

Call for papers

Psychology in Society (PINS) special issue

**Psychology, climate change and the environment: foregrounding justice**

Guest editors: Brendon Barnes, Garret Barnwell and Lynn Hendricks

How can we foreground justice in our work on climate and environmental psychologies? There is increasing interest in the role of psychology in climate change, environmental degradation, and sustainability. Climate and environmental psychology scholarship, however, has predictably focused on the traditional psychological domains such as perceptions, attitudes, norms, and behaviours with several associated problems (Barnwell, Watson & Stroud, 2020a; Fernandes-Jesus, Barnes & Diniz, 2020).

Scholarship has largely paid lip service to the historical, political, and economic drivers of environmental injustices (Barnwell, Stroud & Watson, 2020b). For example, there has been a marked increase in behavioural interventions in environment and climate change studies. The assumption is that if enough individuals change the way they think, feel, and behave; it will create a ripple effect that will ultimately mitigate impacts on the environment and/or encourage people to adapt to climate and environmental hazards. Individualism, of course, places the source and solution to environmental problems on individuals at the expense of the structural. In addition, polluting industries have historically evaded regulation by actively framing environmental issues as individual responsibilities and undermining policies that would protect communities against climate change and toxic exposures (Brown, 2007; Mann [in press]; Oreskes & Conway, 2010). Ideas of localisation, contextuality, intersectionality and pluralism that undergird community-based struggles and movements are often lost to ideas of individual action, scale, universality, and technological fixes (Escobar, 2020).

Importantly, scholarship lacks voices, perspectives and struggles of people who are disproportionately affected by environmental injustices. Community movements in the global South (and among marginalised groups in the North) are taking interesting political forms (e.g., youth, farmer resistance, and indigenous women-led movements) and are important sites of repression, resistance, and transcendence (Escobar, 2018; Gómez-Barris, 2017; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Shiva, 2020; Watkins, 2019). However, activists from marginalised groups are met with increasingly hostile, punitive, and violent responses (Centre for Environmental Rights, 2019). It is important to document these, understand the barriers to mobilisation, how

different framings (e.g., justice, rights, and citizenship) work with and possibly against each other.

Furthermore, climate and environmental psychology scholars have, to date, relied heavily on post-positivist methodologies that have reinforced some of the problematic representations above. There are opportunities for studies using decolonial, citizen science, feminist, and other critical methodologies (Brown, 2007; Fernandes-Jesus et al 2020; Tuck & McKenzie, 2014).

The timing is right to disrupt the current trajectory of psychology and to map a more inclusive and just path for climate and environmental psychologies. There is a small but growing critical scholarship within psychology interested in climate and environmental justice, for example, attempts to carve out roles for critical and community psychologies (Adams, 2021; Fernandes-Jesus, Barnes & Diniz, 2020; Fisher, 2013; Watkins, 2019). In addition, a large and rich body of theoretical work exists on environmental and climate justice outside of psychology that could enrich current discussions. There have also been important theoretical developments within psychology, for example, decolonial, social, political, community and feminist psychologies that may have implications for climate and environmental scholarship.

We welcome theoretical, review and empirical studies in the following domains:

- Theorising justice in environment and climate psychologies.
- The role, relevance and integration of cross-cutting ideas such as decoloniality, power, racism, intersectionality, feminisms, co-constitutionality, and class.
- Psychology and just transitions.
- Psychology, environmental justice, and reparations.
- The role of 'evidence' of disproportionate climate and environmental impacts in politics, law and policymaking. This could include scientific evidence and climate change denialism.
- The role of community activism(s) - enablers, barriers, and enactments.
- Youth-led activism.
- Psychology and toxic heritage.
- The promise and pitfalls of solidarity among different movements, for example, black consciousness, indigenous, feminist, disability, and green movements.
- The politics of individualism and behaviour change in environmental and climate psychologies.
- Methodological advances including critical, decolonising methodologies, indigenous methodologies, citizen science and feminist methodologies.
- Strengthening and critiquing 'indigeneity' in climate and environmental psychology.
- Critical disability studies, environment and climate change.

**Submission deadline: 31 August 2021**

**All submissions to be emailed to [bbarnes@uj.ac.za](mailto:bbarnes@uj.ac.za)**

**Submissions should adhere to PINS style guide: <https://www.pins.org.za/style-guide-2019.pdf>**

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