



DAVID R. ATKINSON CENTER
for a Sustainable Future
Cornell University



Atkinson Center Topical Lunch

Title: *Cooperation in the Apocalypse: The Science of Human Generosity*

Presenter: Athena Aktipis, Arizona State University and The Human Generosity Project

Hosts: Keith Tidball, Senior Extension Associate, Department of Natural Resources;
Assistant Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Sharon Tennyson, Professor, Policy Analysis and Management; Cornell Institute for Public
Affairs (CIPA); Director of Graduate Studies for the Field of Public Affairs

Date: Monday, April 22nd, 2019; 12:00 – 1:15pm, 300 Rice Hall

Abstract: How do people behave in the aftermath of disaster? Do we see the best of human nature or the worst of it? In this talk, we'll discuss how humans help one another in disasters - both large and small - and what that can tell us about human nature. We'll tour societies around the world to uncover the science of generosity, from the supposedly uncooperative Ik people of Uganda, to ranchers in the southwest United States who have reputations for extreme self-reliance. We'll also ask whether helping others in times of need is a viable survival strategy, using data from computational models to answer the question of whether generosity helps people survive in harsh and unpredictable environments. In The Human Generosity Project, we use many methods to triangulate to questions about cooperation in apocalyptic conditions. Come learn about human nature in times of disaster -- your survival may depend on it.