

Rachel Wetts
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Academic Positions

2019 – Acacia Assistant Professor of Environment and Society and Sociology
Brown University

Education

PhD University of California, Berkeley, Sociology, 2019

BA Yale University, Psychology, 2006

Publications

Wetts, Rachel. 2023. “Money and Meaning in the Climate Change Debate: Organizational Power, Cultural Resonance, and the Shaping of American Media Discourse.” *American Journal of Sociology* 129(2): 384-438.

Painter, James, Joshua Ettinger, David Holmes, Loredana Loy, Janaína Pinto, Lucy Richardson, Laura Thomas-Walters, Kjell Vowles, and **Rachel Wetts.** 2023. “Climate Delay Discourses Present in Global Mainstream Television Coverage of the IPCC’s 2021 Report.” *Communications Earth & Environment* 4(1): 118.

- Reported in *Salon*, *The Nieman Journalism Lab*, and *The Conversation*.

Wetts, Rachel. 2020. “In Climate News, Statements from Large Businesses and Opponents of Climate Action Receive Heightened Visibility.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117(32): 19054-19060.

- Reported in *Harper’s Magazine*, *Popular Science*, *MSNBC Daily*, *The Independent*, *Grist*, and *Columbia Journalism Review*

Wetts, Rachel. 2020. “Models and Morals: Elite-Oriented and Value-Neutral Discourse Dominates American Organizations’ Framings of Climate Change.” *Social Forces* 98(3): 1339-1369. Published online: <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soz027>

- Section on Political Sociology’s Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship for a Paper by a Graduate Student Award, 2019

Wetts, Rachel and Robb Willer. 2019. “Who is Called by the Dog Whistle? Experimental Evidence that Racial Resentment and Political Ideology Condition Responses to Racially-Encoded Messages.” *Socius* 5:1-20.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023119866268>

- Reported in *The Huffington Post*, invited op-ed in *Talking Points Memo*
- *Socius*’ Top Downloaded Article of 2019

Haveman, Heather A., and **Rachel Wetts**. 2019. "Contemporary Organizational Theory: The Demographic, Relational, and Cultural Perspectives." *Sociology Compass* 13(3):e12664. Published online: <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12664>

Haveman, Heather A. and **Rachel Wetts**. 2019. "Organizational Theory: From Classical Sociology to the 1970s." *Sociology Compass* 13(3): e12627. Published online: <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12627>

Wetts, Rachel and Robb Willer. 2018. "Privilege on the Precipice: Perceived Racial Status Threats Lead White Americans to Oppose Welfare Programs." *Social Forces* 97(2): 793-822.

- Reported in *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *New York Magazine*, *Vox*, *The Huffington Post*, *Salon*, *Forbes*, and NPR
- Republished in [special virtual issue](#) on Race, Discrimination, Inequality, and Policing (*Social Forces*, July 2020)

Manuscripts Under Review

Wetts, Rachel. "Climate Politics as Status Politics: How Struggles over the Symbolic Worth of Educational Credentials Shape the Climate Change Debate." Under review at *American Sociological Review*.

Wetts, Rachel and Robb Willer. "Antiracism and its Discontents: The Prevalence and Political Influence of Opposition to Antiracism among White Americans." Under review at *American Journal of Sociology*.

Preprint on SocArXiv: <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/xvcf2>.

- Reported in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.

Wetts, Rachel, Painter, James, and Loredana Loy. "The IPCC in the Hybrid Public Sphere: Divergent Responses to Climate Mitigation Solutions in Mainstream and Social Media." Under review at *Climatic Change*.

Garth, Ann, **Rachel Wetts**, and J. Timmons Roberts. "Who Has a Voice in the Energy Transition in the U.S. States? A Fifty-State Study of Local News." Under review at *Climatic Change*.

Working Papers

Willer, Robb, Matthew Feinberg, and **Rachel Wetts**. "Threats to Racial Status Promote Tea Party Support among White Americans." SSRN Working Paper.

- Reported in *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *The Huffington Post*, and NPR.

In Preparation

Wetts, Rachel and Dan Kitson. "Who Believes in Science? A Computational Tool for Identifying Language Elevating or Disputing the Value of Scientific Knowledge"

Loy, Loredana and **Rachel Wetts**. “‘Let Them Eat Kale!’ Appeals to Class-Based Resentment in Conservative Opposition to Climate Change Solutions”

Wetts, Rachel, Hanna Morris, James Painter, Brenda McNally, Mary Sanford, Max Boykoff, Kelly Perry, Emily Diamond, Robin Tschötschel, Loredana Loy, Marc Esteve Del Valle, and Urooj Raja. “Contending with Unfolding Climatic and Anti-Democratic Threats: Challenges, Transformations, and New Directions for Climate Communication Research”

Selected Conference Presentations and Invited Talks (*=*invited*)

“Climate Politics as Status Politics: How Struggles over the Symbolic Worth of Educational Credentials Shape the Climate Change Debate.”

2023 – Sociology Climate Pipeline Conference, Cambridge, MA

“Money and Meaning in the Climate Change Debate: Cultural Resonance, Organizational Power, and the Shaping of American Media Discourse.”

2022 – Climate Social Science Network, virtual research talk*

2020 – American Sociological Association Annual Conference, virtual event

“The Prevalence and Political Influence of Opposition to Antiracism among White Americans.”

2022 – American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA

“Critical Studies of Climate Media, Discourse, and Power: Contestation around the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change.”

2022 – Climate Social Science Network 2022 Conference, Bonn, Germany

“Activating and Harnessing White Racial Prejudice in the 2020 US Election.”

2021 – American Sociological Association Annual Conference, virtual event*

2020 – Democracy and Its Limits: The United States in Comparative Perspective, Conference of the German Association for American Studies, virtual event*

“Models and Morals: Elite-Oriented and Value-Neutral Discourse Dominates American Organizations’ Framings of Climate Change.”

2018 – Cornell University, Ithaca, NY*

2018 – Brown University, Providence, RI*

2018 – University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN*

2017 – American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada

“Who is Called by the Dog Whistle? Political Ideology Conditions Responses to Racially-Encoded Messages.”

2018 – American Sociological Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA

“Anxiety and Austerity: A Group Position Account of White Americans’ Opposition to Welfare.”

2016 – Society for Personality and Social Psychology Annual Convention, San Diego, CA

2014 – Group Processes Mini-Conference, Stanford, CA

Awards and Fellowships

2021-2024	Climate Social Science Network, Working Group Grant
2023	Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching
2022-2023	Cogut Institute for the Humanities Faculty Fellowship
2021	Institute at Brown for Environment and Society Research Seed Grant
2020-2021	Faculty Affiliate, Weatherhead Research Cluster on Comparative Inequality and Inclusion, Harvard University
2019	Section on Political Sociology's Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship for a Paper by a Graduate Student Award
2018	American Sociological Association Student Forum Travel Award
2016-2017	Dissertation Completion Fellowship
2016	Lowenthal Fellowship
2015	Graduate Summer Research Grant
2013	UC Berkeley Department of Sociology Research Grant
2012	Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award
2012	Berkeley Social Justice Fellowship
2006	Psi Chi Honor Society for Psychology

Teaching & Mentoring

Courses Taught

Climate Media, Discourse, and Power (Brown University, Fall 2023)
Computational Methods for Social Scientists (Brown University, Spring 2021, Fall 2021)
Methods for Interdisciplinary Environmental Research (Brown University, Fall 2020, Fall 2021)
Organizations and Society (Brown University, Spring 2020, Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2023)
Social Psychology of Inequality (UC Berkeley, Fall 2015)

Ph.D. Student Advising

Jasper Cattell (Second Reader of Master's Thesis, Brown University, 2024)
Daniel Kitson (Second Reader of Master's Thesis, Brown University, 2022-2023)

Raquel Douglas (Dissertation Committee Member, Brown University, 2022-Present)
Bryan Natividad (Dissertation Committee Member, Brown University, 2022-Present)
Amy Xu (Dissertation Committee Member, Brown University, 2023-Present)
Archana Ramanujam (Advisor, Brown University, 2021-2023)
Loredana Loy (Outside Member of Dissertation Committee, Cornell University, 2019-2023)

Undergraduate Theses

Callie Rabinovitz (Thesis Advisor, Brown University, 2023-2024)
Olivia Howe (Second Reader, Brown University, 2022)
Finn Lowden (Second Reader, Brown University, 2022)
Cole Triedman (Thesis Advisor, Brown University, 2021)
Katherine Jimenez (Second Reader, Brown University, 2020)
Yik Hei Ho (Graduate Student Mentor, UC Berkeley, Fall 2013)

Other Advising and Mentorship

Leadership Alliance Summer Research-Early Identification Program (Faculty Advisor, Brown University, Summer 2022)

Service

Professional Service

Selection Committee Member, Section on Political Sociology's Best Graduate Student Paper Award, 2020

Ad-hoc Reviewer: *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Climatic Change*, *Humanity and Society*, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Journal of Language and Politics*, *Nature Climate Change*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *Policy Studies Journal*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *Social Currents*, *Social Forces*, *Social Problems*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *Sociological Forum*, *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, *Time-Sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences*

Member: American Sociological Association, Climate Social Science Network

Co-Chair: Climate Social Science Network, Working Group on Critical Studies of Climate Media, Discourse, and Power

Service to the University: Brown University

Search Committee Member, Recruitment of Watson Institute Postdoctoral Fellow, 2021-2022

Advisory Board Member, Data Science Initiative, 2021-present

First-Year Advisor, 2020-2021

Second-Year Advisor, 2021-2022

Independent Concentration Advisor (Sustainability, Institutions, and Organizations), 2019-present

Departmental Service: Sociology, Brown University

Member, Executive Committee, 2021-Present

Member, Organizational Studies Committee, 2023-Present

Member, Graduate Committee, 2020-2022

Search Committee Member, Joint Recruitment of Assistant Professor of Sociology and Data Science Initiative, 2019-2020

Member, Preliminary Exam Committees in Political Sociology, Environmental Sociology, Cultural Sociology, and Organizational and Economic Sociology, 2019-present

Departmental Service: Institute at Brown for Environment and Society, Brown University

Search Committee Member, Assistant Professor in Environmental History, Fall 2023

Co-Chair, Environmental Justice Seminar Series, Fall 2020

Member, IBES Seed Grant Selection Committee, Spring 2020

Member, Environmental Studies Honors Committee, Spring 2020

Concentration Advisor, 2020-present

Other Research Experience

2013 Social Science Research Council – Consultant

2007 – 2010 Vera Institute of Justice – Research Analyst (2008 – 2010), Research Assistant (2007 – 2008)