

Integrating Sustainability into Communication Courses

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About Me

- **Professor of Communication**

- **Research Areas:**

- Science & Environmental controversies
- Environmental/Climate activism
- Environmental Justice
- Energy Democracy

- **Recent Research Projects:**

- Nuclear Waste Siting
- Solar Energy in Puerto Rico
- Energy Democracy



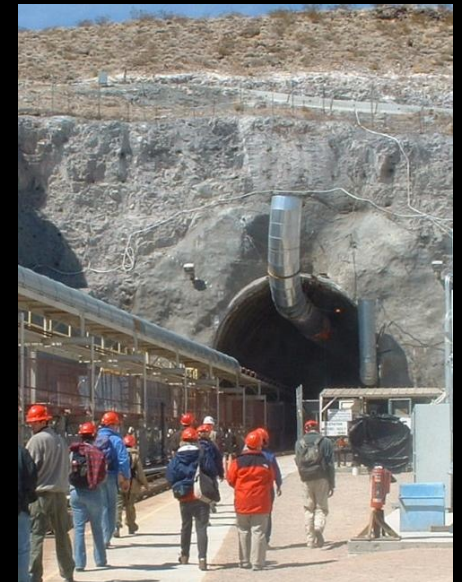
What is Communication?



- The study of the various ways in which humans (and other animals) communicate
- Communication both reflects and has implications for social reality
- Communication theory and research contribute to better understanding (knowledge), communication practices, and engagement in society.

Environmental Communication

- Environmental Communication studies the role of communication in relationship to the environment and environmental issues
 - The role of language in mediating our understanding of the natural world and environmental issues
 - Stakeholders in environmental controversies (e.g., nuclear waste siting)
 - Persuasion and argumentation about environmental topics

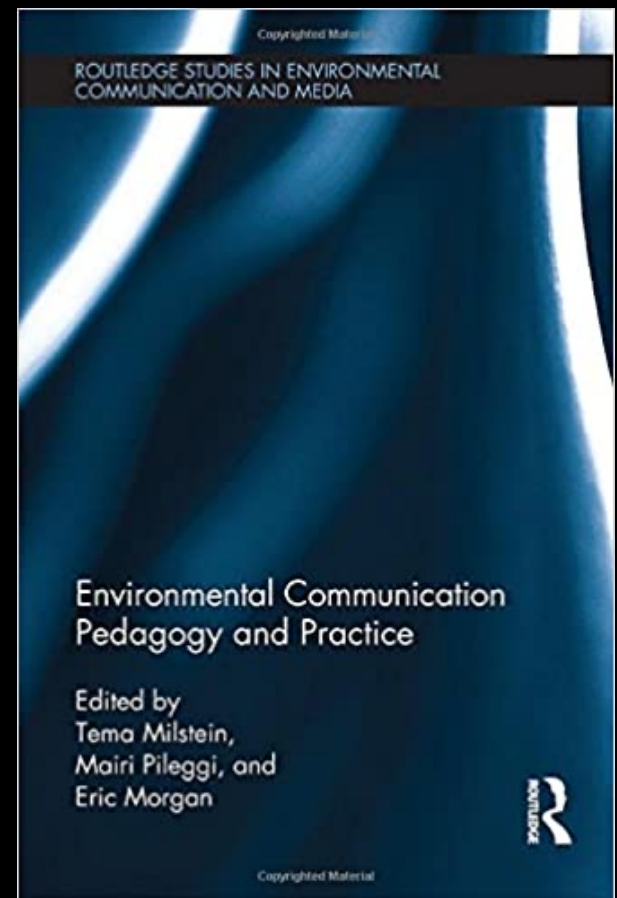


Environmental Justice

- **Environmental justice** refers to the rights of all people to benefit from a healthy environment, to be treated fairly in environmental decision-making, and to be meaningfully involved in environmental decision making
- **Environmental injustice** is the inverse, a common sign of which is that toxic waste and pollution and environmental degradation are disproportionately harmful to members of marginalized communities

Integrating Environmental Communication into the Comm Curriculum

- Examples
- Readings
- Activities
- Guest Lectures &
Campus Events

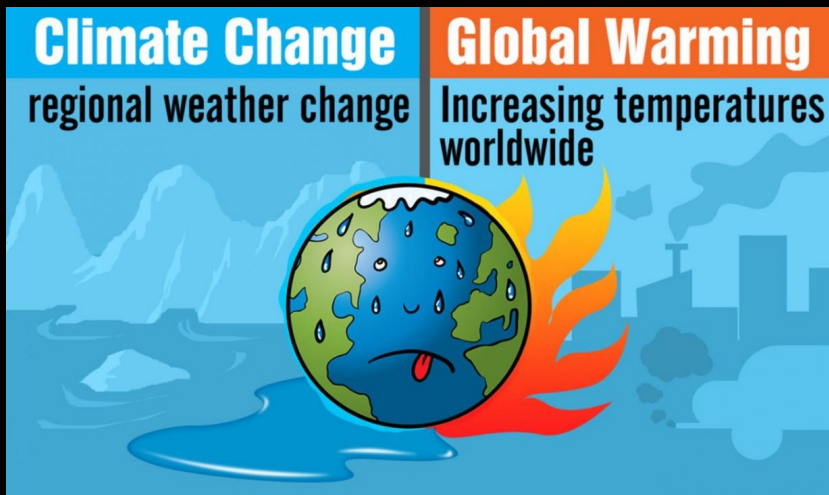


Examples

- I unpack theories and concepts with environmental examples
 - Deliberate attempt to include diverse examples
 - Range of local, national, and international examples
 - Intentional use of environmental (in)justice examples



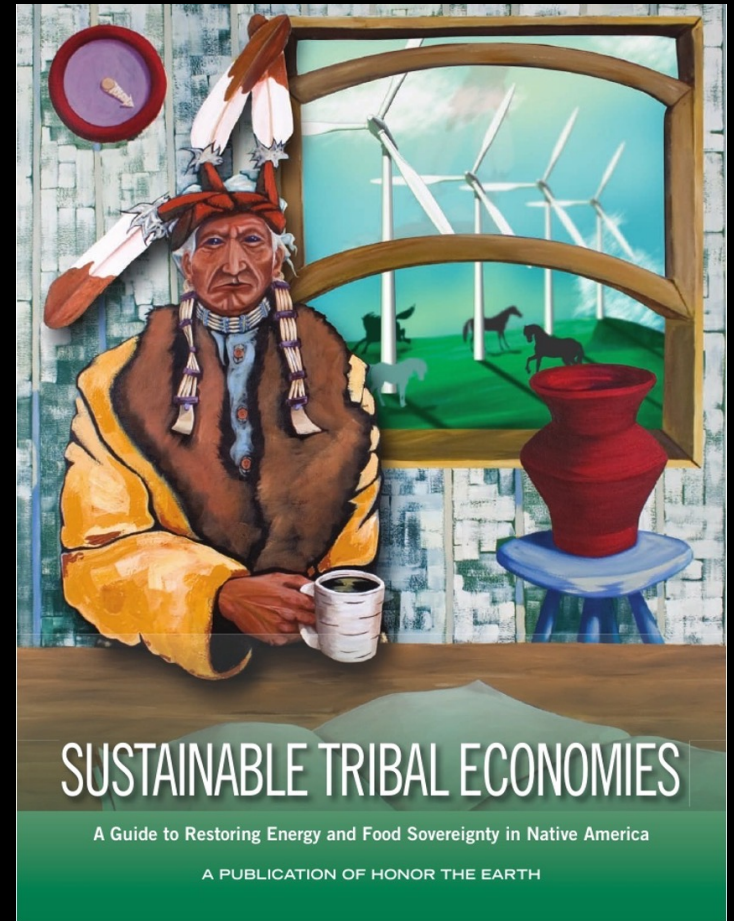
Example: Teaching Framing



- Theories of framing tell us that certain word choices can change the way audiences perceive messages
- My go to example:
"global warming" vs.
"climate change" vs.
"climate crisis" vs.
"climate justice"

Readings

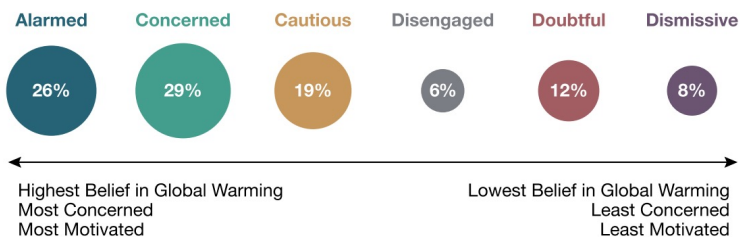
- I am very deliberate and intentional with course readings
 - Environmental & Justice topics
 - Diverse authors
 - Mix of academic work and practitioner work



"Manufactroversy"

- A scientific controversy is "manufactured" in the public sphere when an arguer announces that there is an ongoing scientific debate in the technical sphere about a matter for which there is actually an overwhelming scientific consensus.
- I use this to teach: argumentation, evidence, persuasion, credibility, disinformation, and more!

Global Warming's Six Americas December 2020



December 2020 (n=1,036)



Articles: Ceccarelli, Leah. "Manufactroversy: The Art of Creating Controversy Where None Existed." *Science Progress: Where Science, Technology, And Policy Meet*, April 11, 2008. <http://scienceprogress.org/2008/04/manufactroversy/>.

Ceccarelli, Leah. "Manufactured Scientific Controversy: Science, Rhetoric, and Public Debate." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 14, no. 2 (June 10, 2011): 195-228. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rap.2010.0222>.

Activities

- I have a set activities that can be geared to a variety of different comm courses
 - Communication with the nonhuman world
 - Analyze communication strategies at the zoo, natural history museum, air protests at the capitol, red butte garden, etc.
 - Respectful argumentation with someone with a different viewpoint
 - Ecocultural communication reflection



Communication with the • nonhuman world activity

to an hour outside of the classroom without screens to engaged in communication with the natural world

- Students write a reflection on the experience that ties it to course content
- Can be done during class time (guided) or as home



Guest Lectures & Campus Events

- Guest lectures to introduce students to local environmental issues and perspectives different from mine.
- Communication analysis of a campus event extra credit

EARTH WEEK 2022 EVENTS

Monday, April 11

- **10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free Planting Kit Giveaway.** Come grab a free mason jar planting kit from the ASUU Sustainability Board in front of the student union. Included in the kits are soil, seeds, and planting instructions to grow your own herbs. We will also have reusable utensil packets on hand for those who want one!
- **12 p.m. Hinckley Forum: Public Lands and Gateway Communities.** Come learn from researchers and practitioners about the challenges and opportunities for publicly managed lands and the communities that surround them. In person at the Hinckley Institute, Gardner Commons room 2018, or on Zoom. [Learn more.](#)

MARCH 2023

Thursday, March 2



Author Meets Readers Series with Britt Wray

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Author of *Generation Dread: Finding Purpose in an Age of Climate Crisis*

Registration Info Coming Soon

 [ADD TO CALENDAR](#)

 [FORWARD TO FRIENDS](#)

FEBRUARY 15, 2022

- **Lazarus Adua**, Department of Sociology
"The Downside of the Gap! Examining the Impacts of Inequality on Environmental Views and Outcomes in the United States" [Read more](#)

MARCH 1, 2022

- **Jennifer Follstad Shah**, Environmental and Sustainability Studies
"**WEO**²: Using the Wasatch Environmental Observatory to engage in water resource research, education and outreach" [Read more](#)

APRIL 5, 2022

Some of My Favorite Resources

- Indigenous Environmental Network
- Grist
- High Country News
- Yale Project on Climate Communication
- George Mason Center for Climate Communication
- Climate Justice Alliance
- Drilled Podcast
- Stories from the Land Podcast
- Environmental documentaries
- Bioregional quiz
- My own research
- Past GCSC talks