

“THE SEA IS RISING AND SO ARE WE?”

presents

Cara New Daggett

Energy: A Geo-Theology Of Work

Tuesday 12/14/2021 / 6:15pm - 7:45pm CET / online via Zoom

Please register for this lecture via email at seasrise@uni-bremen.de. A link for the meeting will follow shortly after.

Energy and work are intertwined, both in the scientific definition of energy (the ability to do work), and in the political manifestation of human-fuel practices. The energy-work connection continues to haunt attempts to divest from fossil fuels. In this talk, I will trace the historical emergence of the relationship between energy and work, focusing upon how work came to be understood and valued as a site of energy transformation. With the ‘discovery’ of energy in the nineteenth century, energy physics fed a geo-theology of work that advanced British industrial imperialism. This energy-work ethos informed the emergent fossil fuel culture, wherein technical categories of work and waste intersected with racialized, and gendered, judgments of productivity and sloth. Thinking about energy historically suggests that shifting our fuel cultures will require a corresponding shift in (post)-industrial cultures of work.



Cara New Daggett holds a bachelor’s degree on biochemical science from Harvard University and a master’s degree in international relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science. She received her PhD in political science at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. Cara Daggett is currently assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at Virginia Tech. Her research explores the politics of energy and the environment in an era of planetary disruption. She is interested in questions that lie at the nexus of human well-being, science, technology, and the more-than-human world. Her work often draws upon feminist approaches to power in order to understand how global warming emerged, as well as how it might be mitigated. Cara Daggett’s book, *The Birth of Energy: Fossil Fuels, Thermodynamics, and the Politics of Work* (Duke, 2019), was awarded the Clay Morgan Award for best book in environmental political theory.



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