About half of Republican voters are white evangelicals who do not believe the earth’s climate is in crisis. A small but growing movement of evangelicals is working to change this, calling on evangelicals to “care for creation”. In consultation with “creation care” advocates, I am developing a film project to present stories of evangelical Christians in the global South and the United States who are grappling with climate change and its effects. I filmed this summer in a region in highland Ecuador where North American missionaries began to convert Kichwa-speaking indigenous people in the 1960s. Evangelical indigenous farmers showed me how excessive rains had rotted their fava beans and damaged their potato fields. Indigenous pastors drew on Genesis in calling for good stewardship of the earth. Villagers on the slopes of Mt. Chimborazo showed how they are caring for their water supply as the glacier recedes. In this talk, I will present some Ecuador film clips and reflect on how perspectives from anthropology can help shape an effective film for an audience that has been resistant to ‘mainstream’ environmentalist messages.

Barry Lyons majored in history and political science at Washington University and then lived in a village in the Ecuadorian Andes for two years as a Peace Corps volunteer. He then pursued graduate work in anthropology at the University of Michigan and spent another three years in Ecuador conducting dissertation research on the relationship between indigenous people and the Catholic Church. Dr. Lyons joined the Wayne State Anthropology Department in 1999. He is the author of two books on religion, agrarian relations, and race and ethnicity in Ecuador.