

FAU Research in Action Series

The Stories We Tell About Climate Change and Energy

Stacey Balkan, Ph.D.

Thursday 18 April 2019 @ 2:00pm
Boca Raton Downtown Public Library



How do we think about energy? What forms does it take? And how do we represent energy and energy systems, whether in popular political discourse and/or in the arts? Beginning with a brief introduction to the Anthropocene, or the “Age of Man,” this talk will explore the origins of energy use, the specter of climate change, and the possibilities for just energy futures through a rich discussion about something called “petroculture.”

By examining the ways in which energy, in the form of human labor or fossil fuels, has been used to *fuel* political regimes and popular culture, we will work toward an understanding of the significance and impact of carbon-based energy on our daily lives, and on the broader global community in which we live. This will help us to ultimately ask how we might move beyond our contemporary petroculture to consider, for example, how the sunshine state could survive without petroleum.

Stacey Balkan is an assistant professor of Environmental Literature and Humanities at Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Balkan's teaching and research focus on postcolonial environments, environmental justice, landscape aesthetics, petrocultures and petromodernity, and Global South literatures. Her current book projects include a monograph entitled *Rogues in the Postcolony: Developing Itinerancy in India*, which examines the environmental impact(s) of uneven development on the subcontinent, and a forthcoming essay collection dedicated to petrocultural expression entitled *Oil Fictions: World Literature and our Contemporary Petrosphere*. Stacey is also an advocate for alternative energy, a long-time bike commuter, and a proud founder of NJ Cyclists for Peace. Contact: sbalkan@fau.edu