various aspects of this question, whether ontological, ethical, aesthetical, epistemological, and in relation to political theory, gender theory, critical race theory, ecology, philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, analytic philosophy, and art. We would particularly welcome applications from practitioners who are interested in the application of phenomenology, philosophy, and theory in their professional disciplines.

Invited Speakers:

- **Prof. Andrew Benjamin**, Distinguished Professor of Architectural Theory at the University of Technology, Sydney; Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Jewish Thought at Monash University.
- **Prof. Rebecca Braun**, Executive Dean of the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies, NUIG; Director of the Institute for Social Futures, Lancaster University (2017-2020).
- **Prof. Shaun Gallagher**, Lillian and Morrie Moss Professor of Philosophy, The University of Memphis (USA); Professorial Fellow, SOLA, University of Wollongong (AU).
- **Fiona Hallinan**, Artist, researcher, and co-founder of the Department of Ultimology; PhD student at LUCA School of Arts, KU Leuven, Ghent, Belgium.
- **Prof. Sara Heinämaa**, Professor of Philosophy, Academy Professor 2017–2021, Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Finland.
- **Dr Alessandro Salice**, Lecturer in Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University College Cork, Ireland.

THE FUTURE AS A PRESENT CONCERN

So much human emotion, thought, and action is orientated to the future. Hopes and fears, plans and strategies, promises and interventions, derive their meaning from future intentions. However, as philosophers from Aristotle to Heidegger have pointed out, the future is that which is *not* yet. The future does not exist, tomorrow never comes. Therefore, the question arises as to how we should understand the future. Is the future simply non-being at the limits of the present? If so, does the present have any real connection with a putative future that does not yet exist? The founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, in tackling such questions stressed the future as an aspect of the present. In his terms, each present consciousness is characterized by protention, in other words, the anticipation of a future not as actively planned or envisaged but as passively expected. The present is not an abstract moment but a flow of past and future intentional directions.

This conference seeks to contribute to understanding the future as a present concern both with respect to the underlying issues of temporal orientation and the pressing questions of today as we face into an increasingly uncertain future. Paper topics can explore, for instance:

- Actions in the present, to the extent to which they have lasting effects, will serve to mould the world of future generations. But are we responsible with respect to future people who have not yet been born? If so, what is the basis of that responsibility? And, if it can be shown that we have such a responsibility, to which people or peoples is this responsibility directed?
- In the background of much of the political debate regarding immigration is the question as to whether present actions should secure the future of a particular society to be more or less identical with the present in terms of cultural, religious, linguistic make-up. Contributions that tackle questions of territoriality, migration, and democratic structures would be welcome.
- While certain forms of orientation towards the future stress continuity, there is a long history of messianic, utopian, and revolutionary thinking and action that is premised on the hope or expectation that the future will be / should be qualitatively different from the present. Is there any basis to the claims to novelty, that human action can bring about new and presumably better worlds or in the end is it more true to say that there is 'nothing new under the sun'?
- At a time of unprecedented technological innovation, there is a growing sense of inertia when it comes to decision making particularly in the face of ecological and economic crises. Robust growth seems to go hand in hand with a sense of collapse. It would seem that the orientation toward the future differs in different domains for reasons which may be contingent but which may be analysable in structural terms. How do technological development, and environmental and social challenges form the anticipatory horizon of current and future activity in different fields? Contributions could explore how practitioners in different fields face up to the future.

Abstracts:

We welcome abstracts from multiple perspectives, from practitioners and philosophers (including both the European / Continental and Anglo-American / Analytic traditions), and from postgraduate researchers. Areas include, but are not limited to:

- History and Theory of Phenomenology (perception, the body, sexuality, emotion, ethics and morality, key thinkers in the history of phenomenology, feminism, gender, race, existentialism, philosophy of religion, phenomenological theology, philosophy of technology)
- Health and Social Care (medicine, medical humanities, physiotherapy, maternity, disability)
- Mental Health and Psychological Theories (psychology, psychotherapy, psychiatry, childhood development, trauma studies)
- Public Policy and Society (education, policing, law, economics, politics and international relations, science and technology [STEM])
- Philosophy and history of philosophy, from Western, Asian, African, and South American traditions
- Critical phenomenology and critical theory, phenomenology of race, gender, class
- Under-read texts in the history of phenomenology and philosophy
- On female phenomenologists and philosophers
- Art (fine art, photography, video games, poetry, literature, film, architecture, music)

Conference format:

The conference will take place online over a dedicated conference platform with video, Zoom, and chat forums accessible only by registered participants. Check out the [feedback for the 2020 online](#)

[conference](#) to see what participants thought of this setup. Invited speakers will be streamed live over Zoom and will include time for managed Q&As. Panel speaker presentations will be pre-recorded videos of 20 minutes with Q&As via a chat forum, the releases scheduled according to a timetable over the three days of the conference. After the three day timetabled event, the conference platform will remain open for another week so everyone will be able to see everything they wish and rewatch and discuss presentations over an extended period.

Conference costs:

- Free to members of the BSP and IPS.
- Non-members of the IPS and BSP can become members by *either* [joining the BSP](#) or [joining the IPS](#) during registration if their abstracts are accepted.

Timeline:

- 10 January 2021: CfP opens
- 31 March 2021 (midnight UK / Ireland): CfP closes
- End of April 2021: Abstract submission outcomes communicated
- Early May 2021: Speaker and delegate registration opens
- Early August 2021: Speakers deliver pre-recorded videos of papers

Submission advice:

- Abstracts should be a maximum of 300 words, and you should also provide a short biography of no more than 100 words.
- We welcome pre-constituted panels of two to four papers. An abstract should be submitted for each paper. In addition, each submission should be accompanied by the title and an overview of the panel topic (200 words maximum), as well as the names of all panel participants. This is to enable cross-referencing.

Abstract Submission System:

- [Submit an abstract for 'The Future as a Present Concern'](#)

Selection process:

- The deadline for the submission of abstracts is Wednesday 31 March 2021 (midnight UK / Ireland).
- Abstracts will be blind peer reviewed by members of the conference committee who represent The National University of Ireland Galway, The Irish Philosophical Society, and the British Society for Phenomenology.
- If we receive more abstracts of quality than for which we are able to provide space, the review team will select what they believe to be the best of these for presentation with an eye to the theme of the conference and the concerns of our institutions.
- We intend to inform everyone on the outcome of their submission on or around 30 April 2021. Due to the quantity of abstract submissions, while we notify everyone on the outcome, we do not supply individual feedback on those which are unsuccessful.

Further information:

- If you have any questions about the conference, please email: conference@britishphenomenology.org.uk

Conference Committee:

Directors

- **Prof Felix Ó Murchadha**, Professor of Philosophy, School of History and Philosophy, College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies, National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland.
- **Dr Cara Nine**, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University College Cork, Ireland; President of The Irish Philosophical Society, Ireland.
- **Dr Keith Crome**, Principle lecturer in Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Department of History, Politics & Philosophy, Manchester Metropolitan University; Acting President and Impact Director of the BSP, UK.

Chair

- **Dr David Deamer**, Head of Engagement and Events, BSP; Free scholar and writer, UK.

Team

- **Hannah Berry**, University of Liverpool; BSP Secretary, UK.
- **Dr Matthew J. Barnard**, Lecturer in Philosophy, Manchester Metropolitan University; BSP Executive Committee, UK.
- **Dawn Wang**, University College Cork; The Irish Philosophical Society, Ireland.
- **Jamie Murphy**, University College Cork; The Irish Philosophical Society, Ireland.