

KARSGAARD, CARRIE. 2023. INSTAGRAM AS PUBLIC PEDAGOGY: ONLINE ACTIVISM AND THE TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE. PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, CHAM. XVII, 277 PP. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-26182-4>.

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Abstract

This book provides a comparative analysis of the public pedagogy of Instagram in the social networking system, which today is not only one of the leading channels whose content is actively consumed by young people, but also a platform where content from various information and communication environments is posted and distributed. In this context, modern research into Instagram public pedagogy is aimed primarily at studying the phenomena of civic and social activity, communication barriers and ways to overcome them.

The book provides examples of various social and humanities studies that occupy the study of public pedagogy, as well as the influence of social networks and virtual reality on behavior and perception of various events.

In this book, the political science research problem lies in the formation of digital political pedagogy and the pedagogical contradiction of applying traditional theoretical approaches to the formation of public attitudes in the new environment of virtual social networks. Knowledge of the peculiarities of the formation of civil and political attitudes on Instagram and other social networks will allow us to develop effective methods for diagnosing and leveling the influence of social networks.

Keywords: visual political methodology, political ecojustice, digital political science, public pedagogy, political Instagram, activism, extractivism.

The development of Internet technologies in the modern communication space is a new stage in the modernization of the information society. Improving electronic resources, as well as digitalization of all spheres of life, allows us to take a fresh look at public space.

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Informing citizens about a particular event occurs very quickly, new and flexible channels of interaction between society and the state are created.

This book examines various issues of digital political pedagogy and the public pedagogy of Instagram, uses both innovative and digital methods to politically analyze civil disobedience, and resists the case study of the online controversy over the Trans Mountain Pipeline. The purpose of this study is to identify the civil and political mechanism for the formation of personal and public attitudes in social networks (Karsgaard 2023, 1-20, 21-74).

The book examines social activism and opposition to the Trans Mountain Pipeline in Canada, where there are overlapping networks of concerned citizens. With the goal of protecting the lands of indigenous peoples and environmental activists, the book explores the ways Instagram can be used to document pipeline construction, as well as policing and land degradation (Karsgaard 2023, 75-130, 131-181). This is what the author considers important in public pedagogy, where social networks acquire civic and political educational power, influencing real publicity and virtual reality.

The objectives of this book were the following: 1) Theoretical research on social networks in digital political pedagogy is summarized; 2) The specifics of Instagram and other social networks in political life are determined; 3) Social and political models of the formation of civil attitudes are analyzed; 4) The public grounds for the formation of political attitudes in virtual social networks are considered; 5) A model of the social and pedagogical mechanism for the formation of political attitudes in social networks has been developed; 6) The methodological features of the study of the process of formation of political attitudes in social networks are determined; 7) An empirical analysis of the formation of political attitudes in social networks was carried out; 8) The main strategies and counter-strategies for the formation of political attitudes in virtual social networks are substantiated.

Noting the significant role and flexibility of Internet communication channels of public policy, citizens can in one way or another influence public authorities when solving problems of a socio-political nature. With the help of such a mechanism as social media, citizens are able to exchange received information, comment on it, as well as publish and disseminate their own, conveying this or that position not only to the public, but also to government authorities. Thus, social media are a set of communication tools of the modern Internet space, with the help of which participants in this space are able to receive, create and integrate the necessary information in order to form a certain political agenda and public opinion; influence the civic position of participants and government authorities (Karsgaard 2023, 183-229, 231-254).

The analysis of interactive mechanisms using the example of the Instagram page of the Trans Mountain Pipeline civic initiative reflects several aspects. The first of these is the proactive use of tools to attract large audiences to cover the issue of the construction of the Trans Mountain Pipeline (Karsgaard 2023, 255-271). The use of posts, comments, and reposts became not only a starting point, but also contributed to a truly wide dissemination of information about the problem. The second side of the issue lies in the final results of appealing to the authorities. Giving wide publicity as one of the stages of dissemination and involving a large number of people. Obviously, many famous people and bloggers with large audiences shared information about the construction of the Trans

Mountain Pipeline on their page and encouraged the public to actively cover the situation on social networks.

Some of the influencers on their Instagram page openly appealed to Canada's political elite to focus attention on the Trans Mountain Pipeline issue. The initiative really gained public resonance and spread quite quickly on social networks. The project leaders were not only able to interest ordinary network users, but also attract opinion leaders, which led to decisive action by the authorities. Using interactive mechanisms, coverage of the Trans Mountain Pipeline was carried out not through direct channels of influence, but through indirect ones. This approach is explained by the desire of the project initiators to give the problem significant public resonance and gather a fairly wide target audience around them. The use of mechanisms to highlight the problem was necessary so that not only ordinary users, but also opinion leaders would pay attention to the initiative.

Interactive mechanisms used in social networks effectively and accurately convey the problem to government authorities. They can only be a catalyst or part of a large-scale campaign by the project initiators and act offline: going to rallies organized through social media, sending appeals to regional authorities, filing complaints with the prosecutor's office, etc. Having indirect channels of influence (through ordinary users and opinion leaders), initiators of movements using social networks are able to launch an information and communication mechanism and gather the necessary target audience around themselves. This is done so that the authorities that can influence the solution of the problem are aware of the initiative. Through such mechanisms, constructive dialogue with the government can be effectively carried out.

The Trans Mountain Pipeline Citizens' Initiative is an active example of the use of Instagram, online activism, and crowdsourcing technologies in social media. The project leaders, not having effective legal instruments of influence at hand, used the necessary mechanisms to attract a huge number of people on the network. At the same time, using not only the potential of ordinary Instagram users, but also opinion leaders with a large audience. All this was carried out using interactive mechanisms: publication of posts on relevant topics; using comments as a mechanism to attract famous people and ordinary users; distribution of hashtags and reposts for posts; active tagging of opinion leader pages.

Noting all the points on which the initiative can influence the decisions of public authorities, the question remains about the effectiveness of the created project. When using social media as a tool of public policy, it seems possible to evaluate any social movement. This is necessary in order to determine the characteristics of the information field around which events are formed and to analyze the feedback of interactive mechanisms and technologies.

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