Lorraine Whitmarsh, Saffron O'Neill and Irene Lorenzoni (Eds.), **Engaging the Public with Climate Change: Behaviour Change and Communication.** London, UK: Earthscan Ltd., 2011, 320 pp. $84.95 (hardcover).

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Although it may seem as though the public, at least in some countries, is slowly accepting the existence of climate change and some of its dire consequences, there is still significant reluctance to tackle the issue head-on in both the private and public sectors. *Engaging the Public with Climate Change: Behaviour Change and Communication*, edited by Lorraine Whitmarsh, Saffron O'Neill and Irene Lorenzoni, explains many of the difficulties related to public acceptance of climate change and of engaging the public in making the changes necessary to address this complex challenge. An interdisciplinary look at the emerging field of environmental communication, the book draws primarily from the UK context, but many of its insights are likely relevant for international readers.
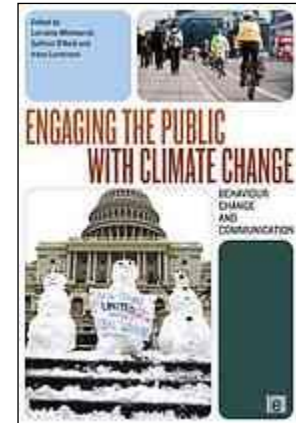
Engaging the Public with Climate Change is a collection of chapters from both academics and practitioners in such varied fields as social psychology, neuroscience, marketing, and agricultural extension studies, among others. An introductory chapter sets the context and introduces the structure of the book, followed by seven chapters which make up a section on "Theories and Models," another seven chapters on "Methods, Media and Tools," and a concluding chapter.

The introduction is somewhat dense and overwhelming; a whirlwind tour of the literature in this emerging field presents the challenges of engaging the public with climate change over only a few pages. It also sets out the structure of the book, which is divided into two parts: Part One deals with theories and models for looking at public engagement with climate change, while Part Two explores methods, media and tools. The introduction also provides an overview of each chapter, its approach to public engagement and its disciplinary roots.

Chapter 1 looks at models of behavior change in general, and specifically looks at explaining behavior change with respect to environmentalism. It also explains why human habits can be especially difficult to change. Chapter 2 explores a proposed model for limiting carbon use among individuals, in the form of individual carbon budgets.

Chapter 3 then provides an analysis of UK climate change policy in relation to public engagement. An examination of the effectiveness of comparing positive and negative examples within and between nations in improving citizens' intentions toward engaging in more environmentally responsible behavior is provided in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 looks at how to dismantle the "consumption-happiness myth" on the

basis of recent neuroscience on affect regulation, conscious and non-conscious processes, habit formation, and psychological development. The potential of, and the need to, use action research to adapt effectively to climate change among farmers in Australia is presented in Chapter 6. And concluding Part One is Chapter 7, which looks at the concept of ecological citizenship and public engagement with climate change from a Canadian perspective.

Part Two on "Methods, Media and Tools" begins with some lessons learned through engaging people in energy saving programs in the UK in Chapter 8. Continuing on in Britain, Chapter 9 explores social learning through "Open Homes" events where people are invited into the homes of people who have completed eco-renovations. Chapter 10 introduces the concept of EcoTeams and how to increase their social impact. A marketing and communications perspective is used in Chapter 11 to explore the role of communications from government and NGOs in public engagement. Chapter 12 looks at some of the challenges and opportunities for engagement in relation to improved measurement and displays of energy demand. The role of new media in public climate change engagement is explored in Chapter 13; case studies provided include the Student Switch Off campaign from the UK (www.studentswitchoff.org) and Americans for Prosperity, an anti-climate legislation campaign in the United States (www.americansforprosperity.org). Chapter 14 provides an overview of some community-based groups involved in envisioning and building low-carbon communities, such as the Transition Towns Network and the Low Carbon Communities Network.

The concluding chapter attempts to bring the various messages of the chapters' authors together, by revisiting themes such as: diverse forms of engagement; the idea that there are multiple motivations for, and many barriers to, individual engagement; that there are many different methods, facilitators and scales of engagement; identifying what some effective and ineffective methods of engagement may be; and a discussion of how to measure success.

The conclusion then proposes a conceptual framework for engagement. A table provides an overview of three different aims of engagement activities, the format (i.e., top-down or bottom-up), strategy, description, and possible evaluation opportunities. The authors use a figure to present positive influences on the dimensions of engagement. It may have been helpful for the reader to have seen this synthesis of some of the main ideas of the book earlier, to help frame the various chapters for the reader, and then to return to it in the conclusion with further discussion to support them. The book concludes with some suggestions for future research and an assertion that the debate around climate change needs to be refocused, perhaps with less emphasis on international climate negotiations.

Although there is a section within the introduction called "Aims, structure, and features of this book," after reading the chapter a few times I remained unclear as to the book's intended purpose. It claims to be "a timely analysis of how to engage diverse publics through both theoretical insights and innovative practical initiatives" (p. 6), however, I believe an opportunity was missed to better integrate the diverse findings of the chapters. The book is very effective as a sampling of the many challenges of engaging the public with climate change, relating theories as well as practical insights from several disciplinary perspectives to the problem, but is weak on integrating them into a cohesive whole. Unfortunately, I found the division of the book into two parts, the first entitled "Theories and Models" and

the second "Methods, Media and Tools" does little to orient the reader as the chapters move along several dimensions (i.e., disciplines, regions, scope, sectors, etc).

The introduction claims that the book "brings together learning from a range of geographical contexts . . . to provide an international perspective on public engagement" (p. 6), but I found the book to be rather UK-centric, with a smattering of entries from Europe, Canada and Australia. Given that the most severe impacts that are already arising from climate change are being felt in low-income countries, there is an apparent gap in the book's international perspective. In addition, the book doesn't seem to draw enough on the emerging field of capacity development where communication and social learning processes feature prominently. The United Nations Development Program defines capacity development as "the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time" (UNDP, 2009, p. 5). Capacity development scholars and practitioners are very much involved in multi-actor engagement, communication, participatory processes and adult education, which are critical for addressing "wicked" problems such as those associated with climate change.

Engaging the Public and Climate Change presents some very interesting theories and examples on climate change communication from an interdisciplinary perspective. Although weighted toward the UK experience, the book may very well be of interest to policy makers, practitioners and academics around the world as an interdisciplinary sampling of potential approaches to addressing the challenge of engaging the public with climate change.

References

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