

**Call for Papers**  
**Thinking at the Limit: Philosophy's Futures**  
Duquesne University, Department of Philosophy  
31 March-2 April 2023 (online)

Philosophy has always attempted to define its limits, to delimit its domain within the broader field of the human sciences. We could think of Plato's insistence on the difference between poetry and philosophy, the medieval subordination of philosophy to theology, the early modern attempts to clarify the relationship between philosophy and the natural sciences, or of Kant's radical redrawing of the limits of metaphysics. In each case, philosophical discourse has decided where to draw its borders. In the latter half of the twentieth century, the problem of philosophy's limits and boundaries forced its way to the foreground of many debates. Often this has taken the form of a blurring of disciplinary boundaries (e.g. deconstruction's problematizing the distinction between literature and philosophy) or a critique of inherited concepts (e.g. decolonial critiques of the Western subject). In parallel, if not in response, many thinkers have called for a revitalization of traditional forms of thought. The questions that have motivated all these new shifts and strategies are still alive and well, and they cut to the heart of philosophy's deepest concerns. How far can philosophical thinking take us? What does it mean to "think" philosophically? How do our many "images of thought," as Deleuze calls them, constrain or liberate thinking? How has the marginalization of non-philosophical forms of thinking, and the exclusion of certain voices from the philosophical conversation, hobbled philosophy's attempts to move forward, beyond the limit? What can we do to broaden the horizons of thought?

This online conference calls for papers that rigorously engage with these and related questions. It aims to serve up a *mélange* of fresh perspectives on what "the limit" means for philosophy today. As a result, participants can ideally glean a richer understanding of where the discipline stands, what paths lie open to it, and what paths are demanding to be opened.

**Deadline for Submissions: 15 January 2023**

**Abstract limit: 500 words**

**Send Submissions to: [duquesnegsipconference@gmail.com](mailto:duquesnegsipconference@gmail.com)**

Examples of welcome submission topics include, but are not limited to:

- Are there better or worse ways of drawing limits?
- Why is philosophy concerned with discourses on limits?
- How does ontology limit epistemology and vice-versa?
- Are all our philosophical projects limited by our unconscious structures and desires?
- Can aesthetic experience yield genuine knowledge? If so, what kind(s) of certainty can it give?
- To paraphrase Derrida, the most important part of philosophy happens at the margins. Can the "limit," and being "at the margin," be understood as being *marginalized* by scholars working on race, colonialism, and/or gender? Do critical race, post-colonial, and gender theories break/cross the limit of philosophy? If yes, what is it meant by "the limit"? If not, why?
- Modern philosophers have often argued, explicitly or implicitly, that language creates and limits thought (e.g. de Condillac, Hamann, Herder, Hegel, Marx, Heidegger, Gadamer, Saussure, Barthes, Foucault, Lacan, Kristeva, Butler, Russell, and

Wittgenstein). Risking oversimplification, we can only think by thinking with words. Yet this erases neurodivergent people who think visually, without words. Can philosophy account for nonverbal modes of thinking? If so, does such an account impact any philosophical theories or philosophers?

- Nietzsche argued that the various philosophical systems ought to be understood as symptoms – that it is, in the last analysis, the body that philosophizes. How has this critique shaped our understanding of philosophy today? What is the relationship between limits of embodiment and limits of thought?
- How does Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming minoritarian connect to the notion of limits? How does this becoming transform the limit in a positive concept, implying a process of becoming other in synchrony with other persons and things?
- How does Deleuze and Guattari's notion of deterritorialization imply an ethics of the limit? What would be the characteristics of such an ethic?
- A proliferation of materialisms has recently ensued. From the speculative realism of Meillassoux to the New Materialisms of Bennett, Bradiotti, Grosz and others, a question of limits has emerged with paramount importance. How do thought and materiality impose their own limits? How does an ardent commitment to materialism account for immaterial events and experiences, how is this 'limit' addressed?