

Annual meeting of the International Communication Association  
San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 2015

## **Post-conference on Climate and Sustainability Campaigns**

To be held: Tuesday, May 26, 2015

### **Sponsors**

Environmental Communication Division, Health Communication Division, Political Communication Division

### **Goals and participants**

This post-conference aims to tap the unique collaboration between the Environmental, Political and Health Communication Divisions. Our goal is to bring together scholars, grad students, and practitioners to engage in a meaningful dialogue about the current state of and the prospects for climate and sustainability campaigns.

We seek submissions that address the spectrum of climate and sustainability campaigns from diverse perspectives, methods and subfields within communication. We define campaign broadly as a strategic course of action, undertaken during a predefined time limit, involving communication, which is carried out for a specific outcome (Rogers & Storey, 1987). Through this post-conference, we hope to highlight the links between environmental and science communication, political communication, and health communication.

### **Rationale**

Anthropogenic climate change has now come of age as a widely recognized global risk and a profound peril to the health and wellbeing of human and nonhumans alike (Maibach, Roser-Renouf & Leiserowitz, 2008). It demands global responses and actions to reduce its threats (Beck, 2010). According to one recent analysis, climate legislation is unlikely without a large, well-orchestrated and sustained climate movement and climate action (Skocpol 2013). The aim of this post-conference is to help shift research on climate communication from its early focus on media coverage of climate change to mapping and understanding the global terrain of climate and sustainability campaigns waged by diverse actors across the world, and targeting various audiences.

Generally, we identify two types of overlapping campaigns: public communication campaigns and advocacy campaigns. Public communication campaigns are usually waged by institutional actors who attempt to inform or influence behaviors in large audiences within a specific time period using an organized set of communication activities. A public communication campaign features “an array of mediated messages in multiple channels generally to produce noncommercial benefits to individuals and society” (Rice & Atkin, 2013, 3). Advocacy campaigns are often, though not always, waged by non-institutional actors, aim for more systemic transformation and seek to change external conditions such as a policy decision or project (Cox, 2013, 213).

What kinds of climate campaigns are promoted by governments and other institutional actors? How does citizen activism sustain climate adaptation efforts in specific localities? What kinds of campaigns are waged by Environmental NGOs and other NGOs as a response to the climate challenge? What are the affective and cognitive precursors for climate activism? What are the relevant frames for climate campaigns? Who is affected by such frames, via which affective and/or

cognitive processes, and regarding what types of behavior or other relevant outcomes? What climate-related behaviors do campaigners aim/prefer to change? How do specific national environmental policies or other relevant country-specific factors affect campaigns and/or their impact on audiences? How are these campaigns covered in the media?

This post-conference seeks to improve our understanding of campaign types, scope, organizational nature and actors, topics, goals, strategies, tactics, capacities, effects, audience psychology, and similar relevant issues. We hope to pave the way for additional prospective research on this topic.

### **Topics**

We welcome a diverse range of manuscripts. Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Climate justice campaigns
- Environmental NGOs and NGOs advocacy campaigns
- Health and climate campaigns
- Importance of celebrities in campaigns
- Legislative lobbying campaigns
- Public engagement campaigns
- The role of opinion leaders in campaigns
- Visual components of campaigns
- Campaigns focusing on consumer behavior or the marketplace
- Campaigns that seek to bridge different stakeholders and goals (i.e. ones that connect issues of health, environment and politics)
- Affective & cognitive effects of campaigns

### **Submission guidelines**

Submit extended abstracts of 1,000 words maximum (Word or PDF formats) to Lucy Atkinson ([lucyatkinson@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:lucyatkinson@austin.utexas.edu)). Please submit 1) a separate title page including the paper's title and author's details (name, title, and institutional affiliation) and 2) an anonymized abstract including the topic, theoretical framework, method and preliminary findings. Abstracts must be received no later than **November 15, 2014**. Acceptance decisions will be made in early January 2015.

### **Venue**

TBA

### **Rate**

\$100 or less (we are seeking external funding to help defray the cost)

### **Organizers**

Merav Katz-Kimchi (Ben Gurion University), Lucy Atkinson (University of Texas, Austin), Connie Roser-Renouf (George Mason University), Kevin Wright (George Mason University), Bruno Takahashi (Michigan State University), Ronald E. Rice (UC Santa Barbara), Evelyn Ho (University of San Francisco), Peter Van Aelst (University of Antwerp), Andreas Schuck (University of Amsterdam)