Everyone knows that the energy transport into the polar caps keeps the poles warmer than they would otherwise be. But how much warmer? What's the right way to think about and quantify the role of atmospheric dynamics in the maintenance of polar surface temperatures, and in polar amplification of climate change? And what exactly does "lapse rate feedback" really mean? In this talk I'll present some incomplete but hopefully stimulating new work on these questions, based on a combination of data analysis, simple models, and less simple models.