

RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE IN THE ERA OF ECOLOGICAL GRIEF



Sarah Law
Department of Sociology

BACKGROUND

Ecological grief is understood as the psychological response to the experienced and anticipated losses due to climate change (Cunsolo and Ellis, 2018). This study conceptualizes ecological grief as a socio-politically and culturally informed response to the climate crisis.

THEORIES AND FRAMEWORKS

- **Affect Theory:** frames ecological grief as *cycle of practice* (Ahmed, 2013) - an embodied response that moves *with* you as you witness and anticipate climate change related losses (Cunsolo and Ellis, 2018).
- **Desire-Based Framework:** analyzes social problems in a systemic lens to explore how social research can document both harms and hope for social change (Tuck, 2009).
- **Militant Research Framework:** recognizes the benefits of an activist/academic research position to create accurate and meaningful social movement data (Chesters, 2012).

RESEARCH METHODS

1. Collected data from interviews with **six climate justice activists** in Vancouver.
 - ✍ Working in academic, corporate, grassroots, and non-profit contexts
2. Coded transcript data in NVivo to conduct thematic analysis.

SIX STAGES OF ECOLOGICAL GRIEF



Each stage of ecological grief *shapes* how we understand the climate crisis as a systemic problem that requires mourning ideas of the future and deeply held beliefs about our social realities.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- **The relationship between grief and labour.** Interviewees who are disconnected from community and grassroots work had more difficulties answering questions about their imaginations and hopes for the future.
- Resilience requires **experiencing conflicting emotions simultaneously** that challenge the labelling of emotions as negative or positive. Grief is not a clean journey to completion that ends with acceptance.
- Resistance is **the belief that climate justice goals are possible.** It requires the use of imagination as a form of political protest to generate visions of new realities for transformation (Moore, 2020).

DISCUSSION

A preliminary finding in this study is how **climate denialism can present itself as a form of ecological grief.** Ecological grief is a relatively new phenomenon and has ties to terms such as *solastalgia* and *climate anxiety*. Both require further research that have potential for climate communication.

CITED SOURCES

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Sarah Law



sarah_law@sfu.ca

