

Colloquium 02/14/25



“The Genesis of Care: Knowledge-Emotion Connections, Extension of the Self, and Care for Nature at an Urban Nature Centre”

Geography Lecturer Tyler Bateman

Where: Sociology Commons SSCI #1061

When: 1:30-2:30

Bio

Tyler Bateman is an environmental and cultural sociologist with interests in the links between social inequalities and environmental protection, the development of environmental stewardship behavior, and community-based research. His work revises theories of the development of care through research that displays a deep appreciation for both discourse and the embodiment of non-declarative culture. He uses case study, qualitative, and computational text analysis approaches to understand meaning in environmental policy and news discourse, programs that connect people in nature, how social practices take hold in people’s biographies, and movements for decolonization. He received a Bachelor’s of Science in Environmental and Conservation Science from the University of Alberta in 2014, and he will be receiving his doctoral degree from the University of Toronto in March 2025. The journals he has published in include *Poetics* and *Qualitative Sociology*. His research has been supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of Toronto School of Cities.

Summary

This talk addresses how engaging in social practices leads to care. Specifically, an unsolved puzzle is why the transition from engaging in a social practice to care occurs. How do people become increasingly invested in a way of thinking and acting, leading to care? The talk builds on a distinction between caring “about” and caring “for” social entities, and on recent work on defining investment as the extension of the self. I argue that we can better understand why people care by examining how knowledge and emotion link with each other and how these links give people opportunities to extend their sense of self over people, birds, sports teams, and other entities. I demonstrate the utility of this framework with data from a 5-year ethnographic study I conducted at an urban nature centre in Toronto, Ontario, using adults’ retrospective accounts and participant observation data with children and adolescents and to illustrate how links between knowledge and emotion lead to opportunities for self-extension, and how that self-extension leads to care.