

RETHINKING ENERGY JUSTICE: ALTERNATIVE HISTORIES AND POSSIBLE FUTURES



PRESENTATION BY
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ABSTRACT | In recent years, a growing body of social scientific work has sought to theorise, develop and apply the concept of 'energy justice' as a way to examine and resolve energy-related inequalities. That literature has focused primarily on energy policy design and management, emphasising scholarly use of the term since around 2013. However, 'energy justice' has a longer history amid diverse fields of social mobilisation – including grassroots groups and indigenous networks in the US. Drawing on collaborative work at ICTA-UAB with Sofia Avila that relates energy research to the evolving history of environmental justice scholarship and activism, the first part of this talk traces alternative histories of the energy justice concept. The second part highlights the importance of temporal aspects of energy impacts in analyzing justice issues, particularly when conflicting notions of 'urgency' are mobilised within energy and climate change debates. I discuss the implications of these alternative histories and critical perspectives for future work in the energy justice field.

BIO | Tristan Partridge is a social anthropologist who works on energy, environmental justice and community action. He is based in the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA) at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and is a Research Fellow at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Through projects on energy justice, land and water rights, and indigenous movements, his research examines the use of natural resources and the uneven distribution of related socio-environmental impacts. He received a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the University of Edinburgh (2014) and has conducted fieldwork in Ecuador, Scotland, India, and the US.

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