

# Fossil Futures:

## Rethinking British history in the Age of Climate Emergency



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The planetary crisis of climate change unsettles not just present politics but also our sense of the past. In this talk, I will apply the lens of climate science and energy analysis to suggest a new interpretation of British history that deepens our understanding of how and why fossil fuel became so entrenched in modern societies. My talk tracks the multiple transformations wrought by coal in British society after 1760 from the infrastructure of the canal network and the steam-powered colliery to the coal-fired household and the emergence of a new ideology of fossil growth in politics. Fossil fuel even colonized the future as geologists and politicians came to identify British destiny with the national coal supply.

Thursday, September 29, 2022 at 4:00pm  
Academic Building, West Wing, Seminar Room 6051

