



Framing as a Tool for Engaging the Public

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- Myth of 'scientific citizen'
 - Fully informed vs Miserly citizens
 - Limits of fragmented media system

- Knowledge and public perceptions?
 - Low knowledge, confused on consensus
 - Discount threat and political priority
 - Partisan divide in perceptions

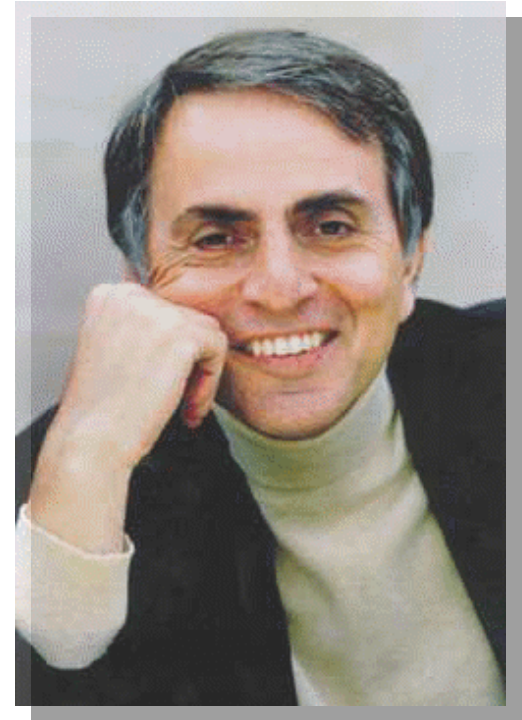
- What is framing?
 - Generalizable set of frames for science debates
 - What frames apply for activating new publics?

A Scientific Citizen?

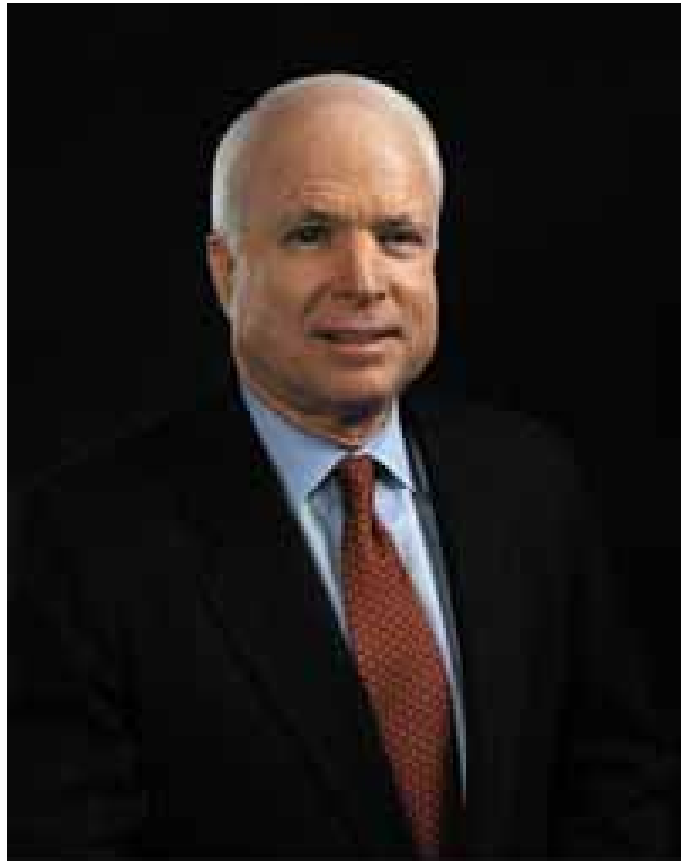
The Popular Science Model



- **Assumption:** If the public knew more about the technical side of science, then the public would view issues as scientists do, and there would be fewer controversies
- Emphasis is on science education and “mass mediated” popular science.

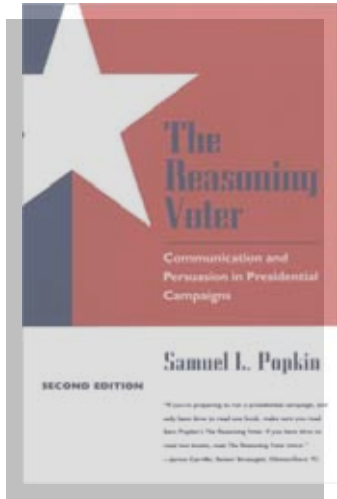


Scientific Citizens?



- "The facts are there. We have to educate our fellow citizens about climate change and the danger it poses to the world."
- Senator John McCain
[*Business Week*](#) 8.14.2004

A Fully Informed Public vs. Miserly Public? Lessons from Political Campaigns

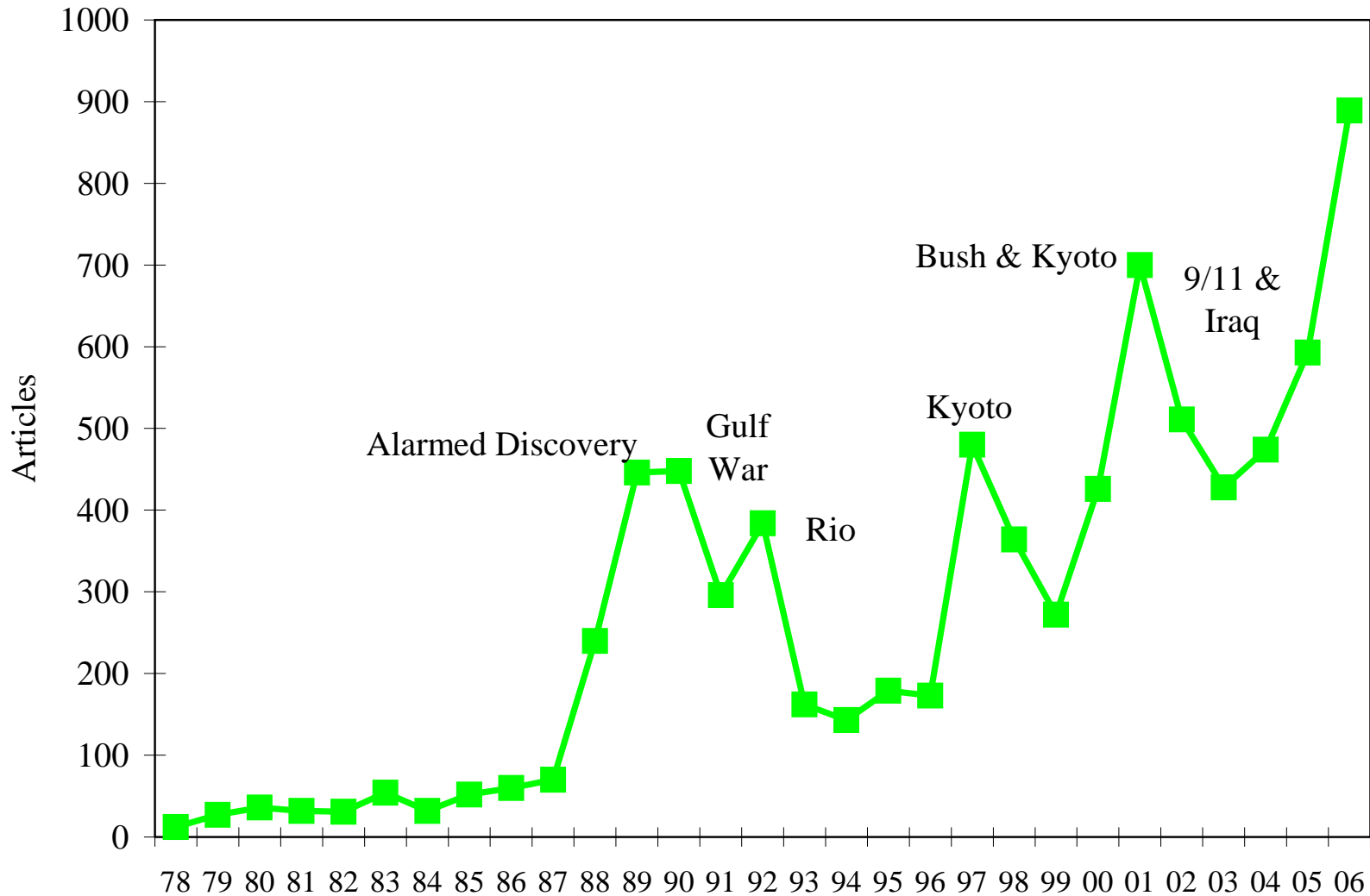


- Most citizens are “cognitive misers”
 - Low information rationality
 - Rely on short-cuts such as opinion leaders, frames, and value predispositions



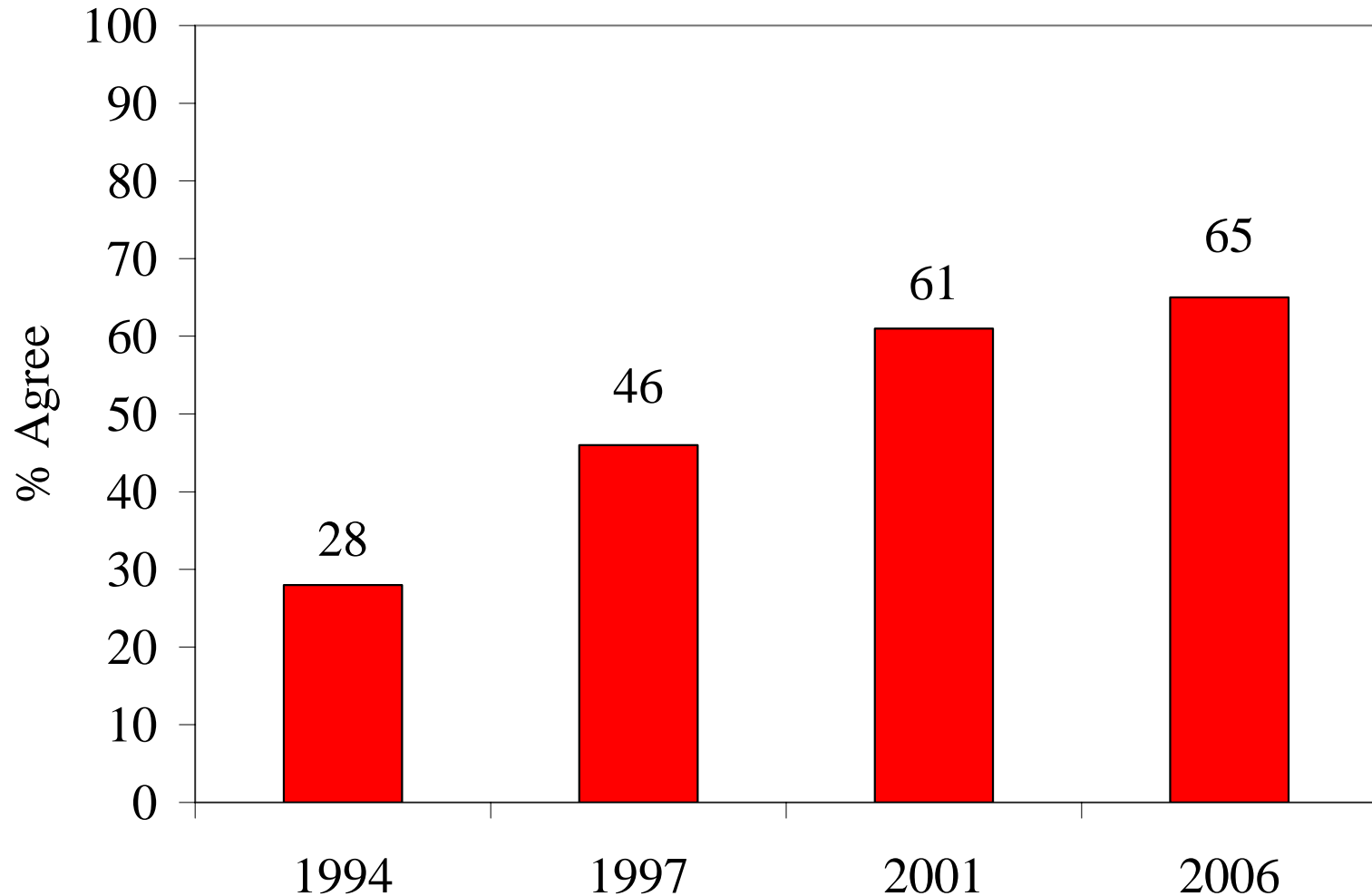
- Fragmented audiences
 - Ideological and preference gaps
 - Micro-targeting

NY Times & WPost Coverage: Headline/Lead Paragraph Key Word Search



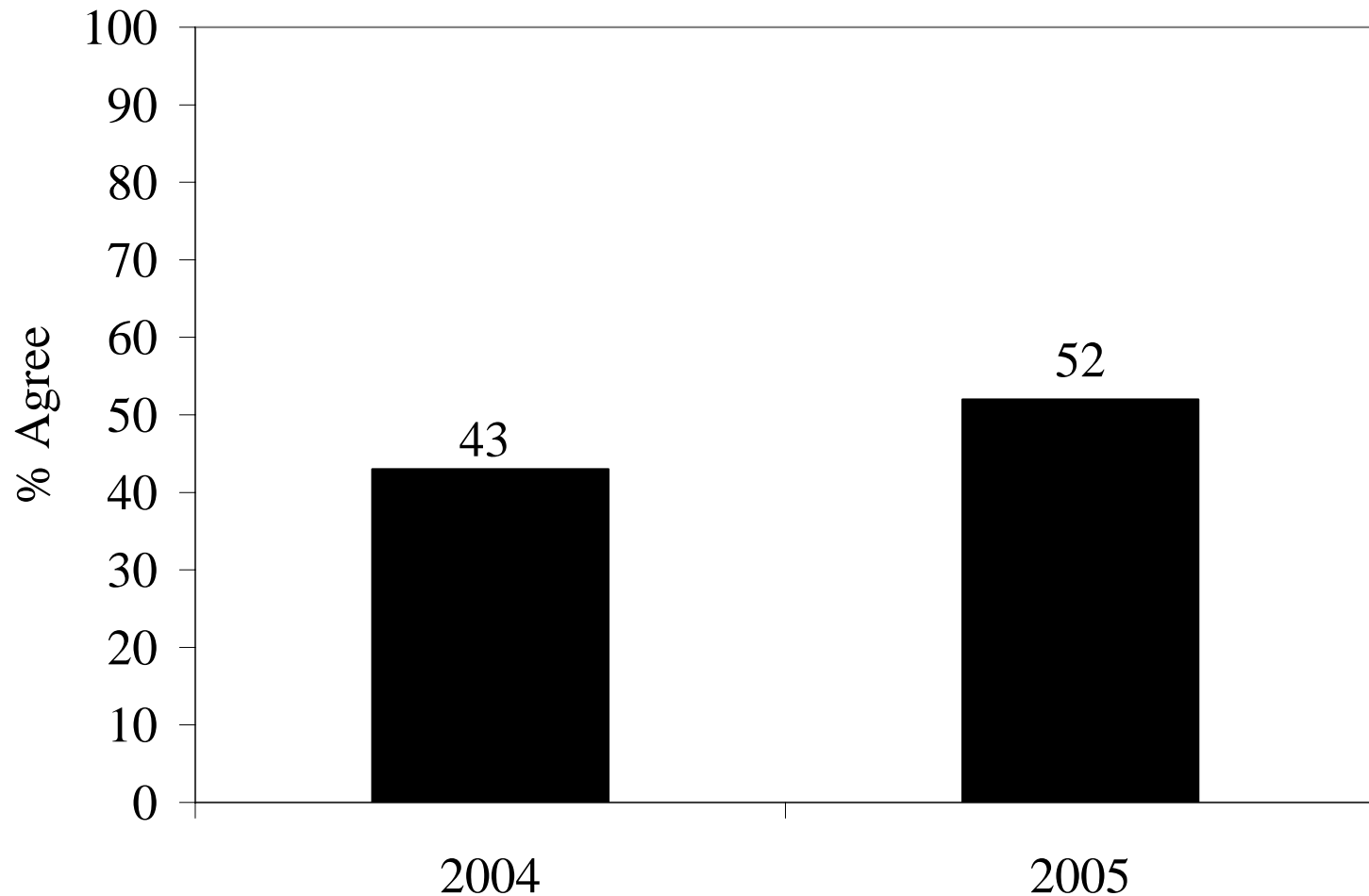
*Through 10/31/06.

GALLUP: Most Scientists Agree GW is Occurring?



Nisbet & Myers (2006). Twenty years of public opinion about global warming.

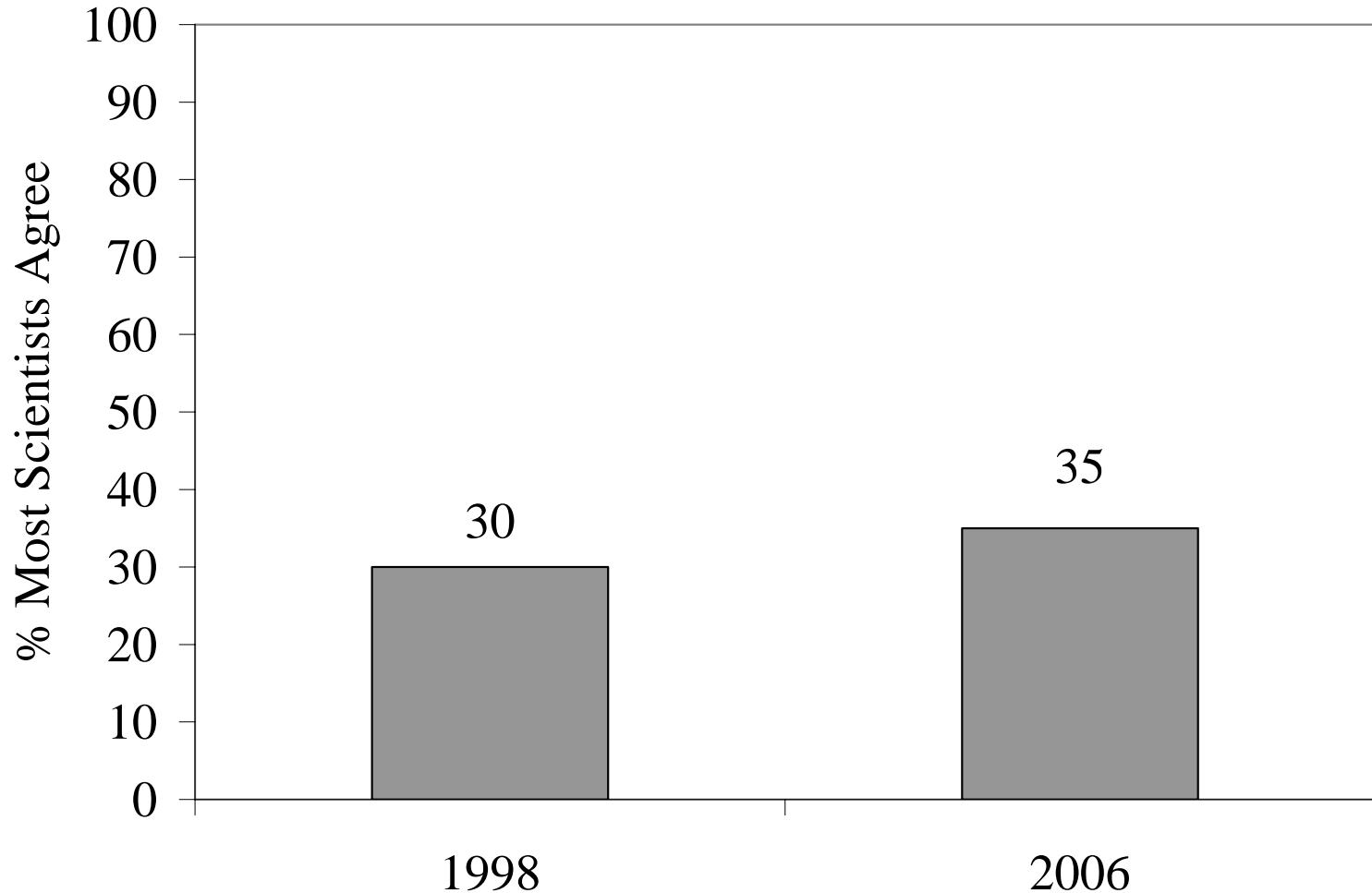
PEW: Consensus Among Great Majority of Scientists that GW Exists and Poses Threat?



Nisbet & Myers (2006). Twenty years of public opinion about global warming.

scienceblogs.com/framing-science

OSU/ABC: Most Scientists Agree GW is Happening Or Is There a Lot of Disagreement?



Nisbet & Myers (2006). Twenty years of public opinion about global warming.

POLITICAL SPECIFICS?

Knowledge of Bush Decision on Kyoto



Do you know whether George W. Bush has decided that the US (United States) will continue to support the global warming agreement, enacted in Kyoto, Japan in 1997, or has he decided to withdraw US support from that agreement?

	<i>PIPA^a</i> <i>10/02</i> (%)	<i>PIPA^{a,b}</i> <i>09/04</i> (%)	<i>PIPA^{a,b}</i> <i>06/05</i> (%)
Decided to continue to support the agreement	48	42	43
<u>Decided to withdraw U.S. support</u>	42	48	43
Don't know/Refused	11	11	14
<i>N</i>	<i>1,091</i>	<i>1,195</i>	<i>812</i>

Nisbet & Myers (2006). Twenty years of public opinion about global warming.

What is Framing?



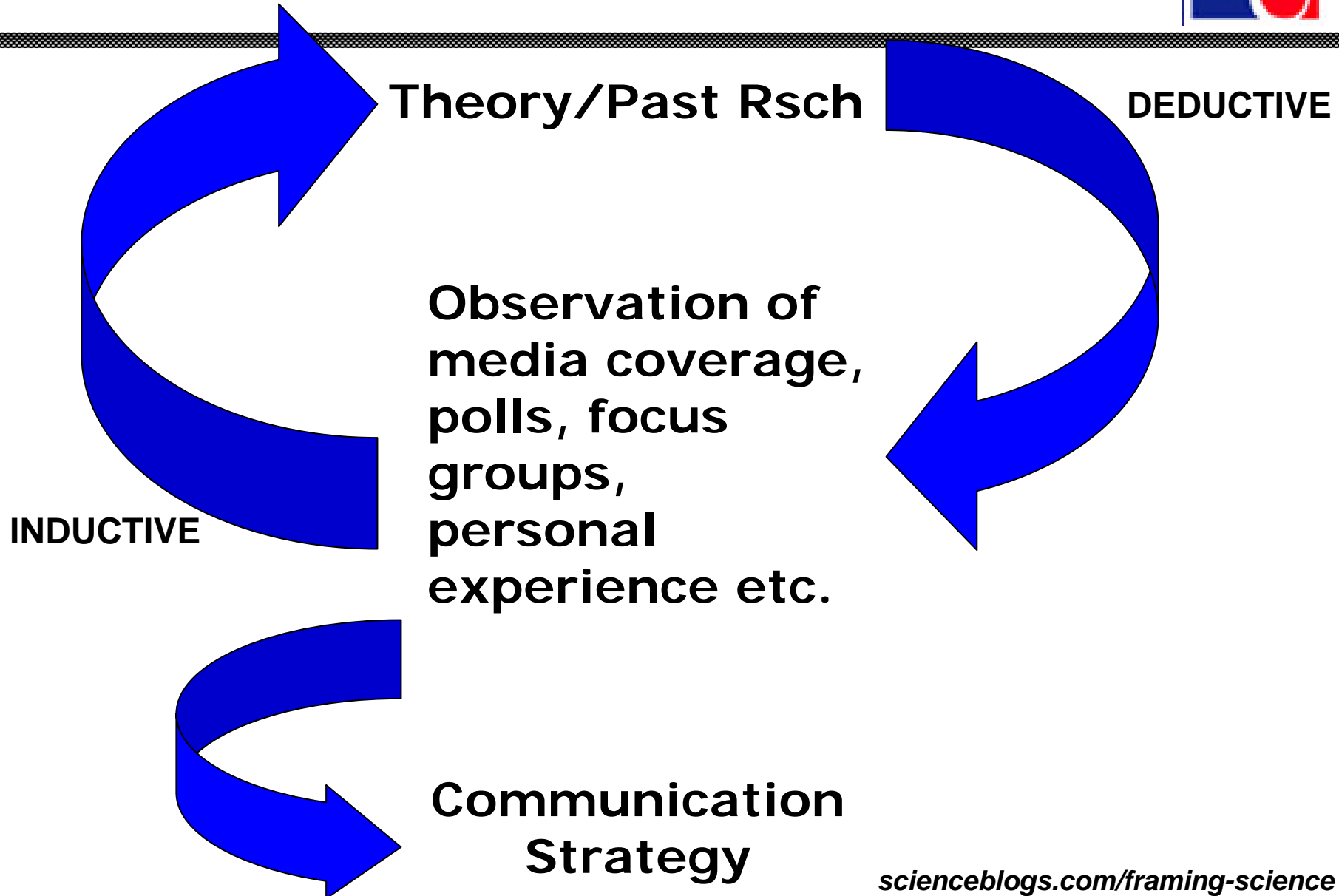
- **Frames organize central ideas on an issue.** They help communicate why an issue might be a problem, who or what might be responsible, and what should be done.
- They endow **certain dimensions of a complex topic with greater apparent relevance** than the same dimensions might appear to have under an alternative frame.
- **Communicated in short hand by condensing symbols:** catch-phrases, slogans, historical references, cartoons, and images.

What is Framing?

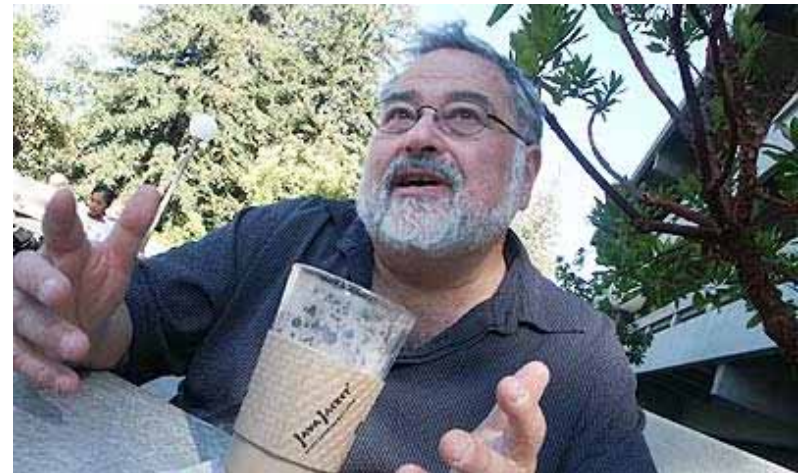
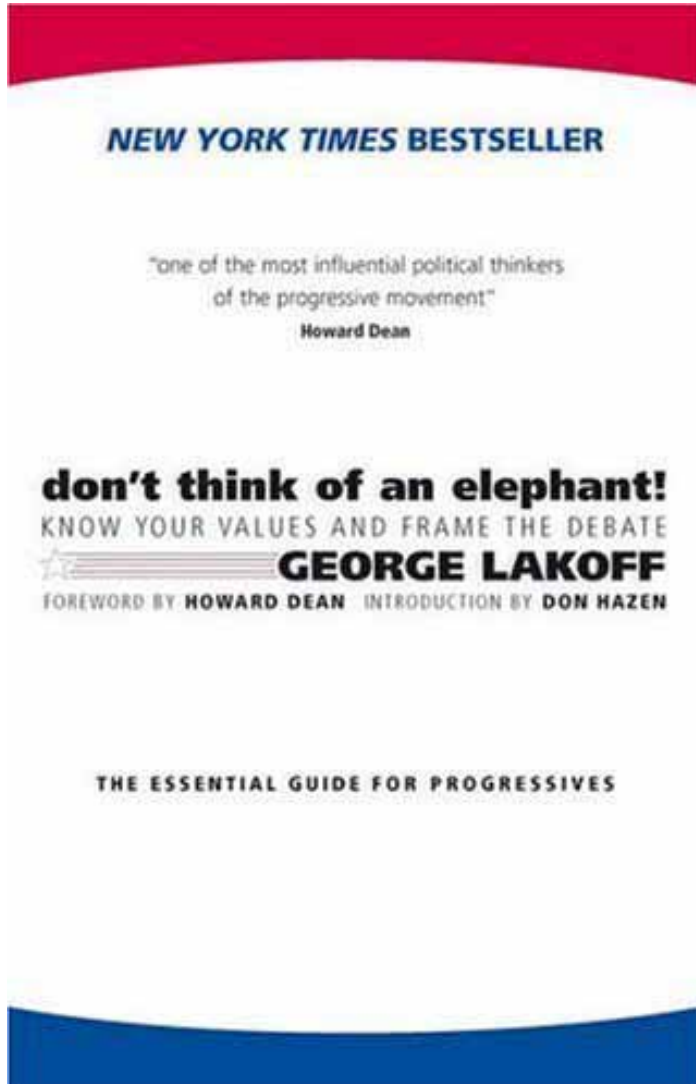


- **Journalists** use frames to organize stories, and appeal to intended audiences.
- **Citizens** use frames to make sense of complex topics, and to articulate their opinions.
- The fact that citizens lean heavily on “perceptual screens,” means that a **specific frame might resonate with one segment of the public, but not with another.**

Identifying and Testing Frames: Deductive and Inductive Process



George Lakoff



Framing and Science Policy Debates



Gamson, WA. and Modigliani, A. (1989). Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach. American Journal of Sociology, 95, 1-37.

Where to Start?

A Generalizable Frame Typology for Science



Frame	Science Issue Defined As....
Social progress	Improving life, solving problems, master/harmony nature.
Economic develop.	Market benefits/competitiveness.
Pandora's box	Call for precaution in face of possible impacts/catastrophe.
Runaway science/fatalism	Out-of-control monster, or action is futile, path is chosen.
Morality/ethics	Right or wrong, crossing/respecting boundaries.
Scientific uncertainty	What is known or unknown; evoking or undermining consensus, "sound science," peer-review.
Public accountability	Responsible use or abuse of power; "politicization," citizen responsiveness.
Third way/alternative path	Compromise solution, middle way between opposing sides.
Conflict/Strategy	Game among elites, battle of groups/personalities.

Framing Global Warming: Scientific Uncertainty & Economic Competitiveness



Strategy Memo

WINNING THE GLOBAL WARMING DEBATE – AN OVERVIEW

Please keep in mind the following communication recommendations as you address global warming in general, particularly as Democrats and opinion leaders attack President Bush over Kyoto.

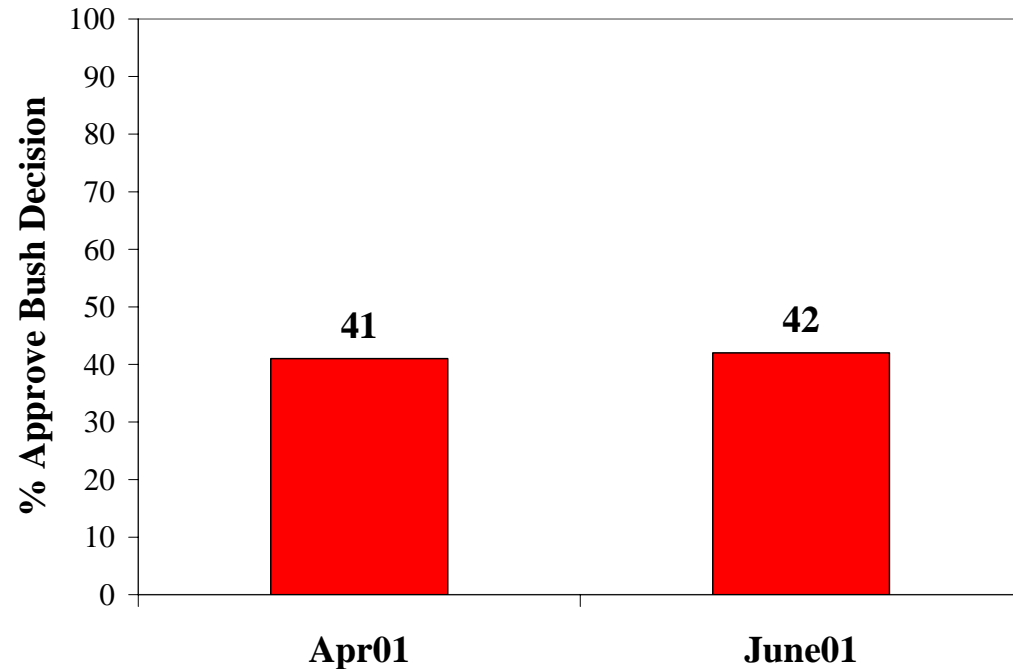
1. *The scientific debate remains open.* Voters believe that there is *no consensus* about global warming within the scientific community. Should the public come to believe that the scientific issues are settled, their views about global warming will change accordingly. Therefore, *you need to continue to make the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue in the debate*, and defer to scientists and other experts in the field.

4. *The “international fairness” issue is the emotional home run.* Given the chance, Americans will demand that all nations be part of any international global warming treaty. Nations such as China, Mexico and India would have to sign such an agreement for the majority of Americans to support it.

GALLUP 2001: Kyoto As 'Unfair Economic Burden'



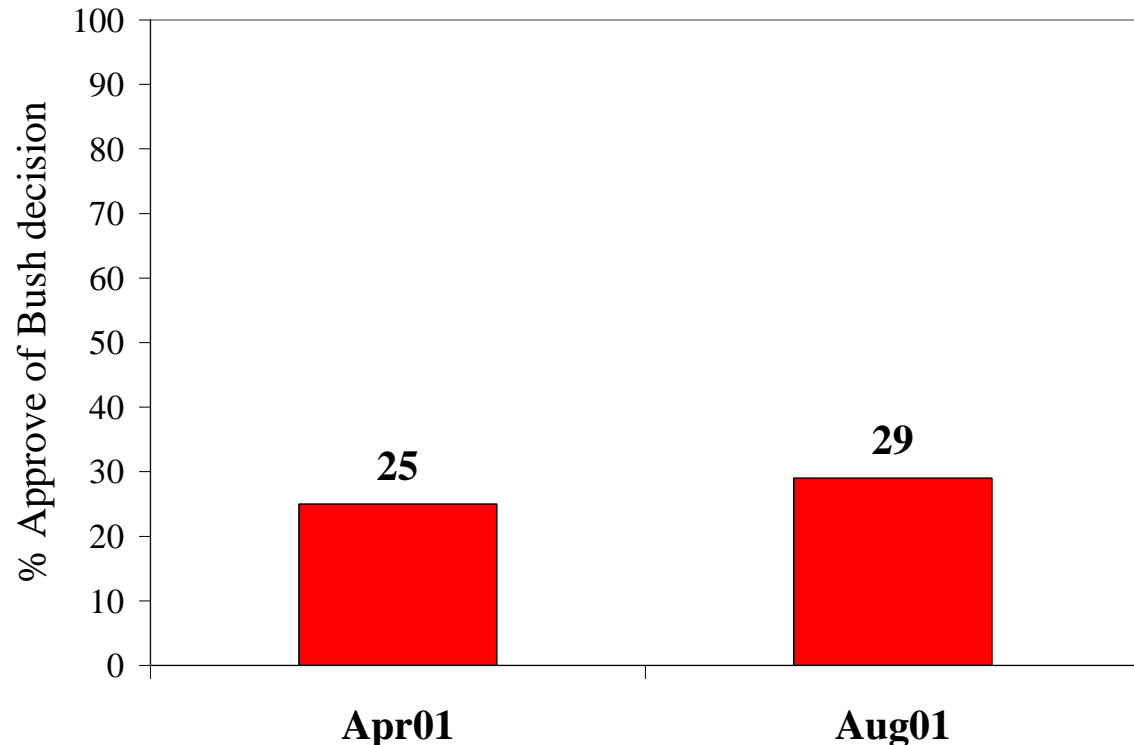
Pres. Bush recently announced that the US will not adhere to the Kyoto International Treaty, which sets voluntary limits on the production of carbon dioxide and other global warming related gases. Bush says Kyoto places too much of an economic burden on the US while demanding little of developing countries. Do you approve or disapprove of Bush's decision?



PEW 2001: No Frame Provided

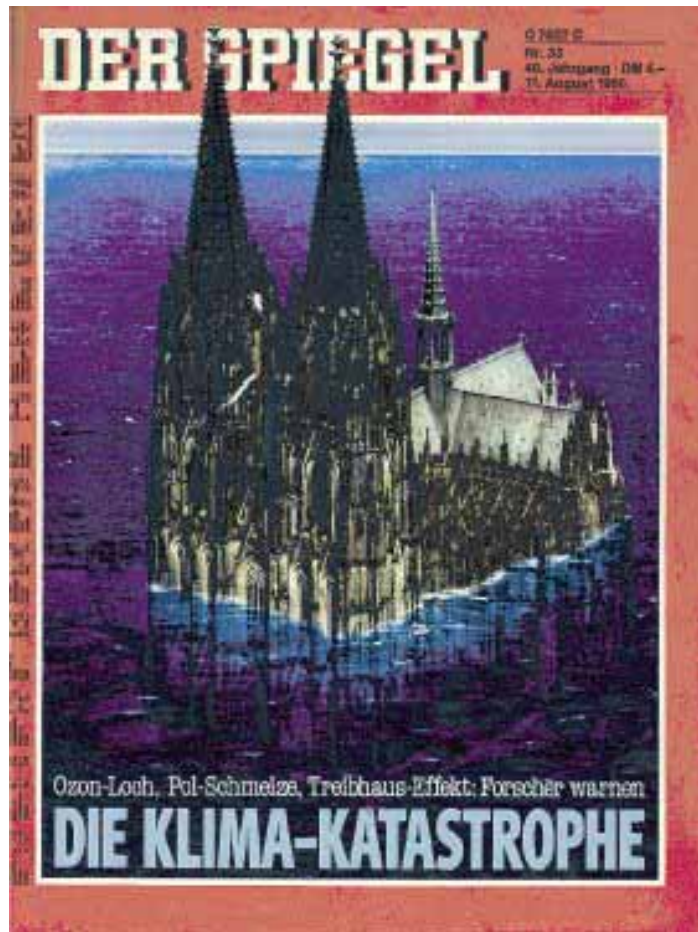


- As you may know, George W. Bush has decided that the US should withdraw its support from the global warming agreement, adopted in Kyoto, Japan in 1997. Do you approve or disapprove of this decision?

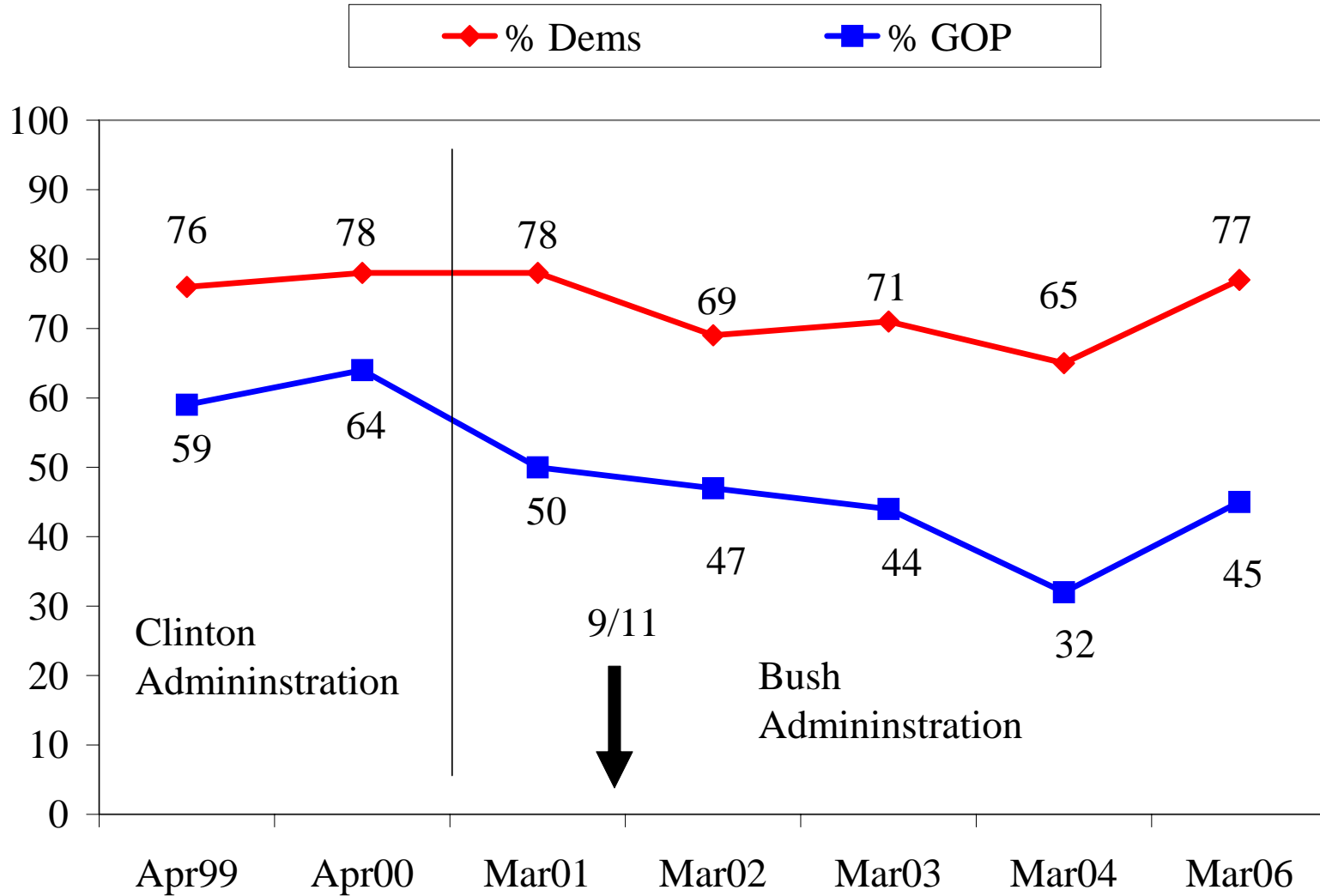


Nisbet & Myers (2006). Twenty years of public opinion about global warming.

Framing Global Warming: Pandora's Box



GALLUP: Worried Great Deal/Fair Amount About Global Warming



PEW June 2006:

% Rating Each Issue as "Very Important"



Republicans		Independents		Democrats	
Terrorism	84	Health care	89	Education	83
Economy	80	Education	86	Health care	79
Education	75	Economy	80	Economy	80
Taxes	74	Social security	79	Terrorism	72
Social security	73	Iraq	78	Iraq	72
Iraq	72	Terrorism	69	Social security	71
Health care	69	Minimum wage	68	Energy policy	67
Immigration	64	Taxes	66	Taxes	63
Flag burning	60	Energy policy	66	Environment	58
Energy policy	56	Environment	64	Immigration	57
Inheritance tax	54	Global warming	56	Global warming	49
Abortion	50	Immigration	52	Minimum wage	48
Gay Marriage	43	Abortion	39	Inheritance tax	45
Minimum wage	36	Flag burning	44	Flag burning	44
Environment	30	Inheritance tax	37	Abortion	41
Global warming	23	Gay marriage	31	Gay marriage	28

Framing Global Warming: Religious Moral Duty



**Our commitment to Jesus Christ
compels us to solve the global warming crisis.**

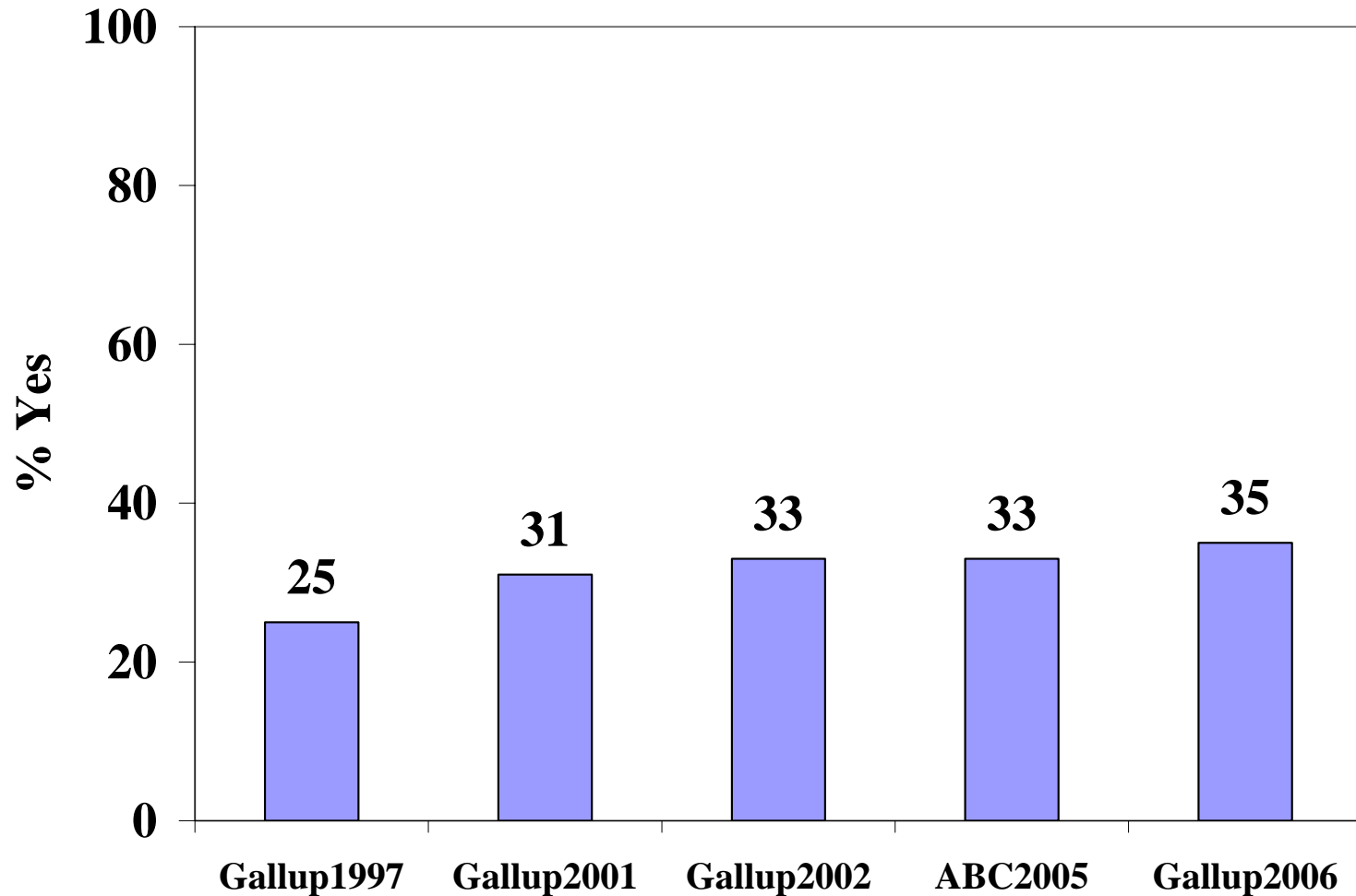
“For by Him (Christ) all things were created: things in heaven and on earth.” COLOSSIANS 1:16

As evangelical Christians, we believe we’re called to be stewards of God’s creation, and after considerable study, reflection, and prayer we are now convinced it’s time for our country to help solve the problem of global warming. We are compelled by our deep commitment to Jesus Christ and our study of God’s Word. Working together and with God’s help, we are convinced that global warming can and must be solved.

It is no small problem. Pollution from vehicles, power plants, and industry is having a dramatic effect on the earth’s climate. Left unchecked, global warming will lead to dryer droughts, more intense hurricanes, and more devastating floods, resulting in millions of deaths in this century.

Therefore, with the same love of God and neighbor that compels us to preach salvation through Jesus Christ, protect unborn life, preserve the family and the sanctity of marriage, defend religious freedom and human dignity, and take the whole Gospel to a hurting world, we the undersigned evangelical leaders resolve to come together with others of like mind to pray and to work to stop global warming.

Discounting the Future: Will GW Pose a Serious Threat in Your Lifetime?



Framing Global Warming: Moral Duty to Our Kids



Global Warming



Man: “Global warming. Some say irreversible side effects are thirty years away. Thirty years? That won’t affect me.”

[Man steps out of way of train, child standing behind him is revealed, commercial fades to black.]

[Source: Ad Council, Environmental Defense, Ogilvy & Mather](#)

Framing Global Warming: Public Accountability



Smart Leadership
for a Change



“Scientific Bill of Rights”
“Muzzling”
“War on science”
“Scientific integrity”
“Science a la Joe Camel”

Framing Global Warming: Economic Competitiveness



2ND-QTR SIZZLE PROFITS AT 900 COMPANIES (p. 34) PAYING FOR COLLEGE BEWARE OF THOSE HIGH 529 FEES (p. 96) TERRORISM WHAT COMPANIES STILL NEED TO DO (p. 26)



Policy action on global warming is not an unfair economic burden, **but an economic opportunity.**

The U.S. is falling behind countries in Asia and Europe in the development of hybrid cars, alternative energy sources, and innovative technologies for dealing with the problem.

CONCLUSION:

Framing as a Public Engagement Tool



- Popular science model is limited. Just “getting the facts out there” does not fit the nature of the audience or the modern media system.
- Policy makers, scientists, and journalists need to show new audiences why global warming is relevant to them and matters.
- Communicating consensus and the potential dangers of climate impacts is tuned out by many Americans, competes with other interpretations.
- Previous research suggests a generalizable set of latent meanings or “frames” that the public uses to cut down on information costs in science policy debates.

CONCLUSION:

What Needs to Be Done?



- What are the relevant segments of the public?
- Which frames resonate with these specific segments?
- What catchphrases, images, symbols, historical references or metaphors activate these latent meanings?
- Which communication channels and what kinds of opinion leaders can be used to “micro-target” specific segments of the public?