

Combating climate disinformation (notes by Justin Rolfe-Redding)

Best practices, from across issues

Facts

People don't like gaps in mental models
Replace myth with "alternative facts"

Myth

Mention very lightly

Fallacy

(softly) Explain fallacy
e.g., cherry-picking, red herring,
'Immunity' to fallacy is enduring
Analogies (night doesn't disprove the sun)

Sticky: Fight sticky myths with stickier facts

Fact sandwich: Fact, myth, fact

FB

Different modes

Can we effectively train people on these techniques

Concerned/Alarmed need debunking training too

=====

Brady Watson, SACE, brady@cleanenergy.org

Skeptics on list, but also at doors

People don't want to pay for solar

TX blackouts, frozen wind turbines

Explain instead it's frozen gas line

Structure of effective debunking

Facts: How to dislodge myth

Mental model

People don't like gaps in mental models

=> continued influence effect after debunking

Can't just say myth is wrong

Replace myth with "alternative facts"

Mock trials: alternative suspect & evidence of innocence needed to get innocence statement to stick

Myth

Need to mention the myth, to activate so they can tag it as false
But don't want to make people too familiar with the myth

Fallacy

Need to explain the fallacy (rhetorical fallacy or incorrect facts)
e.g., cherry-picking, red herring, oversimplification, fake experts
Frame as misconception
Or can say they are victim of malevolent others trying to influence them
Once you've helped people learn to spot a fallacy in other contexts/issues
That's why it's important to explain the fallacy

Want debunking to be "sticky"

Myths are sticky: emotional response, shock people
Fight sticky myths with stickier facts

"Soft" fallacy correction: Less finger wagging, didactic

Fact sandwich: Fact, myth, fact
Use fact as the headline
Generalizing across topics

Facebook: Created Climate Science Information Center, early 2020

John now working with FB
Lots of internal factions, pressure in both directions
They take small actions, see the reaction, then another step

Brady:

Different modes for debunking (broad vs. 1:1)

Deep canvass

John: Has focused more on broader communication (social media, gamification)

Thinking soon about how to do conversational techniques (empathy, elicitation)

JRR: Thinks 1:1 contexts easier for elaboration, build trust

John: Analogies work well to explain complex fallacy debunking

Absurd and extremely good, to make it entertaining
Can be used in mass media (cartoons) and in 1:1

JRR: Can we effectively train people on these techniques (for canvassing, etc.)

--Using Debunking Handbook (nice and short)

Audience effects?

John: Dismissive/Cranky Uncle: avoid

Disengaged: get them engage in the first place, inoculate

Concerned/Alarmed: Often don't talk about climate because misconceiving they are in minority

Inoculation and debunking gives them confidence to engage

-----JRR questions-----

Audience: who does debunking work for?

--Those who aren't ideologically committed?

Can pointing out fallacies really be effective? Too cognitive? Low-elaboration contexts?

Important to do the 'warning' that you'll be manipulated, like in inoculation?

Identity?

Messenger?

How to build trust?

Emphasizing how others are trying to mislead you?

Social media platforms

Faith-based climate mobilization (notes by Tiffany Hartung)

(highlighted areas of potential research the group identified)

two areas of existing research we know about.

- <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00808-3> - who argues that people of faith are critical allies in the fight for climate justice. He is based in the UK and said that Cambridge U. is building a team and a program around interfaith work and climate.
- Climate Nexus 2020 religious voter poll- <https://www.faithclimatejusticevoter.org/faith-voter-poll/>

- experiments and testing that's needed

- Message testing

- message testing on multi-faith instead of faith specific messaging?

GreenFaith

- Why people should care about the environment / why people should connect around justice?

- sacredness of earth and our communities

- how to move Catholics and pro-life individuals / how to talk about climate and environment as a pro-life issue. Also, for Latinx communities- how do we elevate climate as a family, prolife, caring for your community issue

- how do we build a mile wide and a mile deep?

- spectrum of where faith communities are on caring about climate and being active

- having to learn everything to take action
- which kinds of actions activate the most people? Do we differentiate?
- Jewish people- How do we activate and orient people to kinds of actions that are meaningful- how to move passive allies into action
- program work (congregations weatherize) and political action
- How can we make personal behavior change/direct service actually lead to political action?
- Which types of campaigns have the ability to pull people off the sidelines and into the center of this movement?

Sojourners:

- use a lot of metaphors >> the good samaritan – good to help one person, but build the road
- Pastors: out of 100, 30-40 are more politically-oriented
- Direct service comes very naturally
- "we don't get involved, it's too political"
- Moral v. Political issues is the argument I've been given... wonder if research on how people think about different justice areas would be needed

GreenFaith

- faith leaders more involved with social justice work
- environmental justice affects the community

CAC

- list analysis, Catalyst
- IPL: avg age is older white women, mainline protestant

Sojourners:

- diversify base
- cohorts on racialized policing, immigration, climate
- "The Brown Church"
- people disconnect faith from social justice efforts

Multi-faith youth cohort

- GF Africa doing that work
- Indonesia young Muslim group pressuring religious leaders against coal and for climate justice- it's moving faith leaders to respond to it- example that could be looked at
- Greenfaith testing have faith leaders have a bolder approach around getting involved with climate justice work brings more people/younger populations to your congregation- make pitch that it will grow your congregation population.

Phil - youth multi-faith cohort?

- Youth cohort of multifaith climate leaders coming forward to put forth a new vision for what the new multifaith community could look like could move older generations

GF: voter protection

Sojourners voter protection program was amazing

Organizing traditions within the left (notes by Nathan Henderson-James)

What are some of the things that could be generative around organizing methodology. We don't talk a lot about assumptions around organizing and there's a lot of conflict within the organization around approaches to organizing.

So there are assumptions about how to go about things that don't mesh, esp since we seem to be creating a mosaic from various traditions.

What does it mean to win?

Julia – Why did I choose this and what my relationship and history to organizing?

Done some organizing and when and organization is forming – who are we, what are we doing?

DC Chapter of SURJ. Been to a few trainings, but don't feel like I'm deeply rooted in a tradition.

Done deep canvassing, for example.

Tension between a small group who throw down hard or do you want to build at scale? So how do you navigate that tension. How do you build a thing? What's the structure? Also "white people go collect your people" vs "value of organizing in multi-racial spaces" is a tension.

On the data team at the Sierra Club.

Nathan gave his history of experience with organizing and a couple of principles around what organizing is (building relationships and directing the strategic direction of the organization).

Nicole

Been looking at the Momentum model and interest in getting to scale, but also being able to operate as a functional organization.

Youth Climate Strike in MN – 10 high school students organized thousand of folks in a giant march. Didn't know what to do with it after their giant success, which is understandable.

MN350 is having a problem with scaling. Have 14 ppl on staff, but there's a structural question around scaling. Ppl looking to MN350 around climate justice as a leader in the state. We talk about building power, but don't know how much we've built and we're not being responsible to the level of crisis. We should know how to do this. What's the north star, what's the guiding compass.

Statewide Organizing Director

Julia

Ari Trujillo-Wesler did a presentation on how to get the people on the same page.

Nathan

Having everyone in agreement about who your people are and what it means for them to be your people and your members, means you can align your people and your resources to achieve that.

Julia

There are problems that come up when there isn't alignment, that involves a lot of messy egos and ideologies.

There is also dichotomy between where the staff is and where the membership is.

Nicole

Resonating with --- felt okay proposing this bc wanted to be in a learning space without needing to be a debate about ideology. It's about having the alignment of the core function of what we're here to do. Here's who we're organizing and here's how we're going to do that.

We don't have a clear idea of who we're organizing. We are organized around specific issue teams and the teams don't have a shared base.

Jack drops in.

"Is there a shared vision for what all the teams are working towards? Or is it all siloed? That informs your approach as well."

Nicole

There are vague things. "We organize for climate justice." We organize people.

Jack

Plugs Liz McKenna's keynote about how to figure out how you are building power. Ability to be flexible in showing how the work builds power for the constituency.

Deep canvassing in the climate movement (notes by Don Ferber)

Keith – worked on deep canvassing to turn out voters in PA for Biden

They were telling personal stories, but it didn't have to be on issue

This made the transition awkward to pivot to talking about voting

Normally, it is common in deep canvassing to tell a related story to topic

Montana – When they tried telling an off-topic story, it did not work well

For connecting on climate, it is helpful to talk first about your connection to the natural world

Opportunities

- One option is to ask people who else they know that could be contacted
- Can also use deep canvassing to get people more involved

What didn't work with deep canvassing?

- Got a low percentage of door openers or people willing to talk, but when they do, are willing to discuss
- It can take a lot of work to make a script relevant and that will activate people

What hooked people?

- Becoming a known and trusted messenger by telling a story first rather than jumping to the message

Can deep canvassing be applied across the 6 Yale categories?

- Not an efficient way to win on campaigns
- Better for getting more people on board, and best for those who are moveable

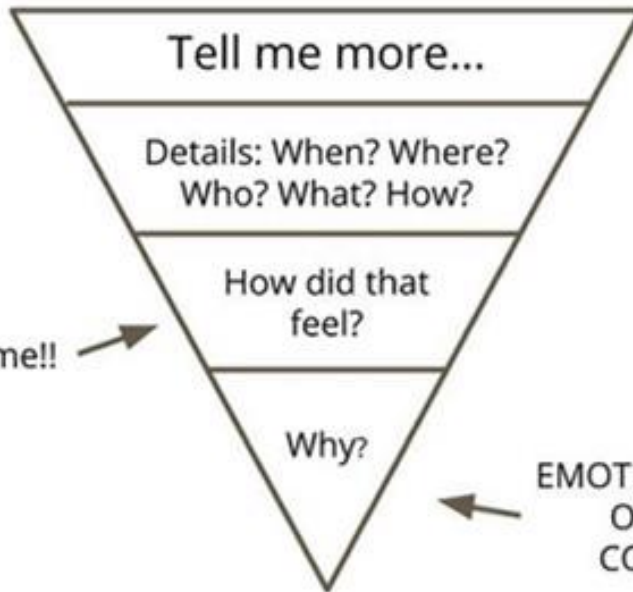
Played audio with canvasser who connected with her personal story that also called the user in

- Used progressive framing
- Good active listening
- Told a compelling story with vulnerability
- Played off what the person said
- Pulled them into examining the issues more deeply

Cone of curiosity diagram – drill down from position as to the why they hold it

When you Hear a Hint of a Story:

Have to be listening!



Can't assume!!



EMOTIONAL CORE
OF THEIR
CONFLICT!

