Management of advice and relational work among the interactions in the Facebook group 'PCT Class of 2020'

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Gruppe von Pacific Crest Trail Association

PCT Class of 2020

🔒 Private Gruppe · 8.919 Mitglieder

+ Einladen

Programm

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Introduction

– Facebook group 'PCT Class of 2020' group for people who intend to hike

Pacific Crest Trail in the year 2020

– Traditionally very friendly environment

     – Climate mentioned in meta-comments

– People seeking advice openly

– Advice given usually very freely, mostly solicited

– Usual focus: all things hiking: gear, mileage a day, water stations etc.

Introduction

– Aim: 3 threads posted in Facebook group mid-March (when Covid-19 cases started to also rise on the West Coast)

– Case study: How advice is managed in a group that usually entails 'general' advice-giving and now suddenly experiences a shift to advice-giving from a more moral perspective

→Change: experience-based to moral judgments

– Based on theoretical framework of 'relational work', 'face management' and 'advice management'

Research Questions

– How is advice (concerning if people should stay on trail or leave it) managed in these 3 threads?

    – How is the morally sensitive topic of hiking the trail in this time negotiated?

    – How do people ask for advice for this situation?

    – How is advice given and negotiated?

    – How is advice embedded in the relational work management in the comment section?

    – Do the original posters respond to the advice at all?

Theoretical Framework: Advice-giving

– OED: 'opinion given, or offered as to action; counsel'

– Not trying to get H to do stg in sense of request
– But telling them what is *best for them* →Weaker directive force than requests

–Additional element: future action *recommended* by advice-giver →combination of assessing, judging, and directing

– Advice-giver offers opinion on how to solve particular problem

– Solicited vs. unsolicited

– Asymmetry: Difference in power, needs to be mitigated →face-threatening

Theoretical Framework: Relational Work

– Relational work = All work invested by individuals in…

    – construction, maintenance, reproduction, transformation of

    interpersonal relationships

    – among those engaged in social practice

    – relationships dynamically constructed in interaction with participants

    – according to situated contexts, norms

Theoretical Framework: Face Management

– Brown & Levinson(1978/1987)

– Based on Speech Act Theory, Gricean Grammatics

– Basic assumption: everyone has a 'face'

    – positive social value of a person, image of self that is delineated in terms of approved social attributes

– Interpersonal communication always:

    – cooperation in keeping face

    – face vulnerable

    – mutual interest of people to maintain each other's face

        →face-enhancing behaviour

        →face-maintaining

        →face-aggravating/face-threatening

Methodology

–Transcription of the posts (that makes sure to include the turns/replies to other comments)

–Qualitative analysis of the comments, with a focus on:

– turn-takings in the discussion

– face-management

– How/If advice is taken up (or simply dropped, respectively not replied to by the original poster)

Data

– Facebook Group 'PCT Class of 2020'

– Counted on 05.10.20 >9000 members

– Mainly consist of people who wanted to hike Pacific Crest Trail in 2020

– Large percentage American but also very international

– Age groups diverse: early 20s – late 50s/60s

–Focused on virtual Community of Practice (VCoP) sharing particular endeavour

(hiking the trail) // featuring a very diverse global membership

– 3 threads mid-March (random selection) people asking explicitly/implicitly for

advice on whether they should stay on trail/travel to the trail or not

– 20–40 comments each

Data

– Ethical concerns:

    – Technically a private group

    – Concealing private information of posters and commenters

Examples: Thread 1

11. März · 🌐

Will you even let us in?

Europa is approaching China-like Corona numbers. And in your country, the virus is about to really hit the fan as well, with 1000 cases and probably many, many more who couldn't or wouldn't get tested.

Numbers show that the infections can roughly double every other day. Provided you test them, of course. It's quite likely that US infections and deaths will reach very uncomfortable numbers shortly. That's not fear mongering, it's observation and math.

In your opinion, will you then expand your travel ban to other viral hot spots, and keep us foreign PCT hopefuls all grounded? Or could it be more along the lines of "too late now, it's global, let's fight it inside out"?

👍😆 7   41 Kommentare

Examples: Thread 1

Ill take the fear mongering of the snow last year over the fear mongering of the corona virus any day. You all will be fine, go kick some ass 2020
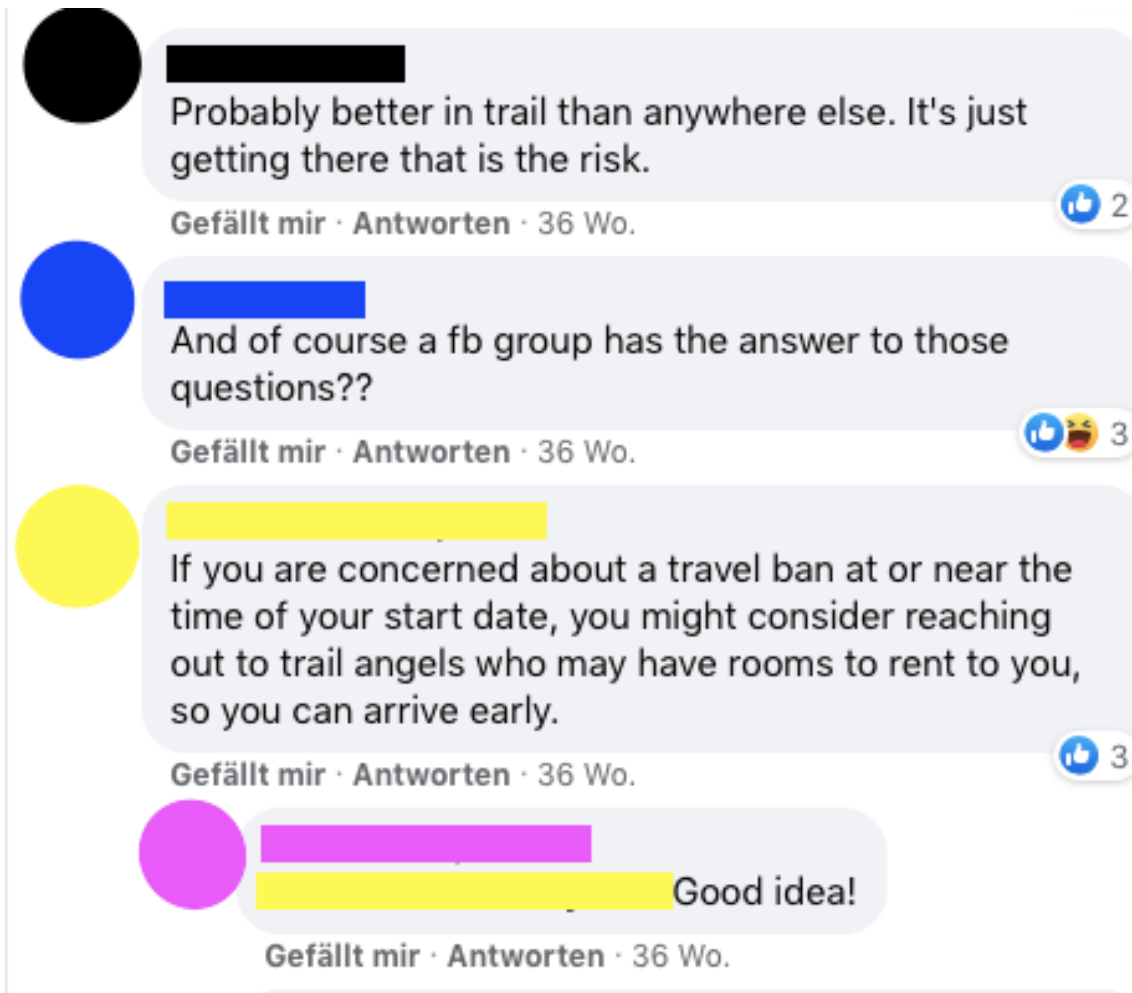
Gefällt mir · Antworten · 36 Wo.   👍 3

well, both are valid reasons to be scared. The snow was really bad last year and being afraid of the US banning European countries is absolutely not redundant. We're in election year and Trump will do anything to rescue his ass including banning half of the world from entering.

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 36 Wo. · Bearbeitet   👍 2

Examples: Thread 1

Probably better in trail than anywhere else. It's just getting there that is the risk.

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 36 Wo.   👍 2

And of course a fb group has the answer to those questions??

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 36 Wo.   👍😂 3

If you are concerned about a travel ban at or near the time of your start date, you might consider reaching out to trail angels who may have rooms to rent to you, so you can arrive early.

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 36 Wo.   👍 3

Good idea!

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 36 Wo.

Examples: Thread 2

16. März · �

I'm due for a March 25 start.

My greatest concern is food resupply.

Can anyone one the trail *now* comment on whether supply towns are well stocked on food options?

👍 10   21 Kommentare

Examples: Thread 2

Things look good in Wrightwood.

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 35 Wo. 👍 3

CANCEL the mots important is health......of employees of s tores, hôtels, post office, inhabitants of small town you can contaminated (without knowing you are infested) and you can be contaminated to !!!!!

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 35 Wo. ❤️👍 3

Our southern California scene appears somewhat different from the Eastern Sierra small towns. There are resupply grocery stores in Idyllwild, Big Bear Lake area, Wrightwood, Tehachapi/Mojave, & Lake Isabella/Kernville, Ridgecrest. But Inyo County (Lone Pine, Independence, & Bishop) has issued a comment "Your adventure can wait" comment.

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 35 Wo. 👍 1

Examples: Thread 3

18. März

Are there any Hikers from Europe on the Trail right now? Or will be starting in the next few Days?

👍 3   22 Kommentare

Examples: Thread 3

We don't want and can't do a shelter in place for weeks in this foreign country!

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 35 Wo.

↳ _____ hat geantwortet · 4 Antworten

Hi _____
Lauft einfach los. Ihr habt die Reise so lange geplant.
Meine Tochter ist die Strecke vor 2 Jahren gelaufen und nach kurzer Zeit war ihr Motto " the trail provides".
Lasst euch nicht verrückt machen. Es gibt auf der langen Strecke immer wieder Hindernisse, aber ihr scheint viel Wandererfahrung zu haben.
Es ist so ein tolles Erlebnis, lasst es euch nicht entgehen.

👍 6

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 35 Wo.

_____ vielen Dank für Deine lieben Worte 🙏 ···

Gefällt mir · Antworten · 35 Wo.

Discussion

– Random Selection → explicit and implicit seeking for council

– Responses often information

– Meta-comments

– Assessments

– Referrals (other's experiences, authorities)

– Users often comment upon other's statements

– OP's rarely interact with commenters, defensive statements

– In common: all questions verging around the topic of hiking during this time

started the discussion (advice-giving) on whether they should go ahead or not

Conclusion

– Morally sensitive subjects →likely a lot of interaction, heated tone

– Rich data for Relational work assessments

– Different strategies for replying to OP's questions

– Different strategies for following up on comments

– Internationality/Multilingual

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Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?