



Mural in La Ventosa,
Oaxaca, Mexico,
courtesy of the artist,
Kencei (2013)

HENNEBACH GUEST LECTURE SERIES

SPRING 2014 PRESENTS:

THE ETHICS AND ECOLOGICS OF WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN OAXACA, MEXICO

Professor Cymene Howe, Rice University, Department of Anthropology

Friday, January 24th 2014
SC Ballroom D 12 – 1 PM

For the production of enormous quantities of renewably sourced electricity, the winds that blow across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Southern Mexico are indisputably some of the very best in the world. For the indigenous and mestizo populations that inhabit the isthmus, however, the arrival of transnational capital, state brokerage and climate legislation that has produced dense tracts of turbines across the region has generated a more ambivalent experience: rendering profits for some and vehement protest for many others. This presentation is a consideration of the politics and ecologics of Oaxacan wind – its renewable energy possibilities, its political investments and its anthropocenic aspirations. It is an assessment of how the moral mandate to remedy global climatological harm by implementing renewable energy projects can run contrary to ethical objectives to assure the rights and sovereignty of the people whose lands, skies and waters are being occupied in the name of energy transition. As a way toward an emerging ethics of the Anthropocene, this discussion sets out to better understand how renewable energy transitions provoke particular reformulations of human and environmental relationships and rights in ethical terms.