

Department of Languages and Cultures

2017 Research Seminar Series

Presents

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The Collective Ethics of Flying



Unconstrained and accelerating greenhouse gas emissions associated with air travel threaten everyone's wellbeing. Popular discourse notwithstanding, neither efficiency gains nor voluntary action (via restraint or the purchase of carbon offsets) has any prospect of having a meaningful effect on emissions growth in this sector. The most common present-day response to the problem--encouraging voluntary, individual rational responses to those risks--cannot succeed due to the nature of human reason and the structure of the problem itself. Rather than throwing up our hands and despairing of the possibility of bringing our travel-related greenhouse gas emissions under control, we turn to a much more promising solution--reframing the issue as a problem of collective action. Participation in the high-carbon air travel regime is a social convention; transition from social conventions requires coordination among players. Our moral duty, then, is to promote the collective actions that can reduce the wrong in question.

Tuesday 11th of April, 2017 12pm A3N7 (Arts Building)