

In Pursuit of an Informed Public: Good Environmental Video Media

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines what makes good environmental video media by analyzing the process of planning a video, the use of media for social change, science in video media, and award winning environmental films. It includes a plan for a video that uses the Community Voice Method to support a green fee and the Sustainable Projects Fund at Murray State University.

INTRODUCTION

Media can affect how society deals with environmental issues. The power of the media and the increase of viral videos make us ask how video media could influence social response to environmental issues. Video media can have an impact on individuals and society. This impact can translate to action if the video is educational, developed analytically, and uses the concept of social marketing to promote its behavioral objectives.

In order to communicate its message effectively, a video must frame its message around its audience's knowledge. If an audience is unaware of a problem then it will not be interested in the solution. If an audience does not understand a problem, then it cannot understand how to solve it. If a video communicates a solution to a problem that its audience is not aware of or does not understand, it may inadvertently misinform and confuse the viewers. To avoid miscommunication, the video must educate the audience, providing it with all of the knowledge necessary to comprehend the video's message. Developing a video that is educational at its base will ensure an informed audience and the better likelihood of effective communication. The video's next emphasis needs to be on socially marketing its message, which means presenting, through marketing principles, how the audience can take action on the video's topic.

To determine the type of education needed and the best way to communicate a video's message, producers should go through an analytical development process that will identify the communication objective, the target audience, and the best communication strategy for that audience. Knowing these things is key to developing an impactful video. The video must reach and connect with the appropriate audience to maximize its impact potential to educate and drive the public to action.

PART ONE

I. THE NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental issues are shaping the future of our generation and every coming generation. It is essential that we know how our decisions about topics ranging from agriculture to transportation affect the ecology of this planet. As stated by Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones, United States Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, “The issues of climate change, environmental degradation and food shortages... are glaringly obvious and immediate challenges” (Jones). As climate changes, resources diminish, and ecosystems deteriorate, the time for action is running short. The public must be informed now and act now. Scientists and environmental advocates have the responsibility to provide an exoteric and comprehensive explanation of environmental issues to the public so that we may make decisions that ensure the stability of the environment and, along with it, human society.

The government of the United States of America is not responding with the urgency that environmental issues demand. In October of 2009, 18 prominent scientific organizations signed a joint letter to the Congress in which was stated:

There is strong evidence that ongoing climate change will have broad impacts on society, including the global economy and ... the environment. For the United States, climate change impacts include sea level rise for coastal states, greater threats of extreme weather events, and increased risk of regional water scarcity, urban heat waves, western wildfires, and the disturbance of biological systems throughout the country. (American)

This letter expressed the urgency for action on climate change. However, between October of 2009 and August of 2013, parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increased from

387.63 to 395.15 and the annual mean carbon dioxide growth rates increased from 1.88 to 2.66 between 2009 and 2012 (Tans). The higher the carbon levels get, the greater the consequences of climate change. As carbon levels continue to increase it seems that the U.S. government and global leaders have made no impactful effort in the last four years to lessen the consequences of climate change. The recent United States government shutdown reinforces that we cannot depend entirely on government policy to make the urgent changes we need.

In order to achieve the rapid change necessary, every individual must take responsibility for how his or her actions affect the environment and must work to make society function in a way consistent with the health of the environment. The only way for the human population to adapt at the necessary speed is for everyone to take action and effect immediate change. This immediate change requires that everyone be informed, quickly. Though rapidly educating seven billion people may be impossible, the deteriorating state of the biosphere obligates us to try.

The introduction of the World Wide Web along with dramatic improvements in technology have markedly increased the speed of communication across the globe. Audio, video, audiovisual, graphic, and written forms of media can be accessed from multiple electronic platforms, including television sets, computers, game consoles, digital video recorders, tablets, and mobile devices. Along with increased physical availability of information has come increased speed of availability. One can publish information on the internet in the morning and by the afternoon millions of people across the globe could be aware of that information, whereas traditional forms of print media must first be printed and then distributed on an individual basis, making it extremely difficult to reach the same number of people. With online media, millions of people can obtain information from just one published account, and immediately after it is

published. This speed can give video media the ability to match the urgency of environmental issues.

II. MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa and 1993 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Change requires that everyone understand the current problem, its solution, and how to progress from one to the other. Uninformed, misinformed, or unorganized people hinder improvement. As Mandela knows, movements can overcome this hindrance through public education.

In this 2003 speech, entitled “Lighting Your Way to a Better Future,” Mandela introduced the “country-changing” education initiative, Mindset Network, a digital educational network for South Africa aimed at reducing education deprivation. Mindset Network was created as an improvement on the Learning Channel, which, Mandela stated, already had made “an immeasurable difference in the lives of countless learners and teachers” (Mandela). Mindset Network aims to improve education and health in South Africa by producing and distributing quality educational materials through television, satellite, internet, mobile networks, and physical media such as DVDs, CDs, and hard drives. Much of the content is in video format and is supplemented by notes and other interactive resources.

Another program that seeks to educate people in an effort for social change is BBC Media Action, whose mission is “to inform, connect, and empower people” through media around the world. It provides reliable and timely information through multiple media platforms so that people may make informed decisions and take action to improve their lives (Mission). One example of BBC Media Action’s work is *Sema Kenya*, which translates to *Speak Kenya*, a BBC Media Action television and radio program that provides a platform for Kenyans to address

and question their politicians directly and voice their concerns about issues that affect them. Research shows that participants and audiences feel as though the show is representative of the ordinary citizen and stimulates a beneficial public dialogue that encourages politicians to remain accountable to their people (Kenya). Through work with institutions, organizations, local media, and individuals in communities across the developing world, BBC Media Action is providing people with the communication, and therefore education, they need to change their societies for the better.

An example of educational media in the United States is Nova, produced by WBGH Boston and broadcast on the Public Broadcasting Service network. The Nova television series began in the mid-1970s as a science education television show and has since expanded to become a multimedia presence (Apsell). Nova produces science journalism on the web, provides education resources for science teachers, and produces the television series, *NOVA scienceNOW*. Nova is popular because it strives to be as entertaining as informative (Nova). Its television show *NOVA scienceNOW* aims at “increasing the public’s use of multimedia resources to learn about current science research, increasing public awareness and understanding of cutting edge science content and its relevance to their lives, and increasing public engagement in science-related activities” (Bachrach 1). The *Nova scienceNOW Season Five Summative Evaluation Executive Summary* finds that the show achieves its goals among its viewers but should increase outreach efforts to younger audiences (Bachrach 2-3).

Media is being used across the world to educate and influence society. Mindset Network demonstrates media’s advantages to improve education in schools and among the public in general. As exemplified by BBC Media Action, media can also be used to educate and benefit society by encouraging social engagement and interaction. NOVA shows media’s ability to

capture viewers' attention to educate them on science. Environmental video media depends on the combination of these educational and influential attributes of media to educate and encourage public action on environmental issues.

III. WHAT MAKES GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL VIDEO MEDIA

Video media is the prevalent form of media around the world. According to a 2013 Gallup Poll, 55% of Americans get their news through television and 21% through the internet (Saad). Television is a video intensive platform and internet is a strong platform for video distribution. With a large portion of people turning to television and the internet for information, video media can have a strong impact on society by educating people, sparking dialogue between them, and empowering them to take action. A large amount of media has been produced in a variety of formats, ranging from news to entertainment, that cover environmental issues. Some of it is bad, some good, and some excellent. The bad, the good, and even the excellent media can be, and have been, used to misinform the public. Though deceptive media can be very influential, well-planned media can combat misinformation and have a beneficial impact on society.

Good media can only benefit society if its message reaches the public. Competition is harsh in today's fragmented media economy and media must aim their messages at defined target audiences in order to compete. It is important for producers to understand the psychographics, or attitudes, interests, and beliefs, of their target audience as to tailor their videos to interest and connect with viewers. Doing so gives the video a better chance of gaining attention and could even motivate the audience "to actively seek and participate in the experience of the program in a way that involves a level of enjoyment" (Friedman 27). An example of targeted media is *The Colbert Report*, which targets mostly the young and Democrats, with 43% of its regular audience

being younger than thirty and 45% being Democrats (Trends 35-39). *The Colbert Report*, a form of infotainment, meant to entertain as well as inform, targets its audience through the use of sardonic humor. Another example of targeted media is *The O'Reilly Factor*, which targets older conservatives through the matter-of-fact, conservative character of Bill O'Reilly. Of the show's viewers, 64% are over the age of fifty and 52% of them are Republicans (Trends 35-39).

Determining the target audience changes both the communication problem and the objective of a video (Friedman 23). An environmental video must determine its target audience before determining the communication problem and the video's objective. For example, *The Colbert Report* and *The O'Reilly Factor* may cover the same story, but they will convey the story differently because of the different psychographics of their target audiences.

Delivering messages with attention to audience psychographics can help media attract specific viewers, as demonstrated by *The Colbert Report* and *The O'Reilly Factor*.

Understanding the values, interests, and beliefs of target audiences will help producers make environmental videos that have engaging content and connect to viewers on both an intellectual and emotional level. Targeting audiences will give environmental video a better chance at competing in the media economy.

A. APPLYING THE SEVEN STEP METHOD TO ENVIRONMENTAL VIDEOS

Developing a good video depends on producing a solid concept and a thorough script. Doing so requires a process of analytical thought identified by Anthony Friedmann as the Seven-Step Method for Developing a Creative Concept. This method guides scriptwriters to define the communication problem, define the target audience, determine why and for what the script will be written, define the communication strategy, the content, and the appropriate medium, and

finally, create the concept. Going through this process will lead to the creation of a well-designed video (17-36).

The communication problem educational videos need to address is, as concluded by previous research, that the public functions on low levels of information, meaning that they don't know enough about the state of society to form rational preferences and opinions. This prevents the public from taking effective action and performing necessary civic roles to improve society (Porto 307). The public still lacks knowledge of environmental issues, which is contributing to the imbalanced relationship between society and its natural surroundings.

Industries and their constituents flood the media with misinformation about the environmental effects of their production methods. Think-tanks, such as the Cato Institute, publish research and literature that denies the severity and causality of environmental problems, especially those relating to climate change and the fossil fuel industry. These institutes receive support from individuals and business organizations that have an economic interest in the continued use of fossil fuels. The Cato Institute, for example, receives a large amount of funding from Charles and David Koch, who own Koch Industries Incorporated. Koch Industries is involved in chemical, refining, fossil fuel, mineral, and ranching industries, among others (Koch). The Koch brothers hold two of the four shareholder seats on Cato's board and are working to gain even more control of the institute (Lichtblau).

Paul Knappenberger, Assistant Director of the Center for the Study of Science at the Cato Institute, states that the *Fifth Assessment Report* of United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is "an embarrassment of internal inconsistency, entirely self-serving, and is beyond misleading." Knappenberger claims that the logical scientific conclusion is that greenhouse gases emitted by human activities have less of an impact on climate change than

commonly held, stating that ten studies support his claims (Knappenberger). The tone of his article is subjective and unscientific, and he cites only those ten studies to oppose the hundreds analyzed by the IPCC. Thousands of scientists across the world contribute to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or the IPCC, which is supported by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme (Organization). In the *Fifth Assessment Report Summary for Policy Makers*, the IPCC states that “human influence on the climate system is clear. This is evident from the increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, positive radiative forcing, observed warming, and understanding of the climate system” (13). The IPCC is trusted and supported by the United Nations and thousands of scientists, making it likely to view data objectively. The Cato Institute, however, depends on funding from members of the fossil fuel industry, making it prone to bias.

To educate the public on the realities of environmental issues, educational videos must fully address the misleading information that has been spread through the media and then provide a thorough explanation of the relationship between society and the environment. This explanation needs to make clear the connection between society’s actions and the environment. It is also important to reveal how these environmental impacts, in turn, affect society. In this way, the video can address the problem of public ignorance. Once the audience is informed, the video must give information on how to use that knowledge. Though fully addressing public inaction would involve educational and promotional strategy in addition to the video, the video can encourage action by providing information to the public on how to become civically engaged with environmental issues.

In order for a video to address a specific problem it must be heard by the correct audience. By understanding the target audience, video producers can tailor the message to

address the communication problem more directly. In defining the target audience producers must identify its demographic and psychographic characteristics. People have different mindsets and different resources and therefore understand issues and solutions in different ways. For example, if the target audience is more concerned with jobs than environmental damage, the video may be more impactful by providing information on how creating a sustainable economy will provide job opportunities. If the target audience has job security and is concerned with preventing environmental damage the video may have a greater impact if it focuses on ways individuals can work to ensure environmental health. Understanding the concerns and values of an audience will determine the right approach to communicating a message (Friedmann 24).

The next important step in creating good environmental video media is to define the objective. Friedmann states, “One way of defining an objective is a change of knowledge, perception, or awareness” (32). The purpose of environmental video is to help move society toward a more sustainable future, therefore the objective of good environmental video media should be to motivate change in the perception of the environment and how it is valued by society. The video may achieve this objective in a variety of ways, but the idea is to spark discussion and empower people to take action. Friedmann notes, “If you can achieve that change of consciousness in an audience, you have succeeded in putting in place the foundation for all subsequent thinking and eventually action” (32). The objective of environmental video, then, is to make environmental issues a top priority in the viewer’s mind. This is both an informational and behavioral objective, as the audience must know about environmental issues in order to prioritize and take action on them.

The next thing to consider is the communication strategy of the video, which appeals to emotion, reason, or ethics (Friedmann 33). The communication strategy will determine how the

video will get the attention of the target audience. This strategy is what will achieve the behavioral objective of motivating the audience to action. For example, a video could show the detrimental effects of mountain top removal coal mining on a community of people in Appalachia and challenge the audience to live up to their moral obligations to protect that community by working to end mountain top removal. The video could appeal to emotion by angering the audience with examples of how coal companies oppress the people of Appalachia. The video could appeal to logic and argue that if the companies are allowed to continue their oppression and destruction of Appalachian communities, then nothing will keep them from doing the same thing to the communities of the audience members.

The next three steps of Friedmann's method determine how a video will physically portray the message. Step five determines content. Now that the communication problem, the target audience, and the objective have been defined, video producers may apply this knowledge to multiple situations. For each situation the general foundation of environmental videos will need to be refined to shape the video to the specific needs of the environmental issue. The issue being addressed will determine the content of the video, or what will be seen and heard by the audience. The content will be framed in accordance with the objective.

The sixth step in the method is determining the medium used to portray the message. This paper is about what makes good environmental video media, so the medium has already been determined. Friedmann discusses medium in the context of writing a script "so as to exploit the special advantages and qualities of the medium" (34). Advantages should still be considered through an analysis of different platforms of video media. Different platforms offer different viewing experiences with varied advantages. Film made for a theater screening has the ability to envelop the audience in its message with surround sound and visual dominance. A video on the

internet does not offer the effect of a theater film, but can offer an interactive element through participatory activities like graphs, games, and other click-throughs. Television can offer the possibility of a broad audience as many people are exposed to television in waiting rooms, restaurants, businesses, transit areas, and, of course, their homes. People's likelihood of exposure to videos has increased with advancing technology. Television sets now have the capability to stream video from the internet. Smart phones and tablets make it possible for people to watch videos virtually anywhere. People can also access multiple media at one time, exposing themselves to multiple messages, influencing their experience of the media. It is important to keep in mind the different advantages of each platform so that the video may be tailored to use them effectively.

The seventh step is creating the concept. After thinking through the communication problem, the concept for the video can begin to take form. The creative concept will "solve the communication problem, reach the target audience, achieve the communication objective, embody the communication strategy, provide the content of the program, and show how it will work in the chosen [platform]" (Friedmann 36). An environmental video that follows these analytical steps will be likely to have a stronger impact than one that does not. These steps ensure that producers understand the message they need to communicate and how they can best reach their audience. Going through this analytical process makes the message clear and concise by narrowing the video's focus to the most pertinent issues that address the communication problem.

B. THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENCE

In order to solve the communication problem, videos must inform audiences of the environmental issues they are addressing. Before a video can achieve its motivational objective

the audience must have a good understanding of the subject behind the motivation. Video has certain advantages when explaining scientific information. Scott Curtis states that the attributes of video that give it these advantages when used for research in cell biology are “its temporal malleability; its ability to frame and isolate; [and] the forward, teleological motion of its projected image” (52). In 1911, when presenting his discovery that nerve fibers grow from a single cell, Hermann Braus used film of his experiment to aid in the explanation of his findings. Film mimicked the forward motion of growth exhibited by the nerve cell, capturing the cell moving forward in time. This temporal continuity helped viewers to see the cell develop. Film also allowed Braus to explain his observation techniques: “manipulation of the film could isolate and analyze aspects of the tissue that could also be manipulated, isolated, and analyzed in the technique of tissue culture itself” (52). Braus enhanced the process of virtual witnessing, or judging the validity and value of an experiment based on detailed descriptions of its procedures, by showing the real time progression of the experiment. Film enhanced virtual witnessing because it allowed for the virtual repetition of an experiment (51).

Using virtual witnessing is an important factor in communicating science to the public. A video can provide a visual representation of science that may give a generalist audience a better understanding of it than they would get from just hearing or reading a description of the facts. A video can show science occurring and provide an opportunity for the audience to judge for itself the validity and value of the information presented.

The audience’s understanding of science also depends on the context in which it is explained. There are some scientists who acknowledge that it is impossible not to anthropomorphize nature, or give nature human characteristics, because we view nature through the human perspective. There are also nature writers who acknowledge the economic, ethical,

and political contexts through which they experience nature (Johnson-Sheehan 366-367). The importance of context relates to the step of defining the target audience in the seven-step method. Different contexts will apply to target audiences in different ways. Explaining the science behind environmental issues in an economic context will give the audience a different understanding of the importance and value of the information presented than they would get through describing the same information in an ethical context. Keeping in mind the target audience and its contextual worldview will help the video producers ensure that their viewers understand the importance of the scientific information presented in relation to the environmental issue and their personal lives.

C. THE CASE FOR SOCIAL MARKETING

Advertisers have known for years that no matter how good a product is, it will not become known without successful marketing. Marketing consists of pricing and distributing products and raising awareness of them within a given market. The end goal is to increase and maintain sales of that product. In the context of environmental video, however, the goal of marketing is to advance the video's behavioral objective.

Social marketing is defined as “the adaptation of commercial marketing technologies to programs designed to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences to improve their personal welfare and that of the society of which they are a part” (Prestin 1018). The difference between social marketing and normal marketing is that social marketing is intended to increase the knowledge wealth of the consumer rather than increase profits for the messenger. The concept of marketing is based on product, price, place, and promotion. As Abby Prestin and Katy Pearce have determined through research, product represents the target behavior of the audience, price represents the economic, social, and psychological changes necessary to achieve target

behavior, place represents medium through which the public is made aware of the target behavior, and promotion is the part of the message which persuades the audience to adopt the target behavior and demonstrates the benefit of the behavior (1018). Designing a video through a social marketing framework will increase the impact of the video by promoting its behavioral objective.

D. EXAMPLES

There are many awards and festivals for environmental media. One of these is the Grantham Prize, issued by the Metcalfe Institute, awarded between 2005 and 2012. “Coal: A Love Story” was awarded the 2012 Grantham Prize Award of Special Merit. The multimedia website explores our culture’s relationship with coal and uses videos, graphics, and short written pieces that provide information and multiple perspectives on coal. The Metcalfe Institute awarded the website with the Grantham Prize because “the videos draw viewers to consider the human costs (and benefits) of America’s reliance on coal for electricity generation” (“Coal: A Love Story”). The videos present multiple perspectives by examining the lives of those who benefit from coal, such as coal miners, and those who are negatively impacted by coal pollution, such as people living next to coal plants. Catherine Orr, editor-in-chief of “Coal: A Love Story” and co-producer of its video, “Born Into Coal,” stated that the videos on the website “show that the story of coal is not about one side versus the other, or right versus wrong, it is about universal desires and struggles that affect us all” (Orr). Orr believes that getting people to care about energy is a matter of showing that it isn’t energy that matters, but how we interact with it. The films and the website were successful because the producers understood that the target audience included people affected by coal in different ways and therefore did not demonize any aspect of

the coal industry, as many other environmental films do. Rather, they reported on beneficial and negative aspects of coal, challenging viewers to rethink their understanding of the coal industry.

Personalizing environmental issues is an important factor of environmental video media. Another very important factor is providing solutions to the issues raised. To motivate change, it isn't enough to just tell the public what is wrong: a video must tell the public how to fix the problem. *Cafeteria Man* is a documentary film that focuses on Tony Geraci's movement to solve the problems of a dysfunctional school nutritional program by incorporating local and fresh foods into the school lunches of public schools in Baltimore. It won Best of Festival at the Wild and Scenic Film Festival, the film festival for environmental activism (Awards). This film is an example of social marketing. It explains that reforming school nutritional programs means healthier children, which is the product. It shows how to go about that reform through community organizing and political engagement, the price. The documentary provides the information, the place, and the promotion, and shows the successful outcome of Geraci's movement.

PART TWO

I. THE COMMUNITY VOICE METHOD: THE VIDEO

To solve environmental issues, solutions must be localized. Activists and organizers have been working for years to organize people to take action to shape the communities they live in, and their grass-roots strategies have proven effective at mobilizing community members. Video media can be used to increase the effectiveness of these strategies. A successful example is a North Carolina town that was facing the prospect of land development. The grass-roots group, Macon Tomorrow, wanted to increase civic engagement in land use planning discussions. Attempts at public meetings to discuss land use had proven frustrating and ineffective. Macon

Tomorrow did not hold policy change as its immediate object: leaders recognized that it was necessary to “foster productive conversation, elicit stakeholder recommendations for addressing the effects of rapid land use change in the county—either through governmental or non-governmental means—and to build participants’ capacity to advance these recommendations through sustained dialog and collective action.” To improve public participation in land use planning, Macon Tomorrow found that “participation processes needed to be better informed by relevant data, more inclusive of diverse views, and conducive of ongoing dialog” (Cumming 435).

Gabriel Cumming and Carla Norwood, graduate students with knowledge of the land use challenges faced by the county, worked with Macon Tomorrow to solve the identified problems through the experimental Community Voice Method. Norwood was a founder of Macon Tomorrow and had maintained a relationship with the group upon entering graduate school. Cumming and Norwood created a documentary film by combining audio interviews with photographs. The film exhibited the people of the community and their thoughts on the land development in question, giving a multi-vocal explanation of the land use situation and challenging “participants to view each other not simply as proponents of a single agenda, but as multifaceted individuals” (Cumming 442). The documentary opened four different public meetings and the makers of the film made sure the meetings used an open format to include and empower every individual. The CVM project proved successful, with most participants leaving the public meetings feeling as though they had learned about land use and had a voice in the discussion about land use in their community. After the meetings, Cumming and Norwood worked with Macon Tomorrow to determine how the county should progress in addressing changes in land use based on the public’s discussions at the meetings.

According to Gabriel Cumming and Carla Norwood, the Community Voice Method was conceived to address polarized debates. It has been successfully adapted to build support for civic engagement in a number of situations, including the economic development of a local food system in Warren County, North Carolina, and the improvement of fishery management policy regarding turtles at Turks and Caicos Islands, among others (“The Community Voice Method” 443; Community Voice Method). The CVM is a good example of using video media to increase civic engagement as it breaks down barriers between people and encourages public discussion of disputed issues, helping communities reach solutions.

A. SEVEN STEPS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS FUND

At Murray State University, the Murray Environmental Student Society has been trying to establish support for a student green fee, called the Sustainable Projects Fund, or SPF. Students have conducted surveys and presented the idea to campus administration. Student surveys indicate support for a green fee. However, the call for an extra fee has met with resistance. The Community Voice Method could be used to instigate a continuing discussion on the fee and perhaps increase the chances of bringing the Sustainable Projects Fund to fruition. A group like MESS could create an impactful environmental video about the Sustainable Projects Fund by combining the CVM with media techniques for education and strategies employed by other successful environmental videos. The final part of this thesis is a plan for this video and its use.

1. The Communication Problem

The main problem for environmental video to solve is the public’s lack of information on environmental issues. In the case of the Sustainable Projects Fund the students and employees of Murray State University lack information about what makes a green fee important. In order to

have a significant discussion on the implementation of a student green fee it is necessary that those involved understand green fees, why they are important, how they work, and what benefits they offer. The Sustainable Projects Fund focuses on increasing renewable energy on campus, so it is important that the video explain energy in relation to sustainability and how a green fee will help Murray State progress toward a more sustainable future. The audience needs to take the consequences of climate inaction seriously to understand and support SPF.

2. The Target Audience

The video will primarily target students, as implementing a student fee depends on their support. The secondary target audience will be the university's administration, as they are the ones who will actually implement the fee and the sustainability measures it will fund. Students are educated at least to the level of a high school graduate. They are young, with students at or below the age of 25 constituting 98.84% of the total undergraduate enrolled. Judging by the fact that 91% of Murray State students receive financial aid, 28% receive federal aid, and 50% receive student loans, it is likely that most students have low incomes (Murray). The administrators are older, educated, mostly middle class white males, with high incomes and monetarily conservative attitudes. Serious resistance from either group could end the campaign for the fee. Tight budgets are on everyone's mind, so the issue of the fee amount will need significant focus in the video. The young audience of students will want to watch something intriguing, not boring. Use of humor and visually enticing graphics may be a good strategy to increase the interest factor. The administrators will want something professional. The more clean and professional the video, the more legitimate the proposal will seem.

3. The Objective

The objective is twofold, being both informative and behavioral. The first half of the objective is to inform the audience about green fees. The second half intends to change the behavior of the audience, aiming to increase support for the Sustainable Projects Fund by encouraging students to participate in surveys, attend campaign events, and sign a petition in support of the fund and its student fee.

4. The Strategy

The video will employ the strategy of social marketing and use ethical, emotional, and logical arguments. People will not be interested in the green fee if they do not understand the purpose for it. Therefore, the video will first appeal to emotion by explaining the impacts of climate change on people around the world, and ideally showing images of and interviews with those people. The video will appeal to our responsibility to preserve the environment for our own and future generations, making an ethical appeal. The logical solution to the climate crisis is to take action to prevent further environmental degradation and climate disruption. This is an example of social marketing: the product is support of the Sustainable Projects Fund, the price is the understanding of the importance of the fee and the literal cost of \$5 per semester, the place is the video itself and the public meetings held, and the promotion is the ethical, emotional, and logical appeals to support the SPF. This social marketing furthers the behavioral objective of the video by giving the audience reasons to support the green fee and the Sustainable Projects Fund.

5. The Content

The video would open with a brief informational segment on the state of the environment. Voice-over would explain the anthropogenic causes of climate disruption and how climate change is affecting society, how humans have polluted and deteriorated the environment

to our own detriment, and the initiatives to improve the current environmental situation. This segment would also explain the intersections of environmental issues with social issues and how they influence each other. Graphics like graphs and digital models of data will help explain the science behind the issues. Half of the Sustainable Projects Fund would be devoted to energy efficiency and renewable energy, so the video would focus on how Murray State's use and waste of electricity increases carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and contributes to climate change. Another focus would be water use. The video would show how fresh water is becoming scarce and how the University could decrease its water waste by increasing the efficiency of its water infrastructure. There would also be a brief overview of the amount of resources wasted when Murray State throws out food and how Murray State could save money and decrease atmospheric pollution by using fuel efficient vehicles for transportation. Providing the audience with this information and explaining how Murray State University is contributing to environmental and social issues will awaken the audience to our responsibility to take action and improve the situation.

After the informational segment, the editor would use interviews to structure the rest of the video. To make the interviews more interesting, b-roll, or supplemental footage, of things that relate to the speaker or the topic being discussed will be intercut throughout the interviews. The b-roll will also help to give visual context to ideas and concepts. As the Murray Environmental Student Society, MESS, is the group that began pushing for a green fee, there would be interviews with former and present members about why the group decided to campaign for a green fee and how the idea for a green fee turned into the Sustainable Projects Fund. These interviews would be intercut with images of MESS members participating in sustainable initiatives on campus and petitioning for a green fee.

There would also be an interview with Cara Cooper, the organizer for the Kentucky Student Environmental Coalition, which would explain that students across Kentucky are advocating for improved energy efficiency and investment in renewable energy at multiple campuses. She would further explain the benefits of green fees and inform the audience of the use of green fees at other schools in Kentucky and other states. This interview would show the audience that the campaign for the SPF at Murray State is part of a larger movement in Kentucky, giving it more credibility.

Interviews with members of the President's Commission on Sustainability, PCCS, which supports the campaign for the Sustainable Projects Fund, would present the history of the PCCS, current sustainable initiatives at Murray State, and how the Sustainable Projects Fund could increase sustainability at Murray State. The directors of Facilities Management would be interviewed about the cost savings that would come from increased efficiency of electrical and water systems, the money that has already been saved and made through Murray State's recycling program, and other sustainable projects that would make the university economically efficient. Interviews with members of the PCCS would advance the behavioral object by giving credibility to the Sustainable Projects Fund. There would also be interviews with the President of the University and the President of the Student Government Association to show that leaders at the university think Murray State should advance with sustainable initiatives. These interviews would comprise the informative part of the video.

Interviews would be conducted by appointment with those who agree to speak. The interview format would be loose, allowing for open and flexible discussion of topics. As described above, responses would be used to structure and narrate the main part of the video. These questions will form a loose structure for the interviews:

- Is there a reason to be concerned about the state of the climate and environment?
- How does society impact climate change?
- How does Murray State impact climate change?
- Is it important to take action to mitigate climate change?
- Is it important for Murray State to minimize its impact on climate change?
- Is it important to take action to mitigate the effects of other human caused environmental issues?
- Is it important for Murray State to reduce its environmental impact?
- Would you support a green fee of five dollars a semester to support sustainable initiatives at Murray State University?
- Is five dollars too much? Too little? Why or why not?
- Why would you, or why would you not, support the fee?
- Would you support the Sustainable Projects Fund if you would not support the fee?
- What would your concerns be about establishing a green fee?
- What would you like to see the money in the Sustainable Projects Fund go toward? What would you not like to see it go toward?

The Community Voice Method would be incorporated into the video by including student interviews that would show the differing opinions about the SPF and the proposed green fee. The interviews would be intercut to compose a multi-vocal perspective of the Sustainable Projects Fund. These student opinions would end the video and lead those in attendance at the meeting into an open discussion, or encourage the viewer to form his or her own opinions about the SPF and the fee after viewing the video online.

6. The Platform

The video will be produced for a meeting-style projector display. This platform is chosen for its ability to screen videos to a large assembled audience. It will also be formatted for internet viewing. The video could be part of an interactive website that provides information on general considerations for becoming more sustainable and in-depth information on sustainable initiatives that have been funded by student green fees at other schools.

7. The Concept

The video will inform the audience of the need for action on environmental issues through a voice-over narrative and provide information about and multiple perspectives of the Sustainable Projects Fund through interviews with students, faculty, and staff. The documentary will be screened at an open meeting about the Sustainable Projects Fund. The video will make use of the social marketing strategy to motivate viewers to support the green fee and the Sustainable Projects Fund. Cumming and Norwood explain that this type of documentary film “exposes meeting attendees to the personal reflections of fellow stakeholders, many of whom they may know. This tacitly gives the audience permission to be reflective themselves, to articulate values, and to employ more narrative and less antagonistic ways of speaking” (Cumming 442). The Community Voice Method helps opponents view each other as fellow stakeholders whose thoughts should be considered. Listening to fellow students, faculty, and staff discuss their opinions and the reasons behind them will encourage those at the meeting to open their minds and allow their thoughts to be challenged by differing opinions. Viewing each other as stakeholders with valid concerns, rather than just opponents whose arguments are to be countered or dismissed, will encourage meeting attendees to have an open and effective discussion of the Sustainable Projects Fund.

CONCLUSION

We must address the environmental issues threatening our generation. New technologies provide us with the ability to match the urgency needed to do so with rapid communication and education. Along with the public's low levels of information, misinformation has worsened the public's understanding of environmental issues and, therefore, the environmental condition of our planet due to lack of civic action. Misinformation relies on public ignorance, so the basic strategy to combat misinformation is education. Good environmental videos will not necessarily convince viewers to change their opinions, but they will provide viewers with information that will challenge their preconceived ideas, compelling them to look further into issues. Video media may provide a quick response to environmental degradation by educating and motivating the public to action. Social marketing is necessary to increase the realizable potential impact on the public. Good environmental video media producers identify the communication problem as public ignorance and inaction, address the science behind the issue, create their messages in the context of target markets, and increase the impact of the video through social marketing.

The Community Voice Method uses documentary style video to increase public participation in local decision-making. By combining the public voice of CVM with the attributes described above, producers of environmental video media can provide a video that realizes an information and behavioral objective. Making sure that the audience is informed on the topic, providing the audience with possible solutions to indicated problems, explaining actions the public can take to bring about solutions, and including voices from the people can increase the impact of a video. This kind of environmental video media provides its audience with knowledge and empowerment, two necessary attributes for the public engagement needed to address urgent environmental issues.

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