

## BLOCKBUSTER FILMS AS AN EFFECTIVE SOURCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

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Nowadays, ecological problems seem to be among the most vital and complicated problems. But to solve them, people need to support ideas, which they might not understand completely. At the same time human activity, as the conscious citizens' one, play the greatest role in decision-making. This situation provokes ambiguity in the society. Because people can make the government to change the environmental legal base and precipitate necessary decision-making, but they have no reasons to do it. People need more information to act correctly.

Because some global environmental issues are incomparable to social and political problems, they present special challenges to mobilize public action. Though many ecologists are currently raising alarm about necessity of policy changes, it is very difficult mission to capture and maintain public attention to the issue. It is especially difficult for the public to observe the consequences of environmental problems on an everyday basis. For example, attention to climate change decreases and wanes based on the emergence and following aftermaths of dramatic events, including droughts, hot summers, or mild winters; political developments, such as an international summit; or dramatic images such as a picture of a melting arctic ice sheet appearing on the front page of Ukrainian newspapers, and not only on Ukrainian ones. The problem of explanation to average person all the complexity and urgency of the environmental issues at the same time persists. The challenge is to demonstrate the issue existence not only in clips from TV screen, but also as routine face-to-face problems.

Aspiring to solve this situation, researchers face the problem of lack of information. They confront with this question every time while investigating public opportunities for participation in making substantial decision. This situation is acquainted to most of scientists because exists in every country in the world. To spread information ecologist should use very reliable and common way. There are many proposals how to disseminate information and to do this by the highest possible effective method, but the best one seems to be exactly film making.

To understand all films' influence on public activity, simple chain, which consists of public, journalists, and political actors parts should be investigated. All parts of this chain play very important role in spreading information, and it persuades publicity in necessity to draw great attention on environmental problems.

The most of people have learned about environmental issues by means of the media. It can be find out of regarding to a Eurobarometer-survey (Reusswig, F. Schwarzkopf, J. Pohlenz, P. 25), the most important source to gain "scientific" knowledge in Europe is TV (60,3%), followed by newspapers and magazines (37%), the radio (27,3%), schools and universities (22,3%), scientific journals (20,1%) and the internet (16,7%). It might be clear to see that audio-visual media reaches more people than print-media. Moreover, Fritz Reusswig, Julia Schwarzkopf, and Philipp Pohlenz provided survey, which proves fact that people agree, "that at least in part the coverage [information] of the media is exaggerating," but films were recognized as the best method to reach some knowledge by the most frankly way (Reusswig, F. Schwarzkopf, J. Pohlenz, P. 32).

Beyond shaping knowledge and perceptions, the film may also impact public behaviour. Audiences in anticipation of the film release after viewing the movie may be motivated to pay closer attention to news coverage of environmental problems. Or, as environmental activists' groups hope, they may even be inspired to find out more information via a Web search. The public could also be motivated to discuss the film and the issue of environmental problems with others. These kinds of behaviour are likely to shape additional learning, or even channel individuals into direct participation related to the issue, by donating money to an advocacy group, contacting an elected official, or adopting more environmentally friendly behaviour.

High public interest might make the representatives of green movements to lobby journalists in order to influence news' materials. Yet, despite the best efforts of interest groups, their attempts are often mitigated in part by the preferences and norms of reporters. As Michael Nitz conclude in his study of media coverage of environmental problems, journalists for the most part are attracted to drama and conflict as central story mechanism in covering science (Michael Nitz ). Media coverage of science increases when the potential conflict and drama appear and maximize for reporting. In other words, press attention become sharper when there is an obvious disagreement between political forces, when debate takes place in overtly political contexts as in the Verhovna Rada or the Government, or when natural events such as droughts or heat waves bring an otherwise remote scientific issue like climate change or depleting of ozone layer into dramatic and tangible focus. The result is that coverage is often "episodic," focus public's attention on a dramatic event, and then relatively disappearing for long periods of time, despite the unresolved nature of the problem, and the almost constant release of new scientific studies and findings. Science becomes framed by journalists as a political game, with heavy focus on the contest between interest groups and political forces, with journalists emphasizing who is ahead or behind to win the policy debate.

The political mobilization around the films event has helped generate a sizable spike in overall media attention to the issue of environment. As a good example, climate change problem can be illustrated. After using the Lexis-Nexis, Matthew Nisbet in the article Evaluating the Impact of The Day After Tomorrow mentions that the monthly total number of environmental-related articles appearing in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, the *USA Today*, and the *Washington Post* over the past twelve months (Nisbet, M). Media attention to climate change for the twelve-month period was biggest for May 2004, the month of the movie release; it was about 60 articles. The average for the twelve-month period was 50 total articles appearing per month, meaning that the *Day After Tomorrow* helped account for a 32% increase in media attention to climate change over the previous twelve-month average. In a time of many competing events and issues notably the conflict as during president election in Ukraine and the ratification of Kyoto

Protocol by Russia, films serves an important media agenda setting function by focus drawing on the climate change debate (Korneyev).

At the same time, the main target of both public and journalists efforts lead to political changes such new laws exception, correction of existing laws, creating specific committees and other political actions. The last part of the public-journalists-politics chain seems to be the very significant and even the more important than the first and the second. Policy advocates on both sides of the issue use films release as “windows of opportunity” to mobilize attention of politics and support them to except preferred policy options. In the process they seek to strategically frame environmental issue in ways that resonate with the focusing event, promoting interpretations of the issue that favor their preferred policy outcomes.

Therefore, films must be one of the best ways to remember and rearrange information, neither do the others. There are many examples of successful information spreading among citizens with help of films such as *The Day after Tomorrow*, *Jurassic Park* (information about genetic experiments), and *Armageddon* (possibility of asteroids’ collision). Of course, these films were not assigned to inform about ecological situation or persuade somebody of problem existence. Even though everything had been done to make money only, society has received an extra product – powerful source of environmental information.

Films that include environmental information could be the method to influence on every part of above-mentioned public-journalists-politics chain. Mutual interaction between them seems very knotty problem, but every part apparently changes after films viewing. Depth of the issue is arrogated because both journalists and political actors belong to public. Their actions must be investigated not only as professional activity, but also as activity, which come from public decision. Moreover, public impact on mass media may be greater than vice versa sometimes. All these influences can be investigate only in one strict order, which include all parts of chain, but it is really complicated to foreseen all mutual impacts. At the same time, the fact of films impact on public opinion cannot be refused anyway. At the first, films influence on human behaviour, and people may be motivated to pay closer attention to news coverage of environmental problems after viewing. At the second, films make resonance among journalists; moreover, cinematograph makes them perceive it both publicly and professionally. And the main changes, caused by films, are political changes, which can influence on whole world’s state and make it better.

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