

Interest Statement, David A. Call

I am a Ph.D. student who examines the societal impacts of weather, and I feel that my background and prior research qualify me for the WAS*IS workshops. Attending these workshops will greatly enhance my research by fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration with others interested in weather and society issues.

My multi-disciplinary background is one reason why I feel well-qualified for these workshops. I earned a B.S. in meteorology from Penn State and an M.A. in geography from Syracuse University. My meteorology degree helps me understand the underlying physical processes behind the weather, while my geography degree has aided me in understanding the social factors that influence the effects of weather. I also have communications experience as a broadcast meteorologist. From 1998 until 2002, I worked full-time for WJET-TV in Erie, Pennsylvania, and since then I have worked part-time for WSTM-TV in Syracuse, New York. Based on my experiences at these television stations, I have learned that effective communication of weather information is an integral part of an effective weather forecast.

My past research also qualifies me for the workshops. For my thesis, I studied the impacts of major snowstorms on large cities in Upstate New York. I found that while differences in snowstorms themselves affect their impacts, variations in government response, behavior of the general public, and influences from meteorologists and the media can be just as significant. A article detailing my thesis findings will appear soon in the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* (tentatively December 2005). My dissertation research will likely further this work, and I hope to defend my proposal in October.

Because of my background in multiple fields, I can choose from several different career paths. Regardless of whether I become a tenure-track faculty member at a university or a full-time broadcast meteorologist again, this workshop will help my career. Ideally, I would find a way to combine both positions, or work full-time in career and part-time in the other (as I do now). Academia is increasingly recognizing the value of cross-disciplinary collaboration, and working with researchers in other fields will broaden my perspective and improve my research. Broadcast meteorologists are an important link in explaining weather warnings to the general public, and a better understanding of how weather affects the public will allow for better weather communication.

While advances in meteorological knowledge and computing are beneficial to improving weather forecasts, I believe that expanding our understanding of forecasts users is also essential. By attending these workshops, I hope to learn more about how members of the general public react to weather warnings, and how these reactions mitigate, or exacerbate, the impacts of severe weather. To conclude, I believe that my schooling, research, and experience in meteorology, geography, and communications qualify me for the WAS*IS workshops, and I hope to be selected for this outstanding opportunity.