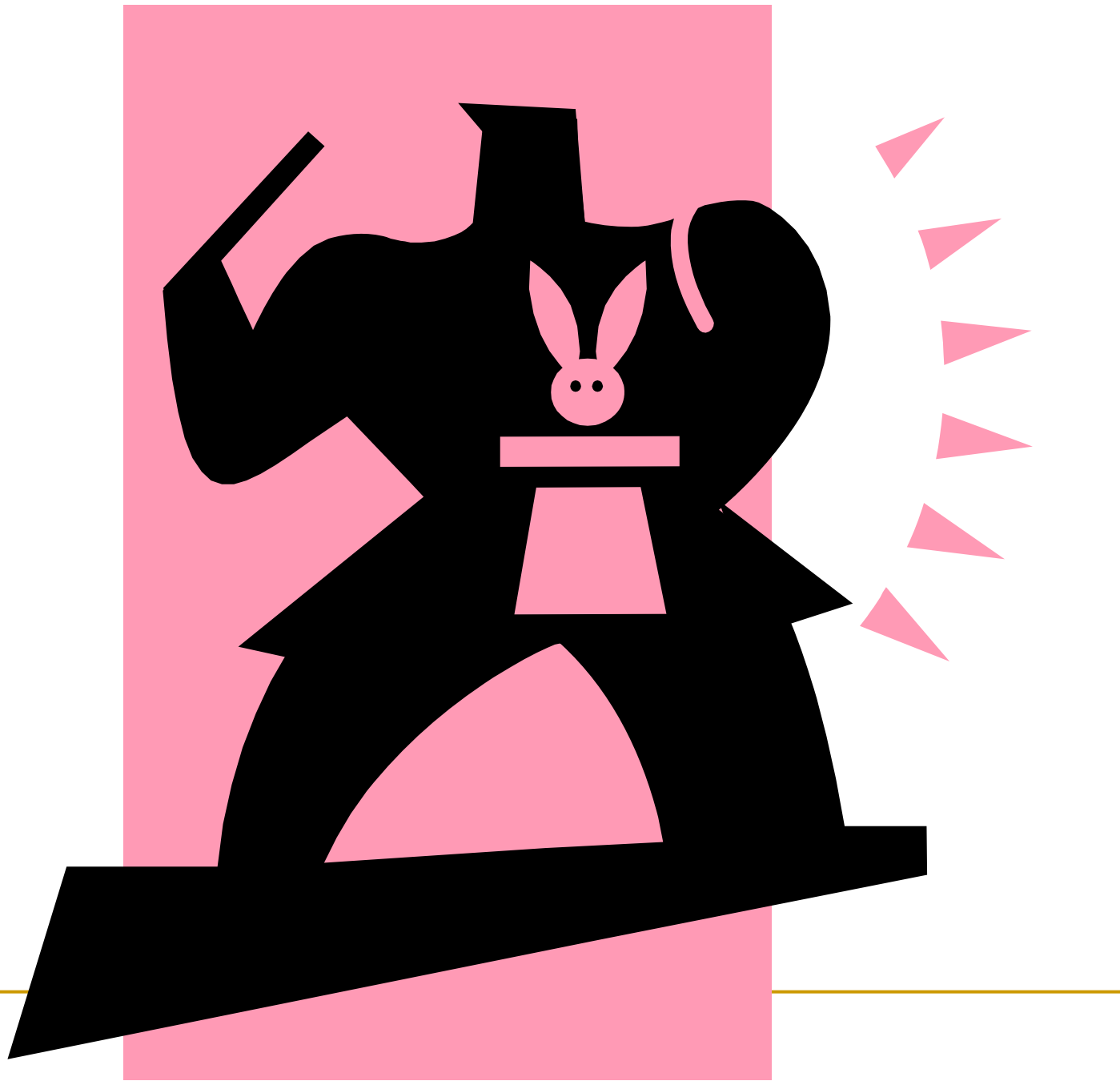

INFORMATION IS NOT ENOUGH

Caron Chess

Rutgers University

Chess_c@aesop.rutgers.edu



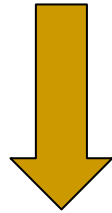
THREE SEGMENTS:

DO THEY APPLY TO NEOs?

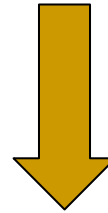
1. Do you believe in magic?
 2. How does fiction affect reality?
 3. Are you prepared for the organizational twilight zone?
-

Do you believe in magic?

Information



Attitudes

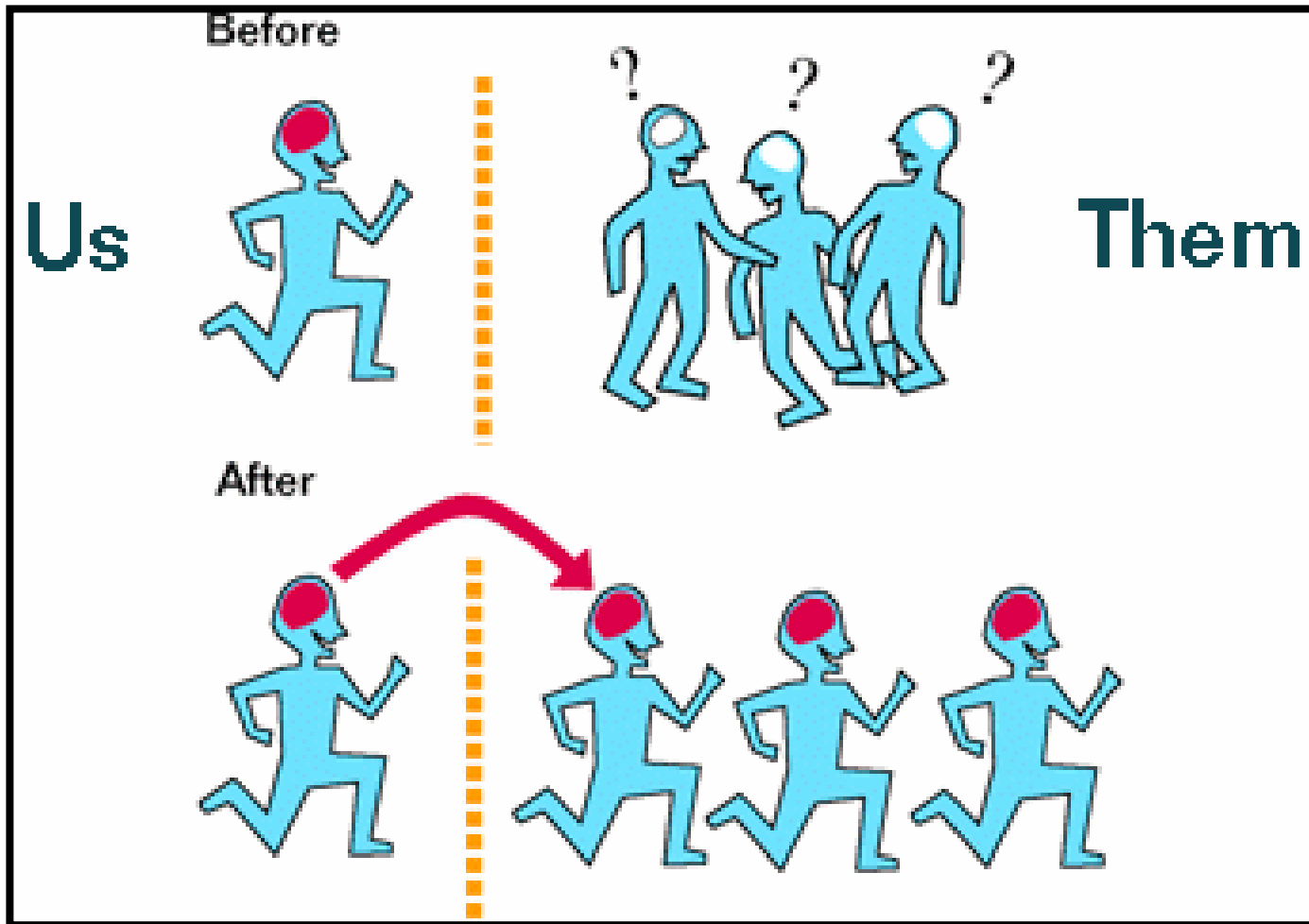


Behavior

They all listen...



Magical thinking



Energy conservation example

- Participants in energy workshop
 - Designed to focus reducing home use
 - Changes in knowledge
 - Changes in attitude

 - **NO CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR**
(e.g. only 1 out of 40 put in new thermostat)
Geller, 1981
-

Energy conservation example

- 85% respondents say energy crisis is serious
- Respondents who say energy conservation is key strategy...

NO MORE LIKELY TO CONSERVE...

Archer et al., 1985

KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS

A review of the literature

50% of studies:

- ❑ Know more = against nuclear power
- ❑ No difference in knowledge between pro- and anti-nukes

Johnson, 1993

Not only laypeople...

White male effect...

Male toxicologists more likely to agree:

**Use of chemicals has improved health more than
harmed**

**Decisions about health risks should be left to
experts**

**Canadians should accept some risks to strengthen
economy**

Slovic et al., 1995

Where you sit....

Studies found affiliation effects:

- **A study producing cancer in animals indicates that we can reasonably be sure that the chemical will cause cancer in human beings.**
 - **22%** **industry agreed**
 - **48.9%** **academics agreed**
 - **52.7%** **government agreed**
-

INFLUENCES ON PERCEPTION

- Evaluation of speakers' credibility
- Listeners' prior beliefs
- Pre-existing common ground
- Social context
- Characteristics of the risk other than probability

Fox and Irwin, 1998

Affective response

- Experiential and intuitive response
- Essential for processing “information”
- Not irrational in fact: “Nothing could be further from the truth”

Slovic on Neos

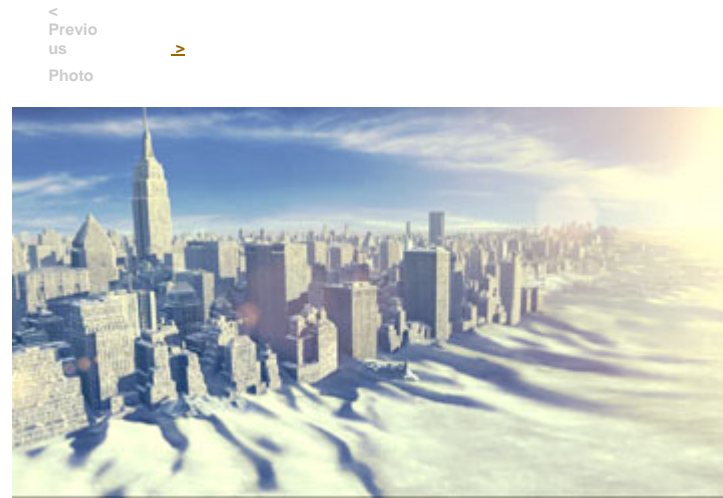
Communication 101

- Know your audience
 - Use appropriate, multiple channels
 - Multiple times
 - Use credible spokespeople
 - Don't think about what until you have considered how and why
-

Impact of fiction on reality...



The Day After Tomorrow



The Big Apple is frozen solid in 20th Century Fox's [The Day After Tomorrow](#) - 2004.

Predications: “The Day After...”

- influence perceptions of climate change?
 - Global warming as mere fiction
 - Fight for global warming legislation
 - Bush vetoes
 - Kerry wins election
- belief in “wrong” science?
- more media coverage?
- no change at all?

***Tony Leiserowitz, “Surveying the impact of the day after”
Environment, 2004***

The day after “The Day After...

How concerned are you about g.w. ?

somewhat or strongly	nonwatchers	watchers
	72	83**/

A new ice age in the next 50 years

41%

But did not pick an extreme model of climate sensitivity , < 10%

The day after “The Day After

- Watchers more likely to
 - Purchase a more fuel efficient car
 - Talk to friends and family
 - Join, donate money, etc
- Temporary blip?

BUT no shift in US opinion overall

21 million viewers but only 10% of population

Teachable moment

151 substantive news stories in 3 months

39% on the science

37% on the politics

Leiserowitz, *Environment* 2004



You unlock this door with the key to your imagination. Beyond it is another dimension.

A dimension of sound

A dimension of sight

A dimension of mind



Risk communication research

Psychological theory

Individual unit of analysis

Perception of laypeople

Organizational framework

“Studying up”

Twilight Zone

- ***risk uncertainty***
how to protect health, reduce risk...
 - ***organizational uncertainty***
which agency should do what
which agency has the authority?

and lives at stake...
-

Leaving the Organizational Twilight Zone

Who answers calls from the public?

Who talks to the media?

What about responding to risks?

Interorganizational communication....

task force: coordination of communication

Communication among orgs (police and health agencies) determined

Risk communication to those who called in about white powder

Emergent organizations

Discussion...Clarity needed

- Agreements re priorities
- ID re problems and conflicts in advance
- Understand roles of org
- Consider the locl
- Consider who are the "first responders"

But also need flexibility, responsiveness,
Allow for emergent groups

Unlikely...unwise...





"Instead of 'It sucks' you could say, 'It doesn't speak to me.'"



Threat works only if...

- Does not numb
- Tied to efficacy
 - Say who is at risk
 - Explain how to cut losses



Global climate change

Hidden Hazard

Far, far away

in time

in space

Unheeded until they reach disaster stage

Issue cultures

“sets of social problems that become commanding concern in society...”

terrorism post 9-11

Command media attention

Related local events make news

Ungar, 2007 Creating a Climate for Change

Marketing a social problem

- Make issue “sticky”
 - Bridging metaphor
 - Ozone hole
 - Greenhouse effect
 - Emergent issue culture?
 - Goes beyond the issue-attention cycle
-

TO WARN OR NOT

- Clear system for who and how
- Trade offs: probability, likelihood people will not respond unless an immediate

Vs

- Ethical concerns
 - Credibility
 - Safety
 - “when in doubt warn” 3-6
-

EDUCATION

consider the audience

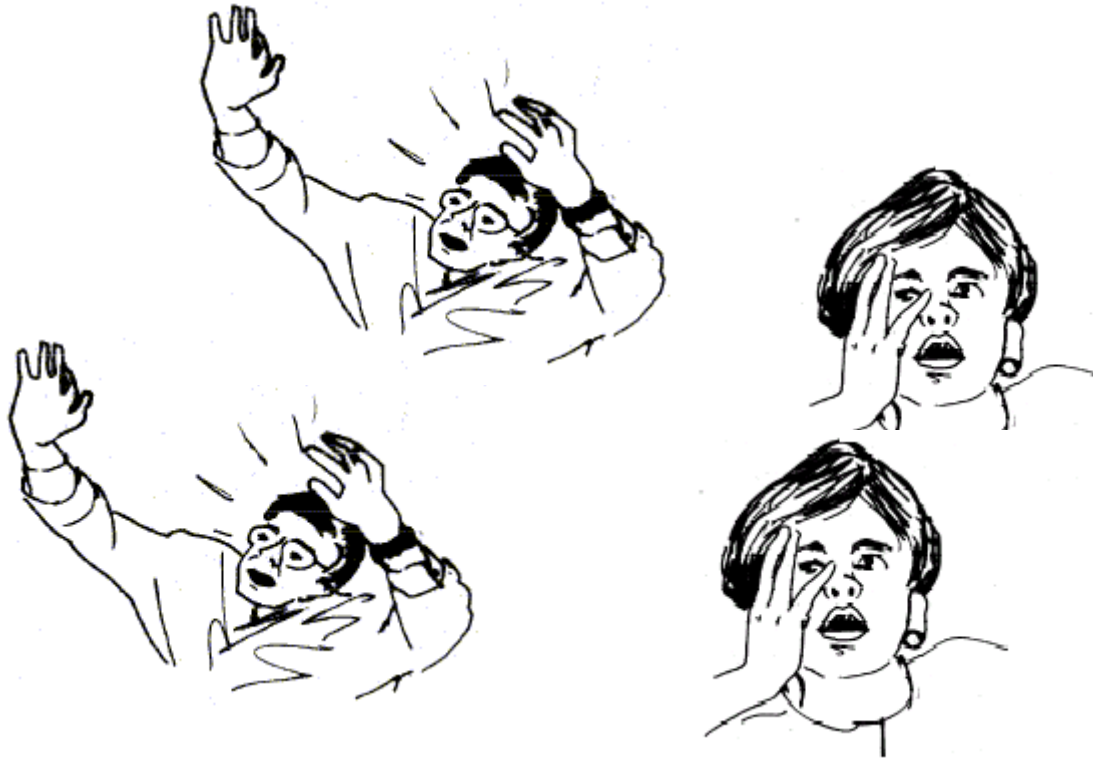
Who is most likely to protect themselves?

- A middle-aged person whose house was seriously damaged in a past disaster
 - Twenty year old male college student
 -
 - Sound public education doesn't change any
-

-
- 074820 646458
 - 11>
 - **November 2004**
 - **Volume 46 Number 9**
 - **\$5.00 U.S.**
 - **\$6.50 Canada**
 - ***W H E R E S C I E N C E A N D P O L I C Y M E E T***
 - ®
 - **ALSO . . .**
 - **SUVs:**
 - **Perception**
 - **versus**
 - **performance**
 - **Stormwater**
 - **on the Web**
 - **Surveying**
 - **the Impact**
 - ***The Day After Tomorrow***
-

Panic myth

Panic about panic



-
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-

Cry wolf

- Response will occur if people know the reasons from previous “misses
 - False alarms if explained may enhance awareness and ability to process information
 - False alarms as opportunities for education instead of problems 3-3
-

“Public response to warnings is much more the result of the information that people have access to during the warning period than anything else, including pre-event public education”

Mileti page 4

Warnings about warnings





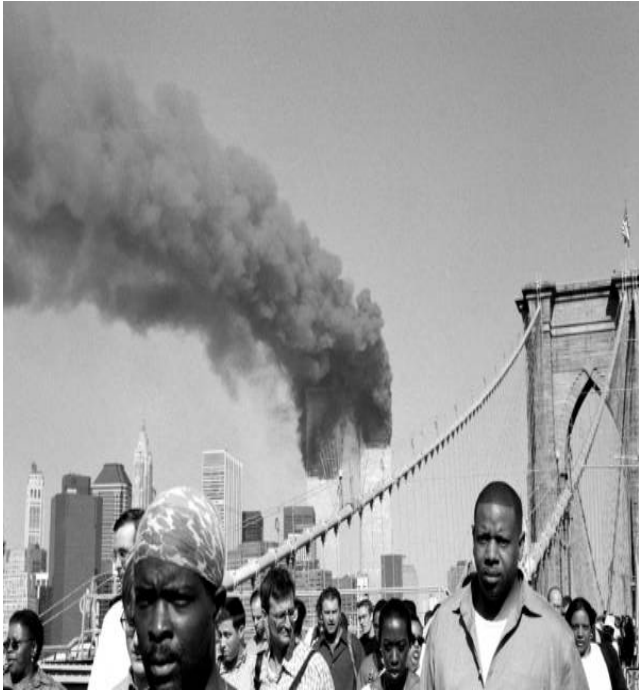
Non-panic finding is robust

- Research from US Strategic Bombing Survey
 - Plane crashes
 - Natural disasters
 - Biologically threatening events
 - 1793 yellow fever in Philadelphia
 - 1918 Spanish flu
 - 1984 Rajneesh cult attack
 - 1932-1945 Japanese attacks on China
-

Why is panic rare?

- Norms
 - Enduring social structures
 - Bonding in face of common enemy
-

Non-panic realities



Counter intuitive

- Public education should raise uncertainty about the issues
 - Leads people to seek information
 - Leads to discussion with friends etc
-

Organizations survive

- Pre-existing relationships
 - Organizational capacity
 - Adaptive
 - Flexible
-