

## Call for Papers:

### “Sentimental Extraction” Virtual Workshop

Sept. 29th - Oct. 1st, 2021

Confirmed keynote speakers: Cara Daggett (Virginia Tech), Macarena Gómez-Barris (Pratt Institute), and Sarah Jaquette Ray (Humboldt State University)

Organized by Axelle Germanaz, Daniela Gutierrez, and Sarah Marak

Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg

Even though it is well established that the extraction and burning of fossil fuels are a major motor of climate change, modern societies continue to rely on them. Debates about the perseverance of coal, oil, and gas are often centered on financial profitability and socio-economic benefits, reflecting the unwavering power of “fossil capital” (Andreas Malm). However, there is also a cultural dimension that reinforces societies’ “devotion, even love” (Stephanie LeMenager) to fossil resources. It is the purpose of this workshop to examine closely the cultural imaginaries and narratives that stabilize this “addiction” to fossil fuels (Matthew Huber). It also seeks to pay attention to those voices that challenge the reliance on fossil fuels and imagine more sustainable and safer forms of energy management as well as planetary futures.

Oil and its derivatives, in particular, are the foundation for resource-intensive modern lifestyles and have long been, especially but not only for North Americans, associated with ‘the good life.’ With the move towards climate regulations, some people have expressed resentment and feelings of nostalgia about what they consider a vanishing lifestyle - one rooted in “cheap energy” (“petromelancholia,” LeMenager). This has inspired regressive, sentimental, even defiant narratives of fossil fuel (hyper-)consumption. These narratives, as Cara Daggett demonstrates, are often connected to a new kind of hypermasculinity (“petromasculinity”). Though often framed in violent and aggressive terms those narratives in fact contain sentimental tropes – for example in plots of male victimization and heroism that (re-)affirm the hegemony of fossil fuels.

We see the intersection of extractivism and sentimentality as a productive site to interrogate the mechanisms behind the lasting power of fossil-fuel systems. Sentimentality has been conceptualized as an affective mode and a set of practices to engage in political and societal issues, teaching its audience to “think and act [and we might add, feel] in a particular way” (Tompkins). Especially notions of pain and suffering have been deployed both for preserving the extractive industries and their opportunities and for raising awareness for the vulnerability of the planet. The proposed workshop sets out to untangle the links between fossil fuel extraction, gender, and sentimentality and aims at analyzing how cultural narratives make use of the sentimental mode to promote or challenge extractivism. We welcome proposals that contribute to uncovering and understanding the representational strategies that make the end of fossil fuel extraction so hard to follow through, individually and collectively, and those that challenge the continued reliance on fossil resources by imagining other ways of being and energy management.

Themes and possible topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Gender Roles in Narratives of Extraction
- Representations of Fossil Fuel Extraction/Extractivism
- Sentimental Tropes in Narratives of Extraction
- Environmentalism and Sentimentality
- Climate Change and Extractivism
- US American Mythology of Expansion and Extraction
- Settler Colonialism, Empire, and Extraction
- Resource Entitlement
- Advertising Extractivism
- Counter-imaginaries of Energy (Climate Utopia/Dystopia)

We welcome scholars of all levels and fields. We invite interested participants to send an abstract (300 words) and a short bio (150 words) to [project-sentimental@fau.de](mailto:project-sentimental@fau.de). **Extended Deadline: August 31<sup>st</sup>.**