

Frame Building in a Digital Age: An Analysis of Framing Dynamics Between Climate Advocates and Skeptics in the UK

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Abstract

We propose a new way of thinking about agenda and frame building in a digital age. In an era in which a multitude of interconnected actors with blurring roles shape such processes, political communication needs to depart from the idea that digital platforms form homogenous agendas that can be attributed to specific actor types. Instead, we suggest that agenda and frame building are structured by competing camps composed of a variety of actors with distinct political positions within issue networks. We develop an approach of inter-camp agenda formation and empirically illustrate how it can be measured for the UK climate change issue by identifying hyperlink networks and applying content analyses to classify actors and frames. Our results indicate the relevance of camps in the agenda-formation process, with climate skeptics being more influential. We conclude by discussing the benefits and limitations of this study as well as future paths for research.

Bio

Silke Adam is professor of communication science at the University of Bern (CH). She focuses on political communication research, especially on challenges through digitalization.