



Judy Chicago, "The Creation" (tapestry, 1984)
<https://throughtheflower.org/projects/birth-project/>

HEALTH AND HEALING: PERSONAL, SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL

49TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MERLEAU-PONTY CIRCLE

September 25-27, 2025
University of Maine (Orono, Maine, United States)
In-person with virtual streaming option

Visible and mobile, my body is a thing among things; it is one of them. It is caught in the fabric of the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing. But because it moves itself and sees, it holds things in a circle around itself. Things are an annex or prolongation of itself; they are incrustated in its flesh, they are part of its full definition; the world is made of the very stuff of the body.

- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind"

Well-being is the invisible context enabling us to pursue possibilities and engage in projects. It is the condition of possibility enabling us to follow through aims and goals, to act on our desires, to become who we are.

- Havi Carel, *Illness: The Cry of the Flesh*

As the lived body is a multileveled structure of consciousness and autonomic functions, a place where psychological history is sedimented, interpersonal relations enacted, biological mechanisms homeostatically maintained, a medicine of the intertwining recognizes multiple points of possible intervention.

- Drew Leder, "A Tale of Two Bodies"

Throughout his work, Merleau-Ponty conceives of the person as always existing in creative communion with others and the natural world. This dynamic model of personhood in turn calls for a dynamic understanding and approach to health and healing. Concepts such as embodied subjectivity, intercorporeity, existential healing, habits that sustain or deny meaningful living, our strange kinship with nonhuman others,

chiasmic or symbiotic relationships, and intersubjectivity, provide avenues for exploring human and nonhuman flourishing, for critiques of practices or institutions that are detrimental to our health, and, ultimately, for radical reflections on lived experiences of caring and healing at individual, communal, and global levels.

In light of the complexity of the phenomena of health of healing, we particularly invite submissions that bring Merleau-Ponty's ideas into conversation with disciplines or domains beyond philosophy and that put these ideas into practice in personal, social, and environmental contexts. Possible topics include: aging, end-of-life care, disability, climate change, ecological restoration, medical humanities, social practices of health and wellbeing, incarceration and restorative justice, generative phenomenology, human-animal relations, psychological health and the phenomenology of illness and healing.

This year's meeting of IMPC will take place in Orono, Maine, United States, on Marsh Island in the homeland of the Penobscot Nation, where issues of water and territorial rights, and encroachment upon sacred sites, are ongoing. The conference is being co-directed by Susan Bredlau, Don Beith, and Kirsten Jacobson. Drew Leder and Havi Carel will give keynote addresses. The conference will be held at Wells Conference Center at the University of Maine, and hotel rooms will be available at Hotel Ursa, located on campus.

Full paper submissions, in English or French (On encourage les soumissions en français.) of no more than 3,500 words should be prepared for anonymous review and sent to IMPC2025Conference@gmail.com with the subject heading "IMPC submission" by May 1, 2025. As is custom, submissions on any aspect of Merleau-Ponty's work, in addition to the conference theme, are also welcome.

The conference features the **M. C. Dillon prize and lecture**, for the best graduate student paper submission, and the **Ron Morstyn Memorial Prize and lecture**, for an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary paper written by a junior scholar, independent scholar, or graduate scholar (more information [here](#) and [here](#)). Graduate students with interdisciplinary papers may ask to have their paper considered for both the Morstyn and Dillon prizes. If you are eligible and wish to be considered for either or both prizes, please indicate this in the email with your submission.

Finally, this conference will be held primarily as an in-person event. If you wish to be considered for virtual participation because attending physically presents insurmountable accessibility issues (of whatever sort, including economic ones), please indicate so in your submission. We will do our best to accommodate such requests. You are also welcome to include any anticipated accessibility needs, which will greatly assist in planning.

Please feel free to contact the organizers of this year's conference (Susan Bredlau, Don Beith, and Kirsten Jacobson) with questions you may have at:

IMPC2025Conference@gmail.com