

BRITTA A. CLARK

CONTACT	424 B, 26 Oxford St Cambridge, MA, 02138 brittaclark@g.harvard.edu (+1) 802-282-7635
SPECIALIZATIONS	Political Philosophy, Climate Change Ethics, Ethics of Technology, Environmental Ethics
COMPETENCIES	Philosophy of Economics, Applied Ethics, Social Philosophy
EMPLOYMENT	Harvard Solar Geoengineering Research Project Postdoctoral Fellow September 2024-2026 Bowdoin College Adjunct Instructor Spring 2025
EDUCATION	Harvard University PhD in Philosophy, 2025 Dissertation Title: Technology and Transition Committee: Lucas Stanczyk, Gina Schouten, Stephen Gardiner (University of Washington) University of Otago Master's with Distinction in Philosophy, 2018 Thesis: 'Picking What Persists: Sociocultural Natural Capital and Intergenerational Justice' Bates College Philosophy and Environmental Studies, 2016 Education Minor <i>Magna Cum Laude</i> Honors Thesis: 'The Political Limits of Deep Ecology'
PUBLICATIONS	'How to Argue About Solar Geoengineering' <i>Journal of Applied Philosophy</i> , 2023 'Neutrality, Nature, and Intergenerational Justice' <i>Environmental Politics</i> , 2021 'Making Teaching Count' (chapter in an edited collection) In: <i>From Preparation to Practice: The Art of Teaching Philosophy</i> , Bloomsbury Press, Co-authored with Gina Schouten, 2023
BOOK REVIEWS	Review of Robin Attfield's 'The Ethics of the Climate Crisis' <i>Environmental Ethics</i> , 2025 (In press)
PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY	'Next Questions on The Climate Philosopher's Agenda' Blog of the APA, 2022

- PRIZES & FELLOWSHIPS
- 2023/24 Harvard Philosophy Department Bowen Prize
Annual award for best essay in moral or political philosophy
 - 2022-23 Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Ethics Graduate Fellowship
 - 2021 Harvard Solar Geoengineering Research Group Graduate Fellowship
 - 2018-19 Fulbright Graduate Research Fellowship, University of Otago, New Zealand
 - 2022 Sissela Bok Ethics and Population Research Prize, Harvard University
 - 2016 Williams Prize for Best Environmental Studies Thesis, Bates College
- TALKS & PANELS
- ‘What’s Wrong with Cooling Credits?’
2025 Resources for the Future Solar Geoengineering Workshop⁺
 - ‘Ethical Dimensions of the Energy Transition’
2025 Harvard Center for the Environment Fellows Dinner*
 - ‘Solar Geoengineering’
2025 Harvard Climate Action Week Panelist*
 - ‘Solar Geoengineering and Addiction’
2024 Princeton University Geoengineering in Crisis Workshop⁺
 - ‘Negative Emissions and Excuses’
2024 Bates College Colloquium
2024 University of Washington Program on Climate Change Meeting*
2023 Politics, Philosophy, and Economics Annual Meeting⁺
 - ‘How to Argue About Solar Geoengineering’
2022 Harvard University Degrees Initiative Solar Geoengineering Science Research Residency*
2021 Brown University Climate Pipeline Project Conference⁺
 - ‘Solar Geoengineering and the Speed of the Energy Transition’
2023 Harvard University Ethics and Solar Geoengineering Conference
 - ‘Should Each Generation Pass On As Much as It Received?’
2023 University of Lisbon Substantive Future Rights Conference⁺
2022 University of Washington Environmental Ethics Symposium*

Conference participation marked with an asterisk (*) indicates participation was by invitation.

Conference participation marked with a plus (+) was invited following blind review of submitted papers or abstracts.

‘Picking What Persists: Sociocultural Natural Capital and Intergenerational Justice’

2017 New Zealand Association of Philosophers Conference⁺

‘Legal Identity and Intergenerational Justice’

2018 Victoria University Wellington Legal Identity Symposium⁺

COMMENTS

Comments on Stephen Gardiner and Catriona McKinnon’s ‘On Blinding Future Generations to the Injustices We Inflict Upon Them’

2022 Pacific American Philosophy Association Conference

Comments on David O’Brien’s ‘The Explanatory Challenge for Egalitarianism’

2023 Edmond and Lily Safra Center Fellows in Residence Seminar

Comments on Dimitri Halikas’ ‘Liberalism, Depoliticization, and Political Rule’

2023 Edmond and Lily Safra Center Graduate Fellows Seminar

Comments at Nicola Kemp’s ‘The Ethics of Failing to Make Happy People’

2020 Harvard/MIT Graduate Conference

TEACHING

As Instructor of Record (Responsible for course design, instruction, and grading)

Climate Change Ethics

Bowdoin College, Spring 2025

Justice and the Future

Harvard University, Spring 2024

Philosophical Foundations of Climate Change Policy,

Middlebury College, Winter Term 2024

What on (and off) Earth Should We Do About Climate Change?

Harvard Pre-College Summer Program, 2023, 2024, 2025

Two-week program for advanced high school students

Sports Ethics

Harvard Pre-College Summer Program, 2024

As a Teaching Fellow (Responsible for discussion sections, holding office hours, and grading)

Economic Justice

Harvard University, Spring 2022

Ethics and Climate Change

Harvard University, Spring 2021 (Online)

Educational Justice

Harvard University, Fall 2020 (Online)

Introductions to Ethics

University of Otago 2018

Invited Guest Lectures in Undergraduate Courses

‘Ethics and Negative Emissions’

Harvard University, Topics in Political Philosophy, 2025

Bates College, Climate Solutions, 2024
 ‘Nature and Intergenerational Justice’
 Bates College, Environmental Ethics, 2020
 Trinity University, Environmental Ethics, 2022
 ‘Degrowth and the Environment’
 College of Charleston, Environmental Ethics, 2022
 ‘How to Argue About Solar Geoengineering’
 Harvard University, Philosophy of Technology, 2023

Certification of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard University, 2020, 2021, 2022

ORGANIZING & SERVICE Co-organizer, Pacific APA Climate Hub 2026

Panelist, Central APA Minorities and Philosophy and Philosophers for Sustainability 2025

Co-organizer, Harvard University Climate and Environmental Ethics Workshop Fall 2024 & Spring 2025

Philosophy Department Graduate Student Representative, 2022-2024

Lead organizer of the Ethics and Solar Geoengineering Conference at Harvard University, 2023

Two day international and interdisciplinary conference with 18 speakers

Lead Organizer, Harvard Minorities and Philosophy Chapter, 2018-2021

Lead Organizer, Philosophers for Sustainability Minorities and Philosophy Workshop, 2021

Reviewer for *Environmental Politics, Ethics, Politics, and Society, Social Theory and Practice*

Organizer, department reading groups: Theory of Justice, Marx’s Theory of History, Economic Growth and Degrowth

GRADUATE
 COURSEWORK
 *INDICATES AUDIT

<i>Course</i>	<i>Instructor</i>
Sociology of Climate Change	Jason Beckfield
Instructional Styles in Philosophy (course on pedagogy)	Gina Schouten and Cheryl Chen
Political Morality of Social Reproduction	Lucas Stanczyk
Plato’s Gorgias	James Doyle
Normative Categories	Selim Berker
Theories of Ideology and False Consciousness	Michael Rosen
Kant’s Ethical Theory	Christine Korsgaard

Topics in Political Philosophy (focus on Egalitarianism)	Gina Schouten
Topics in Political Philosophy (focus on intergenerational justice and social reproduction)	Lucas Stanczyk
Modal Logic	Mark Richard
British Empiricism	Alison Simmons
Historical Injustice	Emilio Mora
Epistemology	Selim Berker
*Topics in Political Philosophy (focus on Structural Injustice)	Gina Schouten
*A Theory of Justice	Gina Schouten and Tommie Shelby
*Modern Moral Philosophy	Christine Korsgaard

TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSITION
DISSERTATION ABSTRACT
Britta Clark

2024 was the hottest year in recorded human history. As emissions continue to rise, governments are increasingly turning to carbon dioxide removal (CDR) and solar geoengineering (SG) as tools to address the climate crisis. Carbon dioxide removal aims to take CO₂ out of the atmosphere after it has been emitted, and solar geoengineering aims to lower global average surface temperatures by reflecting a small amount of sunlight back into space. My dissertation, *Technology and Transition*, is motivated by a pressing policy question: how should we think about the role of these technologies in the energy transition? In answering this question, my dissertation investigates the broader topic of how technological development changes the demands of political morality.

Debates over CDR and SG have been primarily dominated by scientists, often stalling out at empirical questions about whether the technologies will work at scale. I aim to move beyond this impasse by showing that deep questions about the role of these technologies in the energy transition remain even for the strident ‘techno-optimist.’ Moreover, I show that even *arriving* at these questions requires significant work unearthing the assumptions that organize contemporary discussion of CDR and SG. Well-worn debates over these technologies already embed heavily loaded structuring assumptions that deserve open discussion.

One common error involves making inconsistent assumptions about the future use of these technologies. In “How to Argue About Solar Geoengineering,” published in the *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, I argue that the SG debate is rife with this mistake. Proponents often argue that SG is necessary because the level of global coordination required for a rapid energy transition is unlikely. Yet those same proponents go on to assume that global coordination is possible when it comes to the governance of SG itself. On the other hand, critics often emphasize that a rapid, just, and globally coordinated energy transition is still possible. But they also usually remain skeptical of a similarly just and coordinated deployment of SG. Parties on both sides of the solar geoengineering debate thus tend to make inconsistent assumptions that favor their antecedently preferred policy option.

A second error involves failing to recognize the purposes that carbon dioxide removal and solar geoengineering are meant to advance in orthodox climate policy. It can appear as if there is consensus on at least one dimension of this question: most commentators go to great pains to emphasize that SG and CDR are not to be used to emit *more* planet-warming CO₂. I argue that this apparent consensus is a sham. According to economists relying on Integrated Assessment Models, new technologies should delay emissions reductions whenever doing so reduces costs. Meanwhile, according to climate activists, new technologies are no excuse to emit more CO₂. Climate ethicists often side with this latter view, taking for granted that there is a set amount that we can emit moving forward (a ‘carbon budget’), and moving quickly to questions about how to *distribute* that budget.

Is the promise of solar geoengineering and carbon dioxide removal a reason to emit *more*? Neither the ‘economists’ nor the ‘activists’ get the answer to this question right. In response to the activist’s view, I argue that we should be open to the idea that new technologies might change how much societies are entitled to emit. Against the economist’s picture, I challenge the view that the central value we should look toward to determine the role of these technologies is cost-effectiveness. Instead, we should think more broadly about the different purposes these technologies could advance, and what underlying values could justify those purposes. The remainder of my dissertation elaborates and assesses some candidate purposes. One such purpose is fairness; a second is economic growth; a third is efficiency; and a fourth involves responding to projected future wrongdoing.