

Why fly?

The compulsions and affordances of proximity and connected presence in scholarship

Monika Buscher, Centre for Mobilities Research, Lancaster University @mbuscher 3.6 t CO2/year





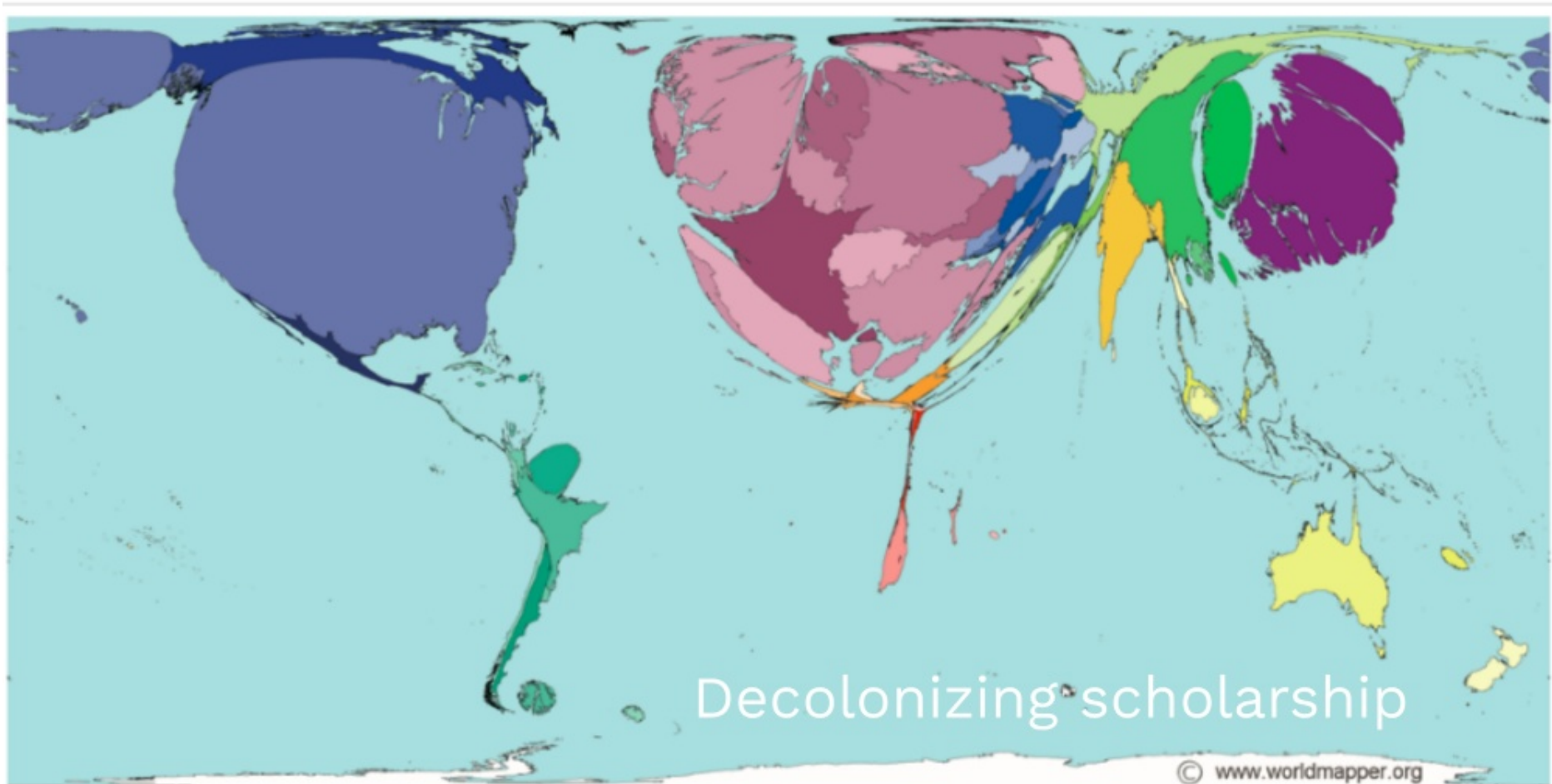
Why fly?

In the immediate as well as the symbolic sense, in the physical as well as the intellectual sense, we ... are the ones to separate the connected and connect the separate. Simmel 1909 Bridge and Door

The will to connection

2°C 5%

Low-fly
No-fly



Decolonizing scholarship

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Territory size shows the proportion of all scientific papers published in 2001 written by authors living there. © Copyright Worldmapper.org / Sasi Group (University of Sheffield) and Mark Newman (University of Michigan).

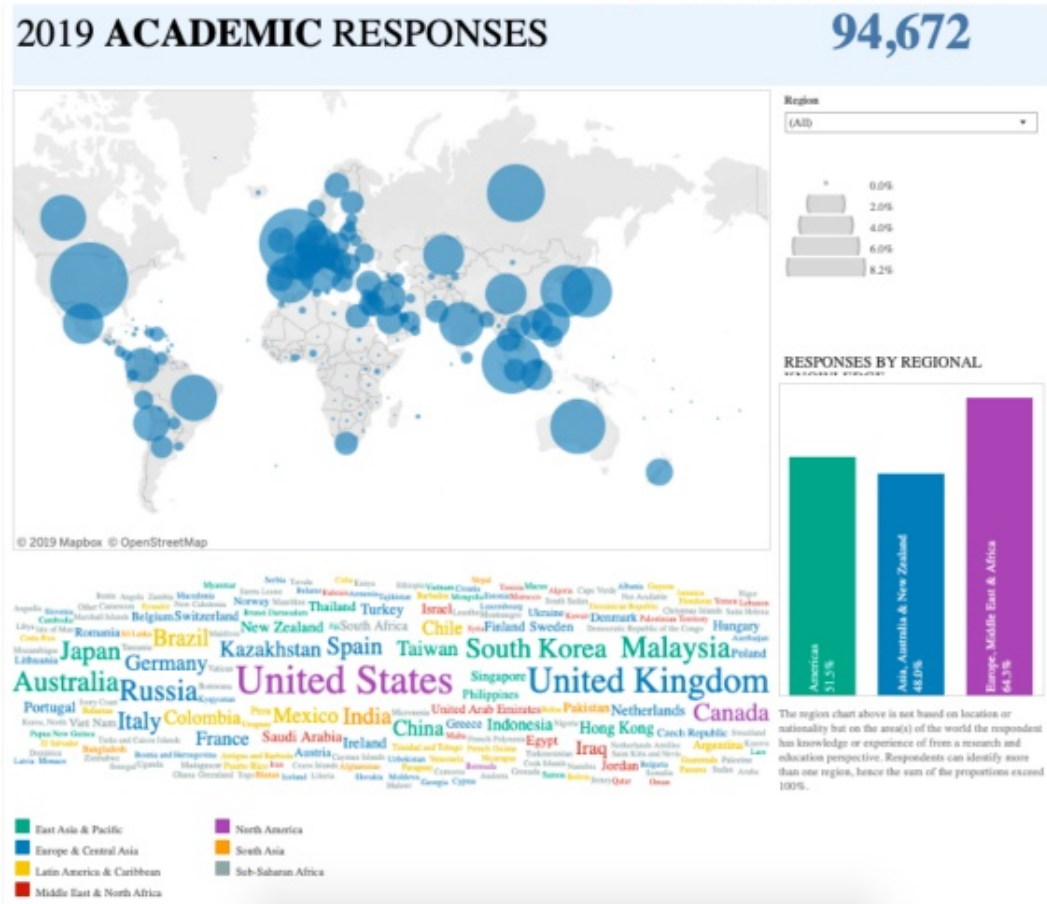
Good and bad and systemic reasons



UK Research and Innovation GCRF

UKRI GCRF Global Interdisciplinary Research Hubs

Building global research communities to develop innovative and sustainable solutions for international development



Why fly?

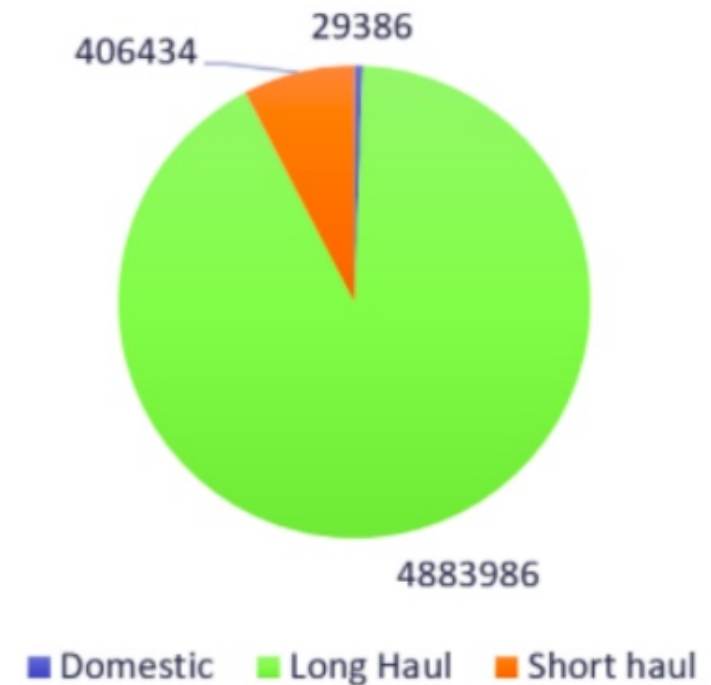
A different kind of separation:

- alienation
- **cause** (emissions) **and effect** (climate change) **invisible**

„I love to fly. I fly a lot - but it is special every time. It is one of the only moments that are left to me where I have myself to myself, far away from my mobile, the Internet, appointments, responsibility.


Schindler 2015

Lancaster University flight emissions (kg CO₂,%)
by sector 1 Aug 17 to 31 July 18



<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lec/about-us/news/blog-ouch-the-carbon-cost-of-academic-collaboration>

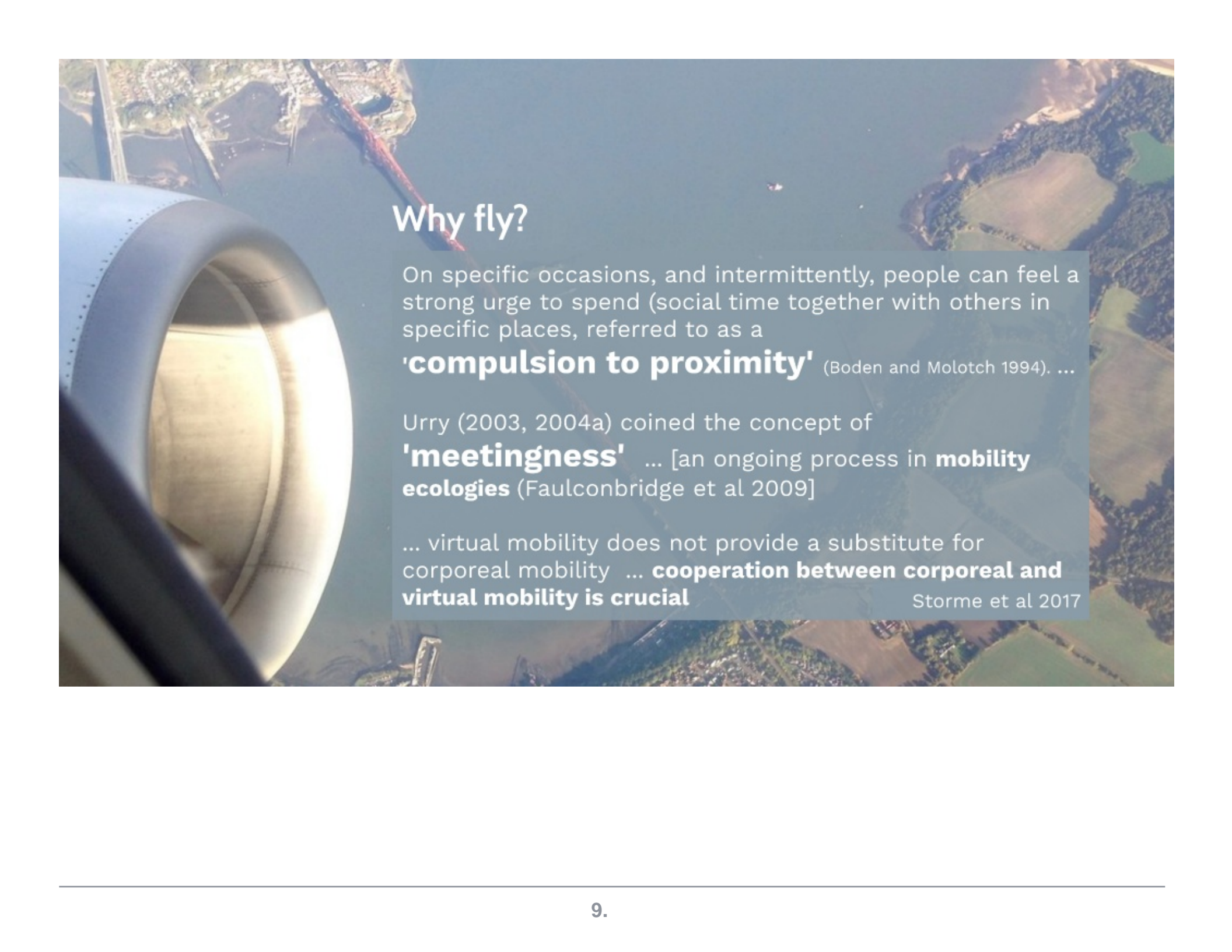




Inspiration Connection

Intense discussion, over the unspeakable coffee, is where it happens. Simply to be in the physical presence of scholars you are studying can be energising. Just as vitally, conferences democratise academia. You can be a star even if you work in a department that doesn't make the rankings. Jonathan Wolff 29 October The Guardian



An aerial photograph of a landscape with a large jet engine in the foreground. The engine is on the left side, and the landscape below shows a mix of green fields, brown patches, and a body of water. The sky is a clear blue.

Why fly?

On specific occasions, and intermittently, people can feel a strong urge to spend (social time together with others in specific places, referred to as a

'compulsion to proximity' (Boden and Molotch 1994). ...

Urry (2003, 2004a) coined the concept of

'meetingness' ... [an ongoing process in **mobility ecologies** (Faulconbridge et al 2009)]

... virtual mobility does not provide a substitute for corporeal mobility ... **cooperation between corporeal and virtual mobility is crucial**

Storme et al 2017

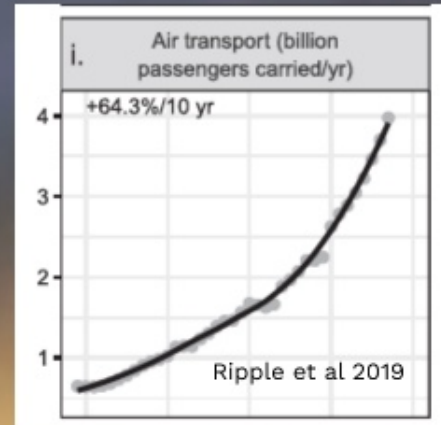
Good reasons or not?

8 billion passengers by 2020



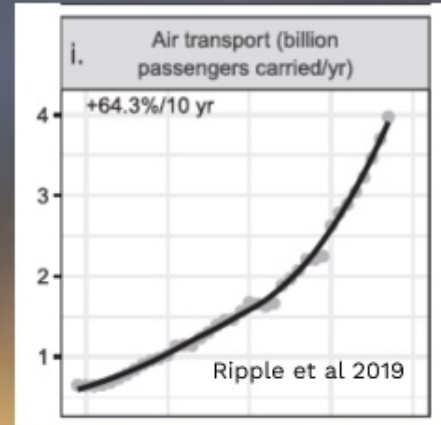
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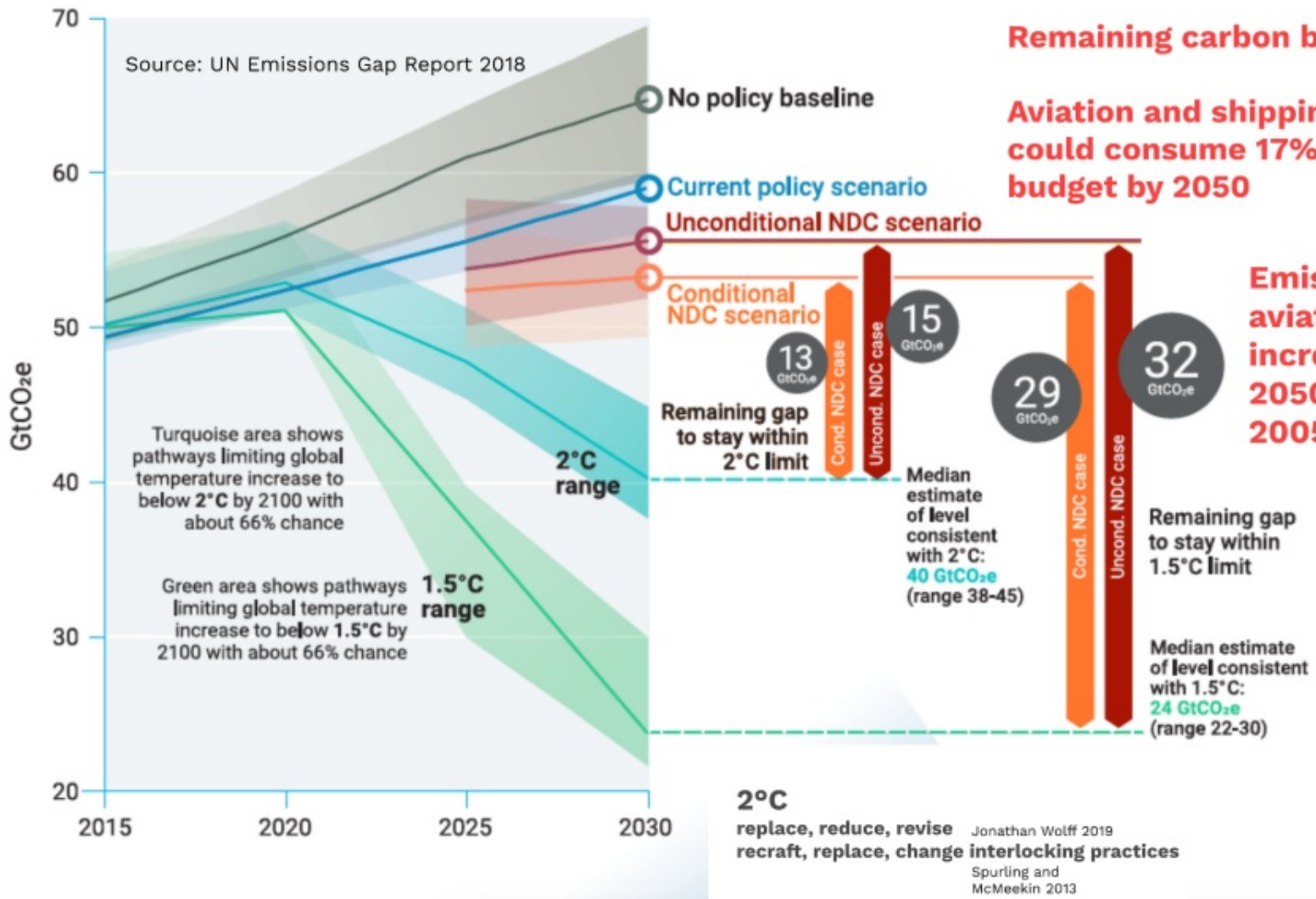
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Good reasons or not?

8 billion passengers by 2020



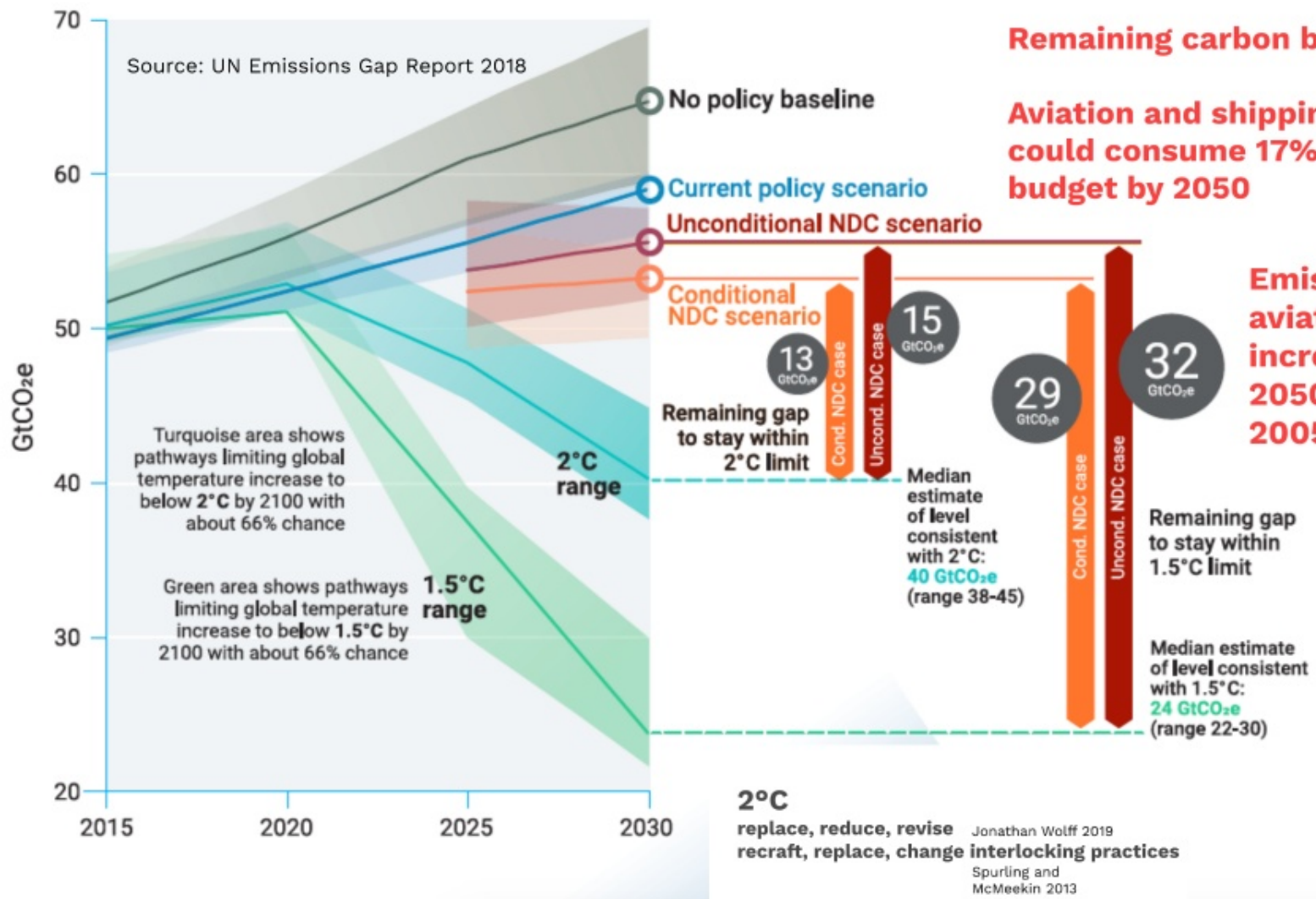


Remaining carbon budget: 550 Gt.

Aviation and shipping emissions could consume 17% of this remaining budget by 2050

Emissions from aviation could increase by 300% in 2050 compared to 2005.

<https://carbonmarketwatch.org/2018/10/08/new-ipcc-report-shows-1-5c-is-still-possible-but-more-needed-from-aviation-and-shipping/>



Remaining carbon budget: 350 Gt.

Aviation and shipping emissions could consume 17% of this remaining budget by 2050

Emissions from aviation could increase by 300% in 2050 compared to 2005.

<https://carbonmarketwatch.org/2018/10/08/new-ipcc-report-shows-1-5c-is-still-possible-but-more-needed-from-aviation-and-shiping/>

2°C

replace, reduce, revise

Jonathan Wolff 2019

recraft, replace, change

interlocking practices

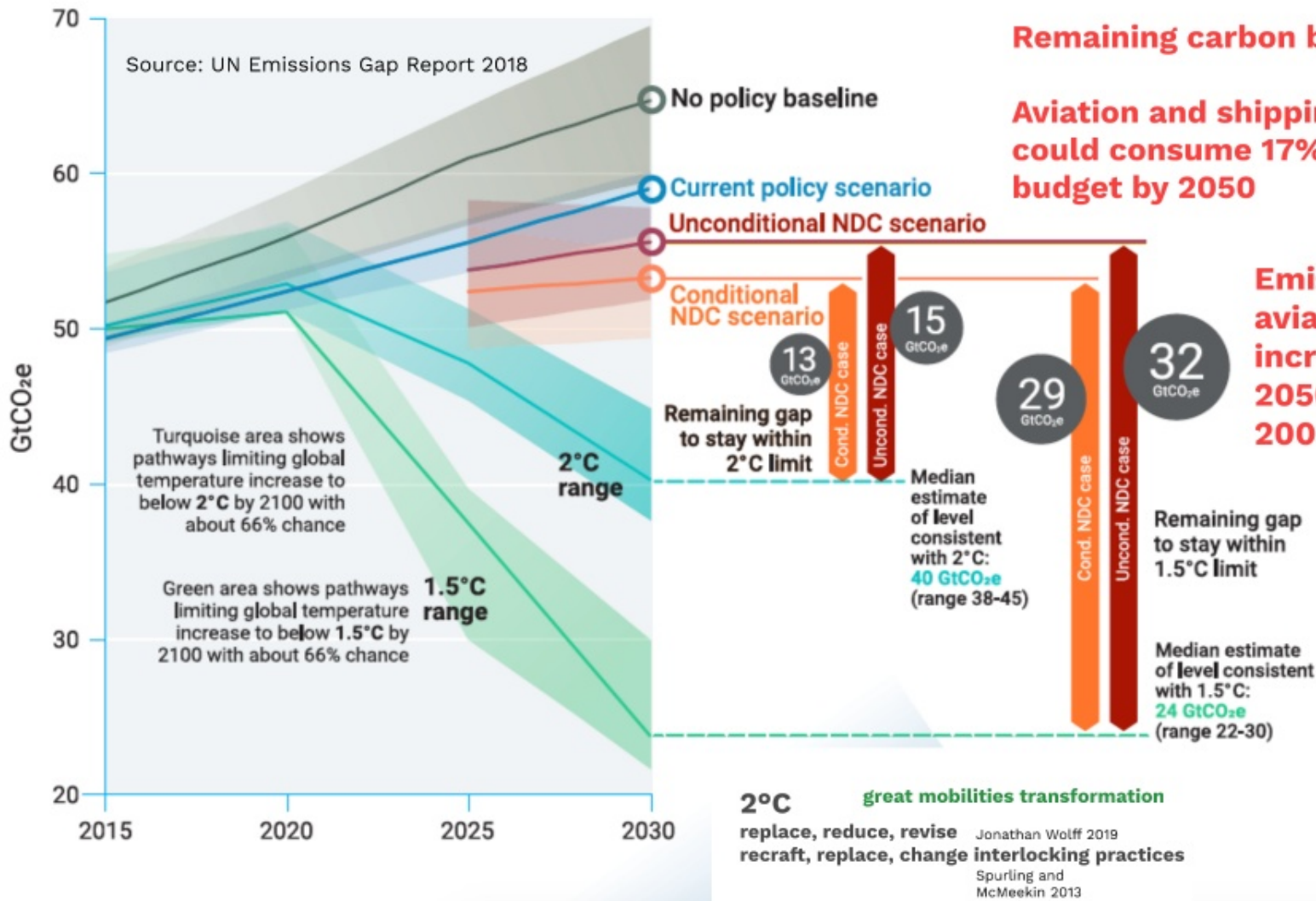
Spurling and
McMeekin 2013


transition MLP

Geels 2012

2°C **great mobilities transformation**

replace, reduce, revise Jonathan Wolff 2019
recraft, replace, change interlocking practices Spurling and McMeeKin 2013
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Why is low-fly, no-fly so hard ?

1. Because there is more to the compulsion of proximity than meets the eye

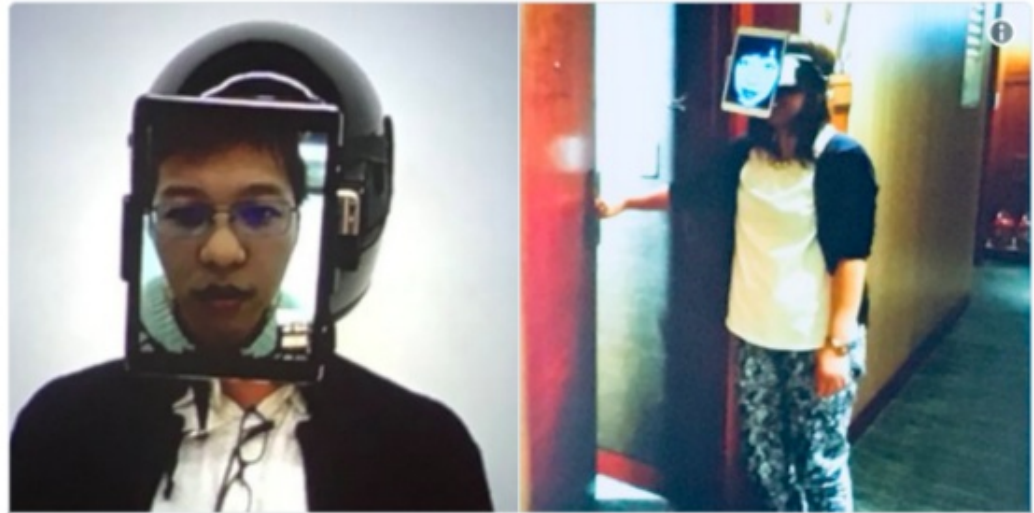


Compulsion of proximity misunderstood

Boden and Molotch do say that 'Copresence affords access to the body part that "never lies," the eyes - the "windows to the soul."

But, ...

Touted by creator Jun Rekimoto, deputy director of Sony Computer Science Laboratories, Inc., as a "human Uber," the service would essentially allow customers to hire a living, breathing human to walk through the world in his or her stead.



will knight ✓
@willknight



"Human Uber," developed in Japan, provides a way to attend events remotely using another person's body. "It's surprisingly natural" says its inventor, Jin Rekimoto of Sony [#emtechasia](#)

♥ 13.8K 6:52 AM - Jan 30, 2018

... they also say:

Copresence is '**the ordering device of all ... forms of communication as well as the basis of the larger social organisation.**'

G: W'd you like t'meet no::w,

→ (0.3)


K: [or late—]
[Well,] not just now. (0.1) Maybe in 'bout ten minutes?

Boden and Molotch 1994

In this example the three-tenths of a second response delay permits the inviter to amend the request (giving the responder a chance to meet later instead); thus, a rejection has been eliminated. So frequent are such response delays that should they not take place before a refusal, the proposer notices that something is wrong. It is an offense, a denial of what Garfinkel calls the “practical ethics” that are intrinsic to everyday interaction. Fast denials wantonly rob the proposer of a chance to save face with qualifying interjections or withdrawals; they imply a motivated animosity. That is why they are rare.⁶¹

As John Heritage summarizes a range of findings on these matters, the recurrent pattern of conversation timings “maximize the tendency for socially solidary actions to take place.”⁶² The organization of talk, in this regard, “itself is intrinsically ‘biased’ towards solidary actions.” Copresence provides the best circumstance for inserting delays before a negative response and for such delays (or their absence) to be noticed and exploited by the other party. Thus, the routine preference for soli-

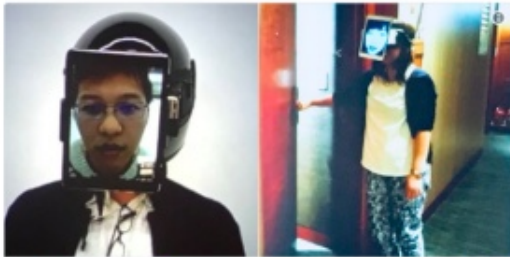
the sequential,
indexical,
reflexive **lived
practice of co-
present
interaction**
enacts **practical
ethics** and
socially **solidary
actions** -
essential for
**lived practices
of trust**

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a landscape of fields and forests. A bridge spans the river in the distance. In the foreground on the left, a large, white, circular engine nacelle is visible, partially obscuring the view. The sky is clear and blue.

Why is lo-fly, no-fly so difficult?

2. Because our technologies are **so bad**

Touted by creator Jun Rekimoto, deputy director of Sony Computer Science Laboratories, Inc., as a "human Uber," the service would essentially allow customers to hire a living, breathing human to walk through the world in his or her stead.



will knight
@willknight

"Human Uber," developed in Japan, provides a way to attend events remotely using another person's body. "It's surprisingly natural" says its inventor, Jin Rekimoto of Sony #emtechasia

13.8K 6:52 AM - Jan 30, 2018

Face, body, hands, time & timing, place, context

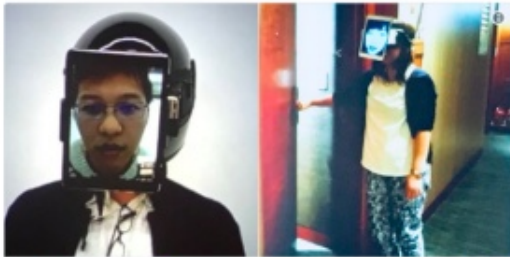


copresence best allows this
"indexicality" ... to manage the ambiguity
inherent in any term or expression
(Garfinkel 1967 in Boden and Molotch 1994)





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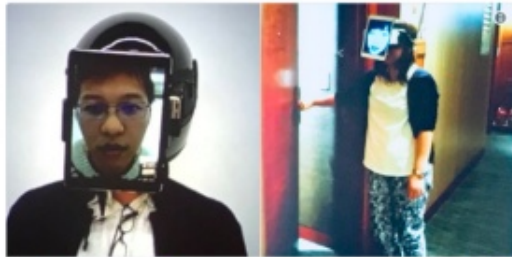
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Beane and
Orlikowski
2015



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Reciprocity of Perspective

(Schutz 1970)

Mirroring

(Petersen and Buscher 2016)

Peripheral Awareness

(Heath and Luff 1992)

Face, body, hands, time & timing, place, context



copresence best allows this "**indexicality**" ... to manage the ambiguity inherent in any term or expression
(Garfinkel 1967 in Boden and Molotch 1994)



Beane and Orlikowski 2015

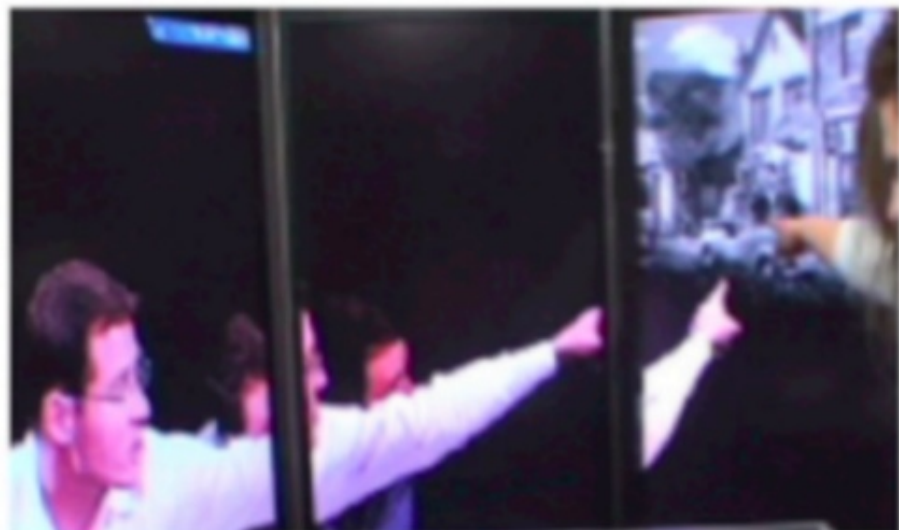


CHI 2011 • Session: Telepresence

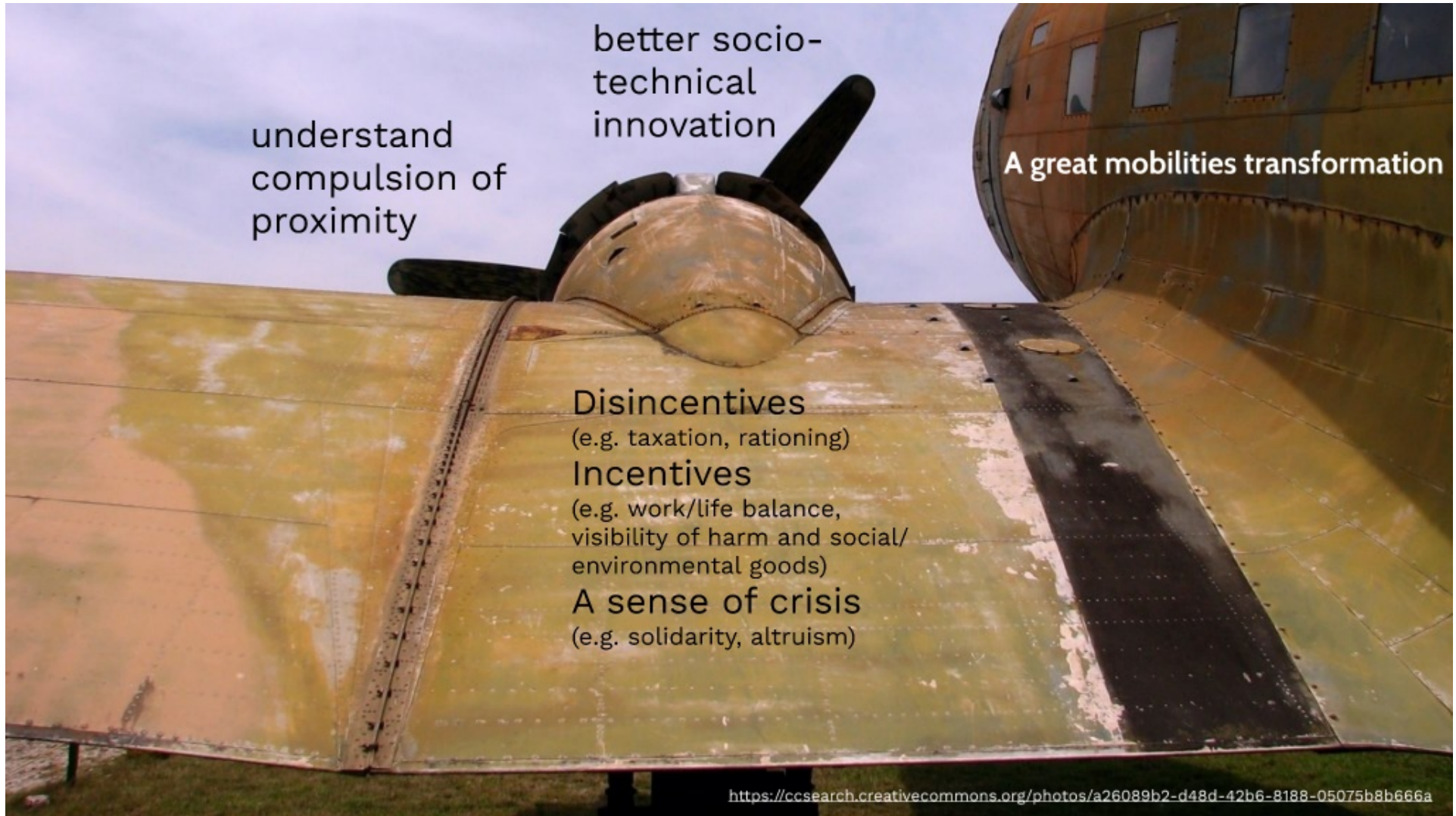


A: right up no, let me (scoot around) that guy right there exactly?
from you (Brian)

As Andrew reproduces his gesture, Helen also points again. They both now move their fingers up and down and around the same figure on the screen. This time they seem to agree that they have found their man. The difficulties, for Andrew, of his earlier pointing seem to be due to the way that his pointing gestures have appeared in the different domains. There are slight differences in how they appear to the pointer in the local domain and the pointee(s) in the remote one.



Luff, P., Yamashita, N., Kuzuoka, H., & Heath, C. (2011). Hands on Hitchcock: Embodied Reference to a Moving Scene. CHI Conference



understand
compulsion of
proximity

better socio-
technical
innovation

A great mobilities transformation

Disincentives

(e.g. taxation, rationing)

Incentives

(e.g. work/life balance,
visibility of harm and social/
environmental goods)

A sense of crisis

(e.g. solidarity, altruism)

<https://ccsearch.creativecommons.org/photos/a26089b2-d48d-42b6-8188-05075b8b666a>

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