Professor’s article examining rhetoric used by the coal industry is reprinted in dozens of newspapers

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Communication Studies Prof. Jennifer Peeples accepts an award from Brad Hall, head of the Department of Languages, Philosophy and Communication Studies, and Joseph Ward, CHaSS dean.

Communication Studies Professor Jennifer Peeples’ research is going where few academic books do: mainstream media.

Peeples and fellow researchers wrote the article “Inside the Coal Industry’s Rhetorical Playbook,” which originally ran in The Conversation, an independent not-for-profit website that publishes content sourced from the academic and research community. That article, in turn, was picked up by the Associated Press and published in about 65 newspapers across the country.

Peeples is the co-author of Under Pressure: Coal Industry Rhetoric and Neoliberalism (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), along with Steve Schwarze, professor at the University of Montana; Jen Schneider, associate professor in public policy at Boise State University; and Pete Bsumek, associate professor of communication studies at James Madison University.

Peeples and her colleagues examine the rhetoric used by coal industry leaders, particularly in the current political environment of former Pres. Obama’s so-called “war on coal” and Pres. Donald Trump’s counter-promise to revive the industry.

Following the 2016 election, Trump’s offered extravagant promises, such as, “I will cancel job-killing restrictions on the production of American energy – including shale energy and clean coal – creating many millions of high-paying jobs.”

The authors discuss why such rhetoric as “an industry under siege” continues despite changing environmental and economic forces that have pushed natural gas to the forefront.

Read the story at https://theconversation.com/inside-the-coal-industrys-rhetorical-playbook-66260