



4C

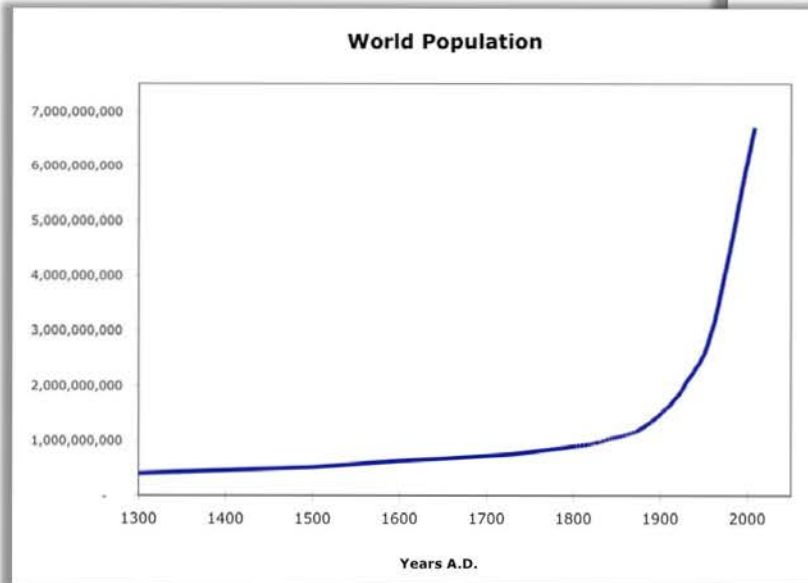
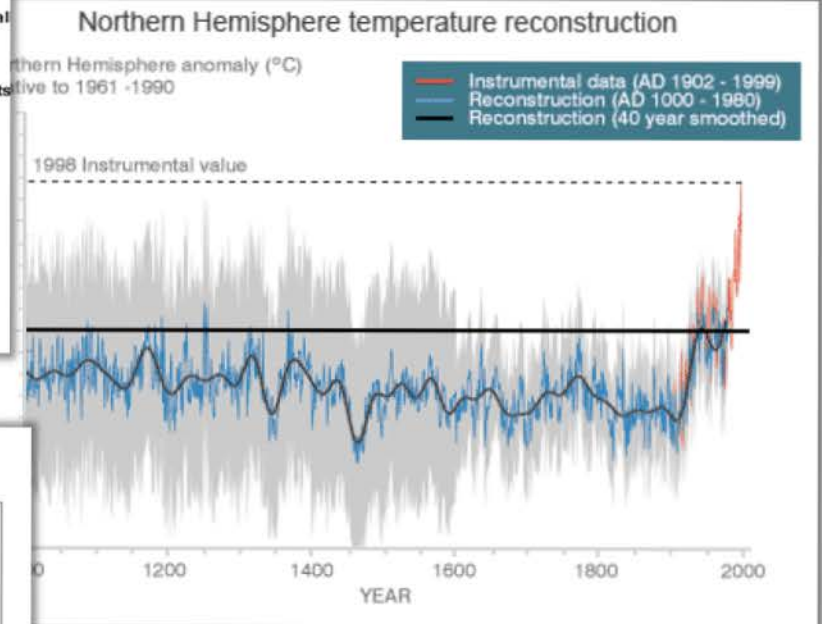
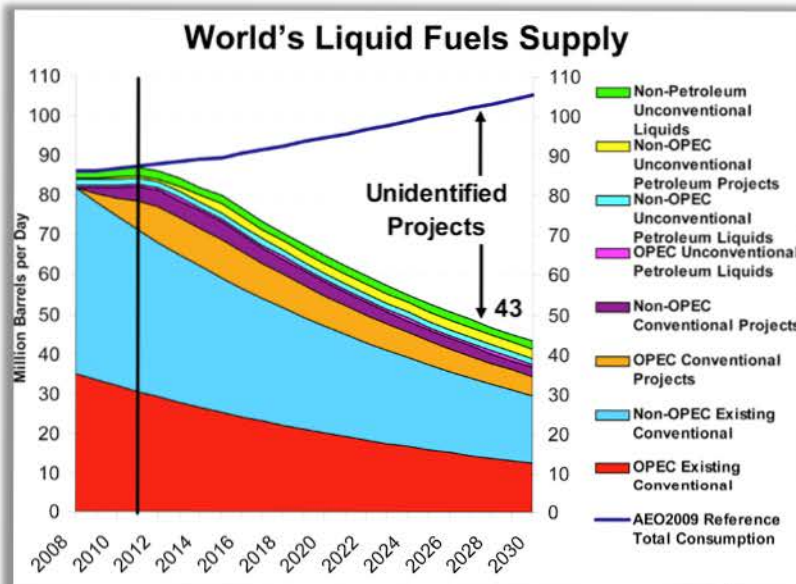
George Mason University
Center for Climate Change Communication

Climate Change Communication 101

Getting on the Right Track

March 21, 2012

Justin Rolfe-Redding, M.A.





Road Map

Challenges/Opportunities You are special

Audience Public Doesn't Exist

BONUS!

Messages 101 KISS



Challenges/Opportunities You are special

Challenges

- Impacts are distant
- Impacts are intangible
- Science is complex
- The issue is politicized
- The solutions seem difficult



Opportunities

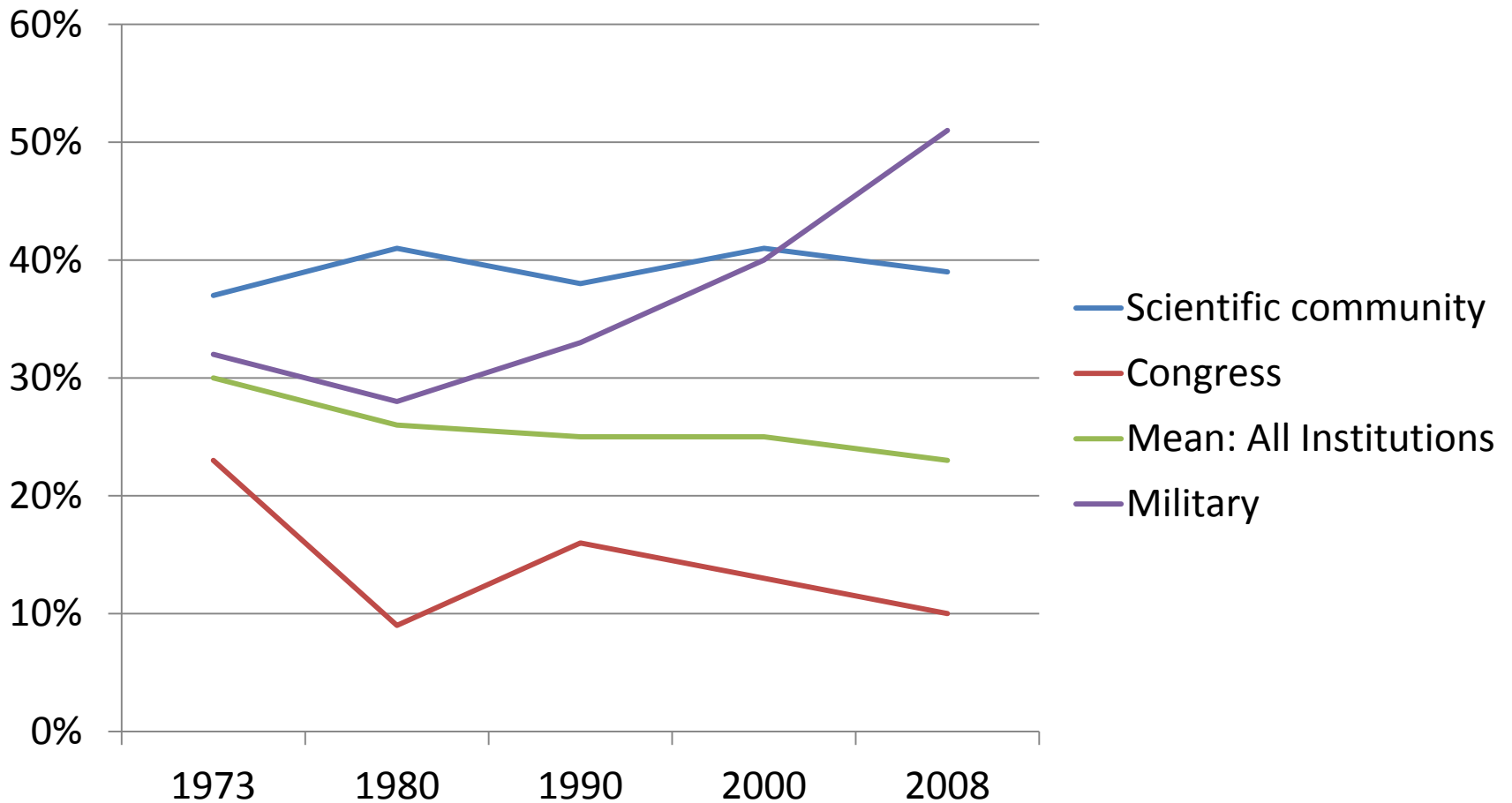
- People *are* receptive
- Communication matters
- You have credibility
- You have solutions



Credibility = Trust x Expertise

Confidence in People Running Various Institutions

(“A great deal of confidence”)



Source: General Social Science Survey, NORC, University of Chicago.

Audience Public Doesn't Exist



What We Do

Social Marketing



A background image of a busy city street, likely Times Square in New York City, with bright lights, billboards, and a pedestrian crossing sign. Overlaid on this image is the text "The 'general public' does not exist." in a large, bold, black font with a blue outline. The word "general" is italicized.

**The “*general public*”
does not exist.**

Audience

To maximize impact:

Target your most important audience(s)

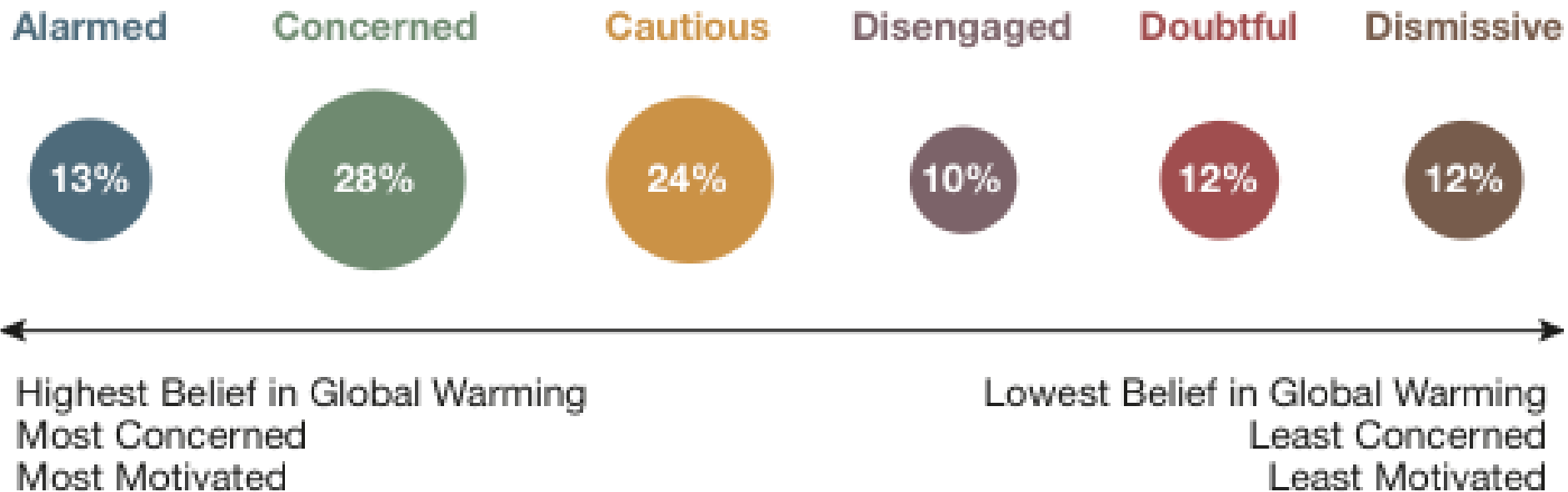
Tailor your messages accordingly



Who are your most important audiences?



Global Warming's Six Americas



Proportion represented by area

Faces of Global Warming's Six Americas

Alarmed

13%

Concerned

28%

Cautious

24%

Disengaged

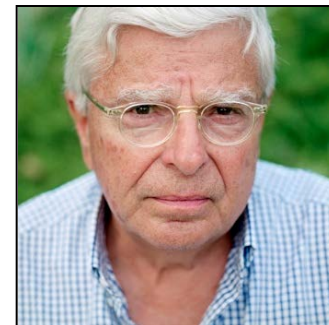
10%

Doubtful

12%

Dismissive

12%



Alarmed Alice



Alice is completely sure global warming is happening, she believes it is human caused, and she feels personally threatened by it. She also believes that people around the world are already being harmed by it, or will soon be.

Alice is only modestly more likely than average to be taking steps to reduce her energy use, but she is far more likely than average to use her purchasing power - and her voice as a citizen - to advocate for change. Alice supports a wide range of policy responses to address global warming.

Concerned Claudia

Claudia is very sure global warming is happening, and she believes it is human causes, but she feels less personally threatened by it than Alice. She believes that global warming will begin to harm people around the world 10+ years from now.

Claudia is average in terms of taking measures to reduce her energy consumption, but well above average in terms of using her purchasing power to advocate for change. Claudia supports aggressive government policies, but is unlikely to contact her elected officials to say so.



Cautious Carl



Carl is only somewhat sure that global warming is happening, and he is equally likely to see it as human caused or not. He sees global warming as a more distant threat – primarily a threat to other people – that won't begin to hurt people around the world for another 25 - 50 years.

Carl is taking average steps to reduce his energy consumption, but isn't involved in addressing global warming in other ways. He is, however, modestly supportive of a range of proposed policies.

Disengaged Diane

Diane thinks global warming may be happening, but she's not at all sure. She's given it very little thought, doesn't consider it personally important, and doesn't feel she knows anything about it.

Diane has done relatively little to reduce her use of energy at home, but because she has lower than average income she is more likely than average not to rely on her own car.

Despite her low level of personal concern, Diane is more supportive than Carl of mounting a national response to global warming.



Doubtful David



David says he doesn't know if real or not, but if it is, he's pretty sure it isn't human-caused. David certainly isn't worried about it; he sees global warming as a very distant threat that won't harm people for at least another 100 years.

David isn't in favor of a national response to global warming per se, but he is modestly in favor of a range of energy-saving policy measures, and is active in improving energy-efficiency in his home.

Dismissive Dan

Dan simply does not believe that global warming is happening – or that it's in God's hands - and he believes that many scientists share his views. Needless to say, Dan doesn't support any form of government action against global warming.

Although vigorously opposed to government action on global warming, he himself is quite active in making energy-efficient improvements to his home.



“If you could ask an expert on global warming one question, which question would you ask?”

What can the US do to reduce global warming?

How do you know that global warming is occurring?

What harm will global warming cause?



Activate the Alarmed and Concerned

Alarmed



Concerned



Convince the Cautions and Disengaged

Cautious



Disengaged



Reach out to the Doubtful and Dismissive

Doubtful

Dismissive

12%

12%





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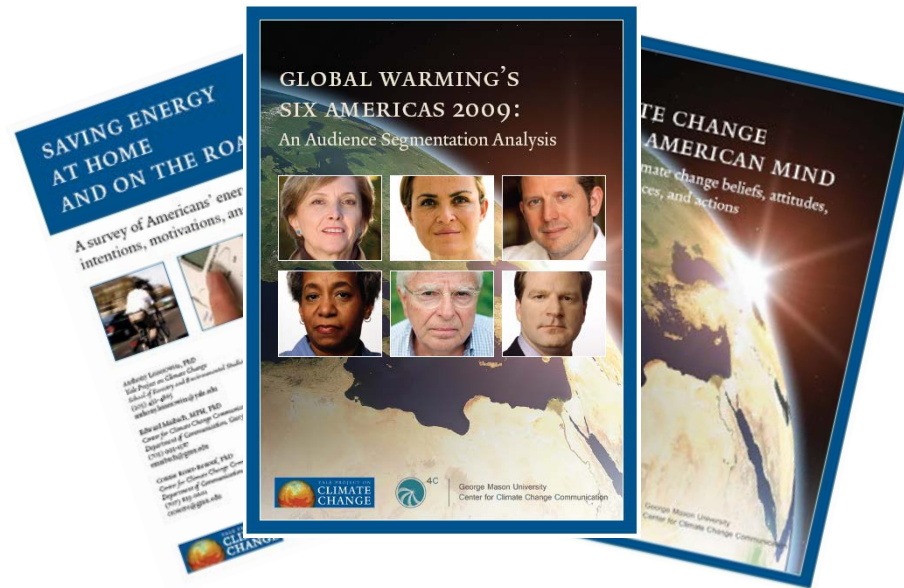
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Thank You!

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All 4C reports can be downloaded at:

Climatechangecommunication.org



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Messages 101 KISS

Key Messages-General

Credibility

Threat

Empowerment

Key Messages-Specific Parts

Credibility

- Almost all climate scientists agree

Threat

- Climate change is happening. It's real.
- It will hurt people

Empowerment

- Humans are the cause
- We can limit the damage

Key Messages-Narrative

- Climate change is happening. (It's real, we're measuring it.)
- People are causing it this time.
- Virtually all climate scientists agree on this
- It will be harmful to people
- We can limit the damage if we choose to. We can lower the damage by reducing emissions and we can adapt with better planning.

Simple clear messages,
repeated often,
by a variety of trusted sources.

*Maibach's formula for communication
impact*

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