



(Research on Lifestyles, Values and Environment)  
UNIVERSITY OF SURREY, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XH

## **FORTHCOMING SEMINAR**

**Wednesday 6 May, 2009, 1300-1400**

45b AZ 04  
University of Surrey

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### **Solar power, homes and lifestyles: exploring the co-construction of users and photovoltaics in the domestic sector**

With increasing concern over climate change, users' energy behaviour in the home has always been central in research on energy consumption. Given the potential of renewable energy technologies in reducing reliance on fossil fuels and decreasing carbon emissions, one area of relevance is the introduction of renewable microgeneration technologies into the home and the impact this will have on people's energy related behaviours and lifestyle.

Acknowledging the importance of users in this context, this research examines how users are configured during the implementation of photovoltaics. On the basis of two cases studies that took place as part of the UK government's photovoltaic domestic field trial, this paper discusses the construction of user identities during the planning and installation of the technology and the way it is appropriated in the home. Drawing on theoretical perspectives from science and technology studies, it argues that during the deployment of photovoltaics, a multiplicity of actors involved in the installation projects engage in configuring the users, resulting in the co-construction of the technology and its users. It then explores the various ways users interact with photovoltaics, suggesting different types of users (or modes of use) relating to environmental technologies. This perspective can help in understanding the diffusion of microgeneration technologies as a negotiated process of actors' knowledge and expectations, the users' methods of appropriation, and the sociotechnical systems within which they operate.

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