

Tuesday, November 13
12:45 – 2:15 PM
G01 Biotech

"Energy, Modernity, and Everyday Trauma"

Fossil fuels provided the raw material for modern industry, and, more generally, modern societies. And our inextricable dependence on limited sources of energy continues to be a driving force of history.

Clearly, the production and use of fossil fuels have always had deleterious consequences for the environment and for humans (while also providing almost magical benefits). But, looking beyond obvious traumas like explosions and spills, and thinking about trauma from bodily, psychological, and environmental perspectives, can we see more subtle ways in which modern energy regimes have been traumatic? Which landscapes and human groups have been hardest hit? Why have activists had such a hard time addressing this gradually intensifying addiction? What exactly are the everyday consequences of living in a culture so colored by the use of fossil fuels?

Presenters:

- **Jing Jin** is a senior undergraduate, a college scholar writing a thesis on literary representations of oil-related traumas, especially in indigenous groups in the US and Nigeria
- **Charis Boke** is an anthropology graduate student focusing in part on an ethnography of environmental and social justice activists, some of whom work on energy issues
- **Michael Jones-Correa** is a professor in government who teaches a course on slow-moving crises
- **Anindita Banerjee** is a professor in comparative literature who teaches a course on energy, empire, and modernity, and is working on a book project called *An Aesthetics of Energy*