

Lee Ahern

Associate Professor
Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications
Department of Advertising and Public Relations
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Education

- 2008 Ph.D. in Mass Communications, The Pennsylvania State University
1987 Master's Degree in Journalism, University of Wisconsin-Madison
1982 Bachelor's Degree in Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Refereed Journal Articles (21)

- Ahern, L. (2021, January 30). [Review of the book *Communicating the Future: Solutions for Environment, Economy, and Democracy*, by W. Lance Bennett.] *International Journal of Communication*, 15, (976-978).
- Grantham, S., Ahern, L. & Connolly-Ahern, C. (2020). HPV Prevention is not just for girls: An examination of college-aged-students' adoption of HPV vaccines. *Health Marketing Quarterly*, 371 (3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07359683.2020.1802936>.
- Connolly-Ahern, C., Ahern, L., Coman, I.A., Molina Davila, M.D., Davis, S.E. & Cabrera-Baukus, M. (2019) The Cost of the Veil: Visual Communication Impacts of Hijab on News Judgments, *Mass Communication and Society*, 22(6), 851-871
- Myrick, J. G., Ahern, L., Shao, R., & Conlin, J. (2019). Technology names and celebrity endorsement effects of autonomous vehicle promotional messages: Mechanisms and moderators. *Science Communication*. 41(1), 38-65.
- Shen, F., Ahern, L., & Han, J. (2017). Environmental orientations and news coverage: Examining the impact of individual differences on narrative news. *International Journal of Communication*. 11(2017), 1-14.
- Hoewe, J., & Ahern, L. (2017). First-person effects of emotional and informational messages in strategic environmental communications campaigns. *Environmental Communication*. DOI: 10.1080/17524032.2017.1371050
- Ahern, L., Connolly-Ahern, C. & Hoewe, J. (2016). Worldviews, issue knowledge, and the pollution of a local science information environment. *Science Communication*, 38(2), 228-250.
- Ahern, L. & Formentin, M. (2016). More is less: Gatekeeping and coverage bias of climate change in US television news. *Electronic News* 10(1), 45-65.
- Kim, K., Schmierbach, M., Bellur, S., Chung, M. Y., Fraustino, J. D., Dardis, F. & Ahern, (2015). Is it a sense of autonomy, control, or attachment? Exploring the effects of in-game customization on game enjoyment, *Computers In Human Behavior*, 48, 695-705.

Refereed Journal Articles (continued)

- Dardis, F., Schmierbach, M., Ahern, L., Fraustino, J., Bellur, S., Brooks, J. & Johnson, J. (2015). Effects of in-game Virtual Direct Experience (VDE) on reactions to real-world brands. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 21(3), 313-334.
- Wang, W. & Ahern, L. (2015). Acting on surprise: Emotional response, multiple-channel information seeking and vaccination in the H1N1 flu epidemic. *Social Influence*, 10(3), 137-148.
- Connolly-Ahern, C. & Ahern, L. (2015). Agenda-tapping: Conceptualizing the relationship between news coverage, fund raising and the First Amendment. *Journal of Non-Profit & Public Sector Marketing*, 27, 1-22.
- Shen, F., Ahern, L. & Baker, M. (2014). Stories that count: Influence of news narratives on issue attitudes. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 91(1), 98-117.
- Ahern, L., Bortree, D.S. & Nutter-Smith, A. (2012). Key trends in environmental advertising across thirty years in National Geographic Magazine. *Public Understanding of Science*, 17(2), 77-91.
- Bortree, D.S., Ahern, L., Dou, X. Smith, A.N. (2012). Framing environmental advocacy: A study of 30 years of advertising in National Geographic Magazine. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*. 17(2), 77-91.
- Ahern, L. (2012). The role of media system development in the emergence of postmaterialist values and environmental concern: A cross-national analysis. *Social Science Quarterly*. 93(2), 538-557.
- Bortree, D.S., Ahern, L., Nutter-Smith, A., Dou, X. (2011). Framing environmental responsibility: 30 years of CSR messages in National Geographic Magazine. *Public Relations Review*.
- Grantham, S., Ahern, L. & Connolly-Ahern, C. (2011). Amplifying risk to activate protection motivation: Merck's Gardasil campaign. *Communication Research Reports*, 28(4), 318-326.
- Ahern, L. (2011). The current environment of the theory-practice divide. *Science Communication*, 33(1), 120-129.
- Yu, N., Ahern, L., Connolly-Ahern, C., & Shen, F.Y. (2010). Communicating the risks of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Effects of message framing and exemplification. *Health Communication*, 25(8), 692-699.
- Connolly-Ahern, C., Ahern, L., & Bortree, D. (2010). The effectiveness of stratified constructed week sampling for content analysis of electronic news source archives: AP Newswire, Business Wire and PR Newswire. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 86(4), 862-883.

Book Chapters (3)

Ahern, L. & Connolly-Ahern, C. (2019). Understanding and managing mass media effects on public perceptions of science issues such as invasive species management. In Paul Martin et al. (Eds.) *Community Based Control of Invasive Species* (pp. 211-228). Clayton, Australia: CSIRO Publishing.

Connolly-Ahern, C. & Ahern, L. (2013). Behind the green curtain: Constructing the green consumer with contemporary environmental advertising. In Matthew P. McAllister & Emily West (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Advertising and Promotional Culture* (pp. 420-434). New York: Routledge.

Ahern, L. (2012). Evaluating the ethicality of green advertising: Toward an extended analytical framework. In Lee Ahern & Denise S. Bortree (Eds.), *Talking Green: Exploring Contemporary Issues in Environmental Communication* (pp.171-194). New York: Peter Lang

Books

Ahern, L. & Bortree, D.S. (Eds.) (2012). *Talking green: Exploring contemporary issues in environmental communication*. New York: Peter Lang

Conference Papers (25)

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| CRS22, June 2022 | Ahern, L., Conlin, J., Norman, M. & Bao, J.— <i>The Problem of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed in Pennsylvania: Stakeholder Perspectives and Media Frames</i> . Under review. Chesapeake Community Research Symposium 2022, June 6-8, Annapolis, MD |
| IAMCR, June 2018 | Connolly-Ahern, C. & Ahern, L.— <i>The cost of the veil: Effect of visual and verbal cues of otherness in mediated news stories</i> , Eugene, OR |
| IAMCR, June 2018 | Connolly-Ahern, C., Ahern, L., Davis, S., Lopez-Urbe, M. & Patch, H.— <i>Buzz Words: Beekeeper Communication Habits and Implications for Hive Health</i> , Eugene, OR |
| ICA, May 2018 | Connolly-Ahern, C., Ahern, L., Brennan, R.A., Diddi, P., Davis, S.E., Shea, M.E., & Bingaman, R.B.— <i>Pond to table: Gauging consumer acceptance of wastewater derived protein through psychological distance and message framing</i> . Presented to the Environmental Communication Division, ICA, Prague, Czech Republic. |
| COCE, June 2017 | Ahern, L.—“Sustainability” in American Public Consciousness, Leicester. UK |
| IAMCR, July 2016 | Connolly-Ahern, C. & Ahern, L.— <i>Same Script, Different Reading: Activist vs. Non-activist Audience Attention to an Environmental Documentary</i> , Leicester, UK |
| AEJMC, Aug. 2015 | Kumble, S., Ahern, L., Aviles, J., & Lee, M.— <i>The Effects of Message Framing and Anthropomorphism on Empathy, Implicit and Explicit Green Attitudes</i> , San Francisco, CA |

Conference Papers (continued)

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| COCE, June 2015 | Ahern, L.— <i>Science Communication: Boundaries and Dimensions</i> , Boulder, CO |
| ICA, May 2015 | Ahern, L., Connolly-Ahern, C. & Hoewe, J.— <i>Worldviews, issue knowledge and the pollution of a local science information environment</i> —Paper accepted for presentation by the ICA Environmental Communication Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico. |
| ICA, May 2015 | Connolly-Ahern, C. & Ahern, L.— <i>Water Blues: Qualitative reactions to a science documentary</i> —Paper accepted for presentation by the ICA Environmental Communication Division post-conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico. |
| AEJMC, Aug. 2014 | Shen, F., Ahern, L. & Han, J.— <i>Environmental orientations and news coverage: Examining the impact of individual differences and narrative news</i> —Paper accepted for presentation by the AEJMC Mass Communication & Society Division, Montreal, Canada. |
| AEJMC, Aug. 2014 | Hoewe, J. & Ahern, L.— <i>First-Person Effects of Emotional and Informational Messages in Strategic Environmental Communications Campaigns</i> —Paper accepted for presentation by the AEJMC Communicating Science, Health, Environment and Risk Division, Montreal, Canada. |
| ICA, May 2014 | Ahern, L. & Hoewe, J.— <i>Evidence of convergent and divergent validity of implicit and explicit measures of environmental attitudes</i> —Paper accepted for presentation by the ICA Environmental Communication Division, Seattle, WA. |
| AEJMC, Aug. 2013 | Ahern, L. & Schmierbach, M.— <i>Political identity as a moderator of third-person comedy news effects</i> —Paper accepted for presentation by the AEJMC Political Communication Interest Group, Washington, DC. |
| ICA, June 2013 | Ahern, L.— <i>Perception, reality and the prevalence of environmental messages in US TV advertising</i> —Paper presented to the ICA Environmental Communication Interest Group, London, UK. |
| AEJMC, Aug. 2012 | Ahern, L. & Formentin, M.— <i>More is less: Gatekeeping and coverage bias of climate change in US television news</i> —Paper presented to the AEJMC Communicating Science, Health, Environment and Risk Division, Chicago, IL |
| AAA, March 2012 | Dardis, F., Schmierbach, M., Ahern, L., Fraustin, J., Bellur, S., Brooks, S. & Johnson, J.— <i>The effects of in-game product performance on recall of and attitudes toward the real-world brand</i> —Paper presented to the American Academy of Advertising, Myrtle Beach, SC. |
| NCA, Nov. 2011 | Bortree, D.S., Ahern L.A., Nutter-Smith, A., Dou, X.— <i>Framing corporate environmental responsibility: A study of 30 years of CSR messages</i> —Paper presented to the NCA Public Relations Division, Orlando, FL. |

Conference Papers (continued)

- COCE, June 2011 Ahern, L.—*Toward a framework for the ethical evaluation of green advertisements*—Paper presented to the Conference on Communication and the Environment, El Paso, TX.
- ICA, May 2011 Ahern, L. & Shen, F.Y.—*The impacts of power, approach orientation and message frames on persuasion in health communications*—Paper presented to the ICA Health Division, Boston, MA.
- ICA, May 2011 Wang, W. & Ahern, L.—*Predicting H1N1 vaccination: The impacts of emotional response and information source choice on persuasion*—Paper presented to the ICA Health Division, Boston, MA.
- ARNOVA, Nov. 2010 Bortree, D.S., Ahern L.A., Nutter-Smith, A.—*Framing the environmental movement: A study of 30 years of environmental advocacy messages*—Paper presented to the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, Alexandria, VA.
- AEJMC, Aug. 2010 Ahern, L., Bortree, D.S. & Nutter-Smith, A.—*Changing shades of green: 30 years of environmental advertisements in National Geographic Magazine*—Paper presented to the AEJMC Advertising Division, Denver, CO.
- AEJMC, Aug. 2010 Grantham, S., Ahern, L. & Connolly-Ahern, C.—*Amplifying risk to activate protection motivation: Merck's Gardasil campaign*—Paper presented to the AEJMC Science Communication Interest Group, Denver, CO.
- AEJMC, Aug. 2009 Ahern, L.—*Psychological responses to environmental communications: The roles of environmental concern, message issue distance, efficacy and idealistic construals*—Paper presented to the AEJMC Science Communication Interest Group, Boston, MA.
- AEJMC, Aug. 2008 Yu, N., Ahern, L., Shen, F.Y. & Connolly-Ahern, C.—*Communicating the risks of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Effects of message framing and exemplification*—Paper presented to the AEJMC Science Communication Interest Group, Chicago, IL.
- PRSA, Oct. 2007 Ahern, L.—*Reconstructing Ivy Lee: A postmodern man in the age of reform*—Paper presented at the PRSA Betsy Plank Graduate Research Competition (won top paper award), Philadelphia, PA.
- AEJMC, Aug. 2007 Ahern, L., Pfaff, M., Rutter, P., & Johnson, C.—*Media bias in the eye of the beholder: Issue importance, issue support and political identity*—Paper presented to the AEJMC Mass Communications and Society Division, Washington, DC.

Selected Other Publications and Contributions

Column published on GreenBiz.com (October 7, 2014). *Who cares if 97 percent of scientists agree on climate change?* <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2014/10/07/scientific-consensus-loser-climate-policy-advocates>

Invited article for *SEJournal*, official publication of the Society of Environmental Journalists (In press). *Adopting Global Warming Adaptation Messages*.

Column published on GreenBiz.com (February 11, 2013). *Why emotion beats reason in green marketing*. <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2013/02/11/emotional-vs-rational-green-marketing>

Featured in column by Joel Makower published on GreenBiz.com (July 25, 2012). *Is green marketing a luxury for good economic times?* <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2012/07/25/green-marketing-luxury-good-economic-times>

Column on Earth Day published in CommPro.biz (April 23, 2012). Republished by request on GreenBiz.com (May 11, 2012). *Earth Day's over: Now let's get serious about the battle for Brand Green*. <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2012/05/11/green-branding-battle>

Recognition, promotions and Awards

Fulbright US Scholar Award 2021-2025

US Department of State, Bureau of Cultural and Educational Affairs

Article of the Year Award Winner 2016

CommSHER Division, AEJMC

Director, Science Communication Program

Penn State College of Communications

Coordinator, Digital Media Trends and Analytics minor

Penn State colleges of Communications and Information Systems and Technology

Member, Advisory Board

New Marketing Institute, New York, NY

Program Manager, Sustainability Communication Initiative

Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication

Senior Researcher

Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication

Betsy Plank Top Graduate Student Paper Award

Public Relations Society of America International Conference, October 2007

College & University Service

April 2019	Presenter, Penn State Sustainability Institute's Sustainability Showcase
2018 2019	Member, Department Tenure and Promotion Committee
October 2018	Panel Moderator, screening of <i>The Most Unknown</i> , sponsored by Penn State's College of Earth and Mineral Sciences, Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, Center for Exoplanets and Habitable Worlds, and Institutes of Energy and the Environment
October 2018	Presenter on Science Communication, Penn State Arts & Design Research Incubator brownbag luncheon
2017, ongoing	Member, Stewarding our Planet's Resources Strategic Planning Committee
2017, ongoing	Advisory Board Member, Marcellus Center for Outreach and Research
2016, ongoing	Member, Microbiome Center Planning Committee
2016, ongoing	Member, Center for Agricultural Innovation-Social, Ethical, Legal and Ethical Implications
November 2016	Presenter, Office for Research Protections Research Ethics conference
November 2016	Presenter, Microbiome Planning Committee brownbag luncheon
November 2016	Organizer, PSIEE Science Communication Month science communication conference
October 2016	Presenter, Penn State Center for Science and the Schools conference
November 2015	Member, Energy Policy Working Group, Energy University initiative
October 2015	Organizer, PSIEE Science Communication Month science communication panel
September 2015	Review Panel Member, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, Water for Agriculture Challenge Area
September 2015	Panelist, Penn State Sustainability Institute screening of <i>Merchants of Doubt</i> , State Theatre
October 2014	Invited Panelist, Graduate Student Career Exploration Workshop, "Developing Your Professional Self"
May 2014	Penn's Woods Project Fellow, Incorporating Sustainability across the Curriculum
April 2014	Invited Participant, "Getting to Zero", a carbon emissions conference held at Penn State's University Park campus
2012, ongoing	<i>La Vie</i> student yearbook faculty advisor
2012, ongoing	Member, College of Communication Academic Integrity Committee

College & University Service (continued)

2011-2012	Member, College of Communications Scholarship Committee
Summer 2009	Page Center Oral History Project. Organized and conducted interview with E. Bruce Harrison, pioneer of environmental public relations and former president of Arthur W. Page Society.

National and International Service

June 2019	Invited Conference Debater, Institute for Science and Global Policy (ISGP) Innovative Foods & Ingredients conference, Minneapolis, MN
March 2019	Keynote Speaker, Pennsylvania Academy of Sciences annual conference, Reading PA
December 2018	Reviewer, McGraw-Hill Education, <i>Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective</i> , Belch & Belch, 12 th Edition.
September 2017	Outside tenure reviewer, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon
2016, ongoing	Editorial Board Member, <i>Journal of Public Relations Research</i>
October 2015	Visiting Professor, Hochschule Pforzheim
October 2015	Reviewer, National Science Foundation science communication grant application for Sol Hart, University of Michigan
August 2014	Outside tenure reviewer, Howard University's Department of Strategic, Legal, and Management Communication
2013, ongoing	Editorial Board Member, <i>Science Communication</i>
June 2013	Proposed organized and moderated panel for Conference on Communication and the Environment (COCE), <i>Evidence-Based Environmental Communication Campaigns</i> .
2013 to 2015	Chair of the International Environmental Communication Association (IECA).
2012 to 2013	Head of the Communicating Science, Health, Environment and Risk (ComSHER) Division of AEJMC.
2011 to 2013	Vice Chair of IECA.
2011 to 2012	Vice Head/Programming Chair of the ComSHER Division of AEJMC.
2010 to 2011	Research Chair, Science Communication Interest Group of AEJMC.
2009 to 2010	Professional Freedom & Responsibility Chair, Science Communication Interest Group of AEJMC.

National and International Service (continued)

2010, ongoing	Paper reviewer for the journals <i>Science Communication</i> , <i>Journal of Public Relations Research</i> , <i>Mass Communication & Society</i> and <i>Environmental Communication</i> .
Fall 2009	Article reviewer for special issue of <i>PRism</i> .
August 2009	Proposed, organized and moderated panel for AEJMC convention, co-sponsored by Science Communication Interest Group and Public Relations Division, <i>Beyond Greenwashing</i> .
2009, ongoing	Article reviewer for various divisions for the AEJMC annual conference

Funded Research

2018	Bellisario College of Communications Summer Research Grant, communicating “biofortified” food innovation in Jamaica, \$2,000
2018	Bellisario College of Communications Summer Research Grant, communication practices of various communities of beekeepers in Pennsylvania, \$2,000
2017	Investigator, College of Communications Summer Research Grant, “Information-seeking and communications practices of natural beekeepers in Pennsylvania” (\$4,500)
2017	Co-Investigator, College of Communications Summer Research Grant, “Framing of Sustainable Waste-to-Food Systems” (\$3,500)
2016	Co-Investigator, Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, Water for Agriculture Challenge Area Grant, \$5 million (College of Communications responsibility approximately \$260,000)
2014 to 2015	Co-Investigator, Penn State Sustainability Institute Reinvention Fund (\$37,500)
2013 to 2014	Investigator, William Penn Foundation Grant Measurement and evaluation for Penn State Public Media’s “Water Blues, Green Solutions” documentary (\$28,000)
2010 to 2011	Penn State Institute for Energy and the Environment (PSIEE) Seed Grant Program. Co-Investigator, “Sustainability and Ethics” project (\$50,000)
2009 to 2010	Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication Legacy Scholar Grant Co-Principal Investigator, “Changing themes in strategic environmental communication: A 30-year history of green ads in National Geographic Magazine” (\$2,400)

Funded Research (continued)

2009 to 2010	Page Center Legacy Scholar Grants Edited Book on Ethics in Environmental Communication Co-Editor of volume focusing on environmental communication that uses the essay “Weathercocks & Signposts,” written by the WWF’s Change Strategist Tom Crompton, as a point of departure. Developed call for proposal for articles, reviewed and selected grant submission, organized and directed authors. (\$10,700)
2006 to 2008	Pennsylvania Department of Health Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Public Information Campaign Assistant Investigator (\$200,000)

Teaching Experience (all at Penn State)

- MPS Digital Analytics II (COMM 839)
- MPS Digital Analytics I (COMM 831)
- MPS Research Methods for Strategic Communication (COMM 530)
- Digital Media Metrics (COMM/IST 310)
- Search Engine Marketing (COMM/IST 450a)
- Digital Advertising (COMM/IST 450b)
- Principles of Strategic Communication (COMM 428a)
- Introduction to Advertising (COMM 320)
- Introduction to Advertising, Honors (COMM 320H)
- Advertising Media Planning (COMM 422)
- Research Methods in Advertising & Public Relations (COMM 420)
- Public Relations Methods (COMM 471)
- First-Year Engagement seminar (PSU 009)

In addition to Developing and teaching all the above classes, I developed and serve as the coordinator for the Digital Media Trends and Analytics minor. The DMTA minor launched in 2016 and has quickly grown to become one of the top-five most popular minors at Penn State. In addition to the courses in the sequence, I organize campus and classroom visits from industry professionals at the cutting edge of digital media and analytics, as well as case competitions and student club activities related to trends in digital media.