



Climate Justice and Emotions

Instructor Guide

Introduction

This module includes an introduction to climate psychology, climate change and climate justice emotions, and strategies for addressing climate anxiety and emotions. Throughout the module, there are opportunities for students to reflect on one's climate emotions and hypothesize methods of systematically confronting the disproportionate impacts of climate change and climate anxiety.

Pre-class activity

1. Watch video: [Feeling climate \(in\)justice](#)
 - a. Timestamp 14:44-45:20

Objectives

1. Identify the causes of differing emotional responses to climate change
 - a. Psychological distance
 - b. Lack of education/knowledge
 - c. Different experiences
2. Recognize the many different emotional responses to climate change
3. Understand the disproportionate impacts of climate induced mental health consequences
 - a. Most vulnerable populations
 - i. Living in places frequently exposed to environmental contaminants
 - ii. Housing mobility, security, and amenities
 - iii. Women
 - b. Climate Justice Activists
 - i. Closer to the fight against climate change: more anxiety, hopelessness
4. Discuss strategies of systematically addressing climate anxiety
 - a. Personal scale
 - b. Equitable large-scale access to mental health education/treatment
 - c. Changes to how climate change is discussed to promote better mental health



- d. Climate justice to include removing the climate change induced threats that disproportionately impact vulnerable populations to promote better mental health

Preparation for teaching

1. [Feeling climate \(in\)justice](#)
2. [Climate Anxiety](#)
3. [Who suffers from climate anxiety](#)
4. [Psychological distress in three Australian communities living with environmental per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances contamination](#)
5. [Understanding and responding to climate-driven non-economic loss and damage in the Pacific Islands](#)
6. [Association between exposure to airborne particulate matter less than 2.5 µm and human fecundity in China](#)
7. [Maybe Next Month? Temperature Shocks and Dynamic Adjustments in Birth Rates](#)
8. [Extreme heat, preterm birth, and stillbirth: A global analysis across 14 lower-middle income countries](#)
9. [Impact of Wildfire Smoke on Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes in Colorado, 2007–2015](#)
10. [Climate Change Isn't the First Existential Threat](#)
11. [The Climate Anxiety Discussion Has a Whiteness Problem](#)

In-class activities to expect

1. Small group/partner discussions and sharing
2. TEDTalk: [Find your Joy in Climate Action](#)
 - a. Drawing your own venn diagram of climate action
3. Readings: [Climate Change Isn't the First Existential Threat](#), [The Climate Anxiety Discussion Has a Whiteness Problem](#)
 - a. Option for short responses
4. Policy memo option

Suggestions for future learning:

1. Project options:
 - a. Choose 1 of the activities (in the following slides) and write a short paper in response to the articles



- b. Write a policy memo about modifying climate change messaging to help people suffering from climate distress
2. Future connections:
 - a. Human perception and emotions define behaviors, it is key to understand both in an increasingly climate affected world
 - b. Applications in policy/politics, business, psychology, medicine

Suggested readings:

1. [Climate justice existential toolkit](#)
2. [Emotional Reactions to Climate Change: A Comparison Across France, Germany, Norway, and the United Kingdom](#)
3. [Climate anxiety, wellbeing and pro-environmental action: correlates of negative emotional responses to climate change in 32 countries](#)
4. [Emotions in Climate Justice Activism](#)
5. [Exposure to and learning from the IPCC special report on 1.5 °C global warming, and public support for climate protests and mitigation policies](#)
6. [Social cognition to encourage PEBs](#)
7. [Psychological distance and climate change](#)