

Call For Proposals  
2015 CSPT Graduate Student Conference  
University of Victoria, BC (Canada)  
May 23 - 25, 2015

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## **Human Being Human**

\*Keynote Address by Dr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Columbia University)\*

What is it to *be human*? Can we *be* anything else? Something *more* or *less*? Are we still, or have we ever been, 'human' at all?

These questions only provoke more questions. How do we approach a topic so fundamental to our own existence? Is this the concern of the humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, theology, or the creative arts? Are we to understand the notion of *being* human as a social construct, political subject, cultural development, or religious modality? Or is it simply something to be *experienced* and not explained?

Recent theory has destabilized traditional understandings of humanity, challenging notions of the human as a rational animal, political subject, and naturalized body. Emerging in their place are conceptions of humans as fragmented identities, products of discourse, cyborgs. Some ask whether we can even imagine the human in isolation from other animals and the environment. Many find that the questions themselves can be interpreted or interrogated from a plurality of perspectives and methodologies.

We therefore invite interrogations, explorations, and expressions of these seemingly simple considerations to shed light on the nature of the questions themselves, in hopes that we might gain insight into that simple, elusive notion of what it means to be human.

Topics and questions addressed may include but are in no way limited to:

- **How can we define the concept of 'human'?**
- **Is humanity something performed?**
- **Technology/cybernetics/genetic enhancement**
- **'Human' as metaphor**
- **GMOs**
- **Racial/racialized identities**
- **Feminist critiques**
- **Animality and non-humans**
- **Emotionality (e.g. grief, empathy, kindness, vulnerability)**
- **Morality and responsibility**
- **Imagining the post-human**
- **Art, creativity, and humanity**
- **Affect & Power**
- **Phenomenology of the body**
- **Prodigies/Genius/Talent**
- **Inter/subjectivities**
- **(your idea goes here)**

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## **Submissions**

In light of our theme, we seek to assemble a diverse group of scholars, artists, activists, and deep thinkers in order to foster interdisciplinary discussions through presentations that are approximately 7 to 13 minutes in length.

We welcome submissions from current and past graduate students who conduct research in any discipline that engages some element of what they perceive to be relevant.

## **Guidelines**

If you are interested in presenting at the 2015 CSPT Graduate Student Conference, please email the following information to [csptstudents@uvic.ca](mailto:csptstudents@uvic.ca) by March 13, 2015 at 11:59 pm:

- An abstract of no more than 300 words
- A short biography of no more than 75 words
- Optional: a complete draft of your paper/presentation\*

*\* All else being equal, preference will be given to submissions that include a paper/draft.*

Please make a note in your submission e-mail if you are interested in participating in a panel discussion or having a faculty member respond to your presentation.

Every effort will be made to provide some form of financial assistance to participants for travel and accommodation.

**Submission Deadline: March 13, 2015 @ 11:59 pm.**

For more information please visit

[humanbeinghuman2015.wordpress.com](http://humanbeinghuman2015.wordpress.com)