

"A climate of injustice: global inequality and climate change - vulnerability, responsibility, and action"

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Climate change is all about inequality: in who has caused the problem, in who is suffering worst and first from the consequences, and in who is doing something about it. Below that injustice lies discontent over global inequality in wealth, which dampens cooperative efforts and requires striking a new global bargain that combines environmental protection, development and trade.

In this talk, Professor Roberts will consider climate inequality from the perspective of world-system theory, reporting results from his new book "A Climate of Injustice: Global Inequality, North-South Politics, and Climate Policy" (2007, MIT Press, co-authored with Bradley Parks). The presentation documents new measures of fatalities and homelessness from climate disasters, systematizes data on "emissions inequality," and rates of participation in environmental treaties. The work reveals the importance of how nations are incorporated into the global economy, and what steps will be needed to improve their situations and their willingness to address climate change.