

How to Play in the Emergency: Practices for generating climate action from the intersections of climate fiction, linguistic theory, and organizing.

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This session draws from various disciplines to make an artist's and organizer's case for playing with, and in, the emergency — and imagining the act of climate play together.

In the face of rising eco-anxiety, climate scholars, communicators, organizers, advocates, and artists share a common challenge: how to simultaneously communicate urgency, rigorous evidence, mitigation strategies, and practical climate hope well enough to effect workable climate interventions. How do we collaboratively approach climate communication to engage community effort sustainably, consensually, and for the long term?

This multimodal, interdisciplinary presentation and discussion — based in multiple streams of scholarship, climate poetics, solarpunk fiction, and practical organizing experience — considers climate hope, doomism, anxiety, and more as components of a society-wide idea-ecology in its own process of change. Through storytelling and case studies, it proposes meeting that challenge with communications based in stewardship principles: making climate communications mutually supportive, emotionally resourcing, and a site for play and graceful failure.

Combining concepts from linguistic pragmatics, trauma neurology, speculative fiction, standup comedy, humanist philosophy, permaculture, prison abolition organizing, Indigenous relations with place, and lived experience, this session aims to actively locate ourselves within that conceptual ecology as embodied, relational people.

By reconceptualizing climate as an outside-context problem we must actively model and learn on fragile bodies, we'll explore play strategies and prison abolition movement-style experiments as a mode for learning that ecology with and within our neurological and communal limits — a mode to think about and communicate climate action without breaking ourselves or each other.

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