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"Introduction: Unexpected Encounters with Deep Time"

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The fractured timespace of the Anthropocene brings distant pasts and futures into the present. Thinking about deep time is challenging: deep time is strange and warps our sense of belonging and our relationships to Earth forces and creatures. The introduction to this special section builds on scholarship in the environmental humanities concerning the ongoing inheritance of biological and geologic processes that stretch back into the deep past as well as the opening up of multiple vistas of the futures. Rather than understanding deep time as an abstract concept, we explore how deep time manifests through places, objects, and practices. Focusing on three modes through which deep time is encountered—enchantment, violence, and haunting—we introduce deep time as an intimate element woven into everyday lives. Deep time stories, we suggest, engage with the productive ways in which deep time reworks questions of narrative, self, and representation. In addressing these dynamics, this introduction and the accompanying articles place current concerns into the larger flows of planetary temporalities, revealing deep time as productive, homely, and wondrous as well as unsettling, uncanny. (Text from authors' abstract)

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