

ATS/CIRA Colloquium

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**The Psychology of Climate Change Communication:
Motivations for Pro-Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors**

Hosted by Emily Fischer

Friday, October 2, 2015

**ATS room 101; Discussion will begin at 11:15am
Refreshments will be served at 10:45am in the weather lab**

How do people think about environmental problems like climate change, and why do some people feel concerned or take action? Despite large consensus among the scientific community, many individuals deny that climate change is happening or that it is a serious issue. Although there are many possible reasons why people disengage from the issue, a common link is that they do not feel personally and psychologically connected to the impacts of climate change. Particularly for Americans, who are relatively removed from the worst effects of climate change, it is difficult to observe concrete examples of climate changes or experience an emotional response. Further, Americans are removed from the direct consequences of their actions that contribute to climate changes, making behavior change difficult.

Research in social psychology, which explores human-human intergroup processes, may also apply to and help us understand human-nature attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, the psychological rationales that produce discrimination toward specific human groups function in much the same way as discriminatory attitudes and treatment of the environment. My work has explored ways to connect people to environmental and climate issues through social values, empathy and other emotions, and reframing the way we think about our identification with other social groups. This talk will highlight why people might be motivated to deny environmental problems, how people might increase their concern about climate change, and provide take-away points on how to re-frame messages about a changing climate.

Link to colloquium videos and announcement page: <http://www.atmos.colostate.edu/dept/colloquia.php>