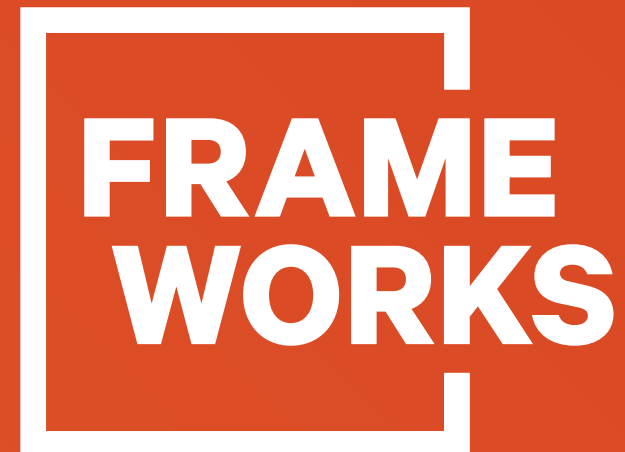


What will that number do?

Using data to tell systems stories

Julie Sweetland, PhD, Senior Advisor



June 14, 2023

Prepared for the UNMC "Making Data Come Alive" Series

FrameWorks is on a mission...

to advance the nonprofit sector's capacity

to **frame the public discourse** on social and scientific issues

In this session, we will:

Learn to spot ineffective ways of framing data

Practice nesting numbers in narratives that build context and understanding

Distinguish data that reinforce health individualism from data that tell systems stories

framing =

choices in how
we present ideas



differences in how
people respond

Examples of Framing Choices

Tone

Values

Numbers

Metaphors

Narrative

Messengers

Examples

Context

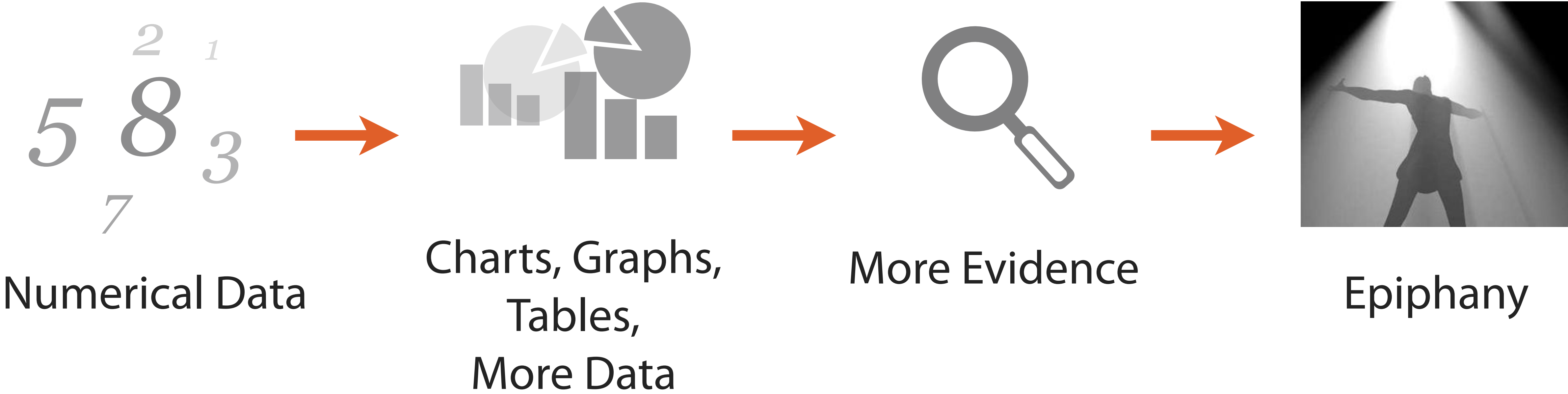
Visuals

Order

Explanatory Chains

Solutions

Providing more and more data doesn't work



Framing catalyzes sustainable social change



Communication



Discourse



Thinking



Policy

Framing fundamental #1:

Order matters.

Leading with data doesn't always work as intended

**Political Inaction on Gun Violence
Is Unacceptable!**



Viewed as 'accusatory' and politically charged
Rejected by participants as inappropriate for 'civil conversation'

**New Research Reveals the Impact of
Gun Violence in Missouri**



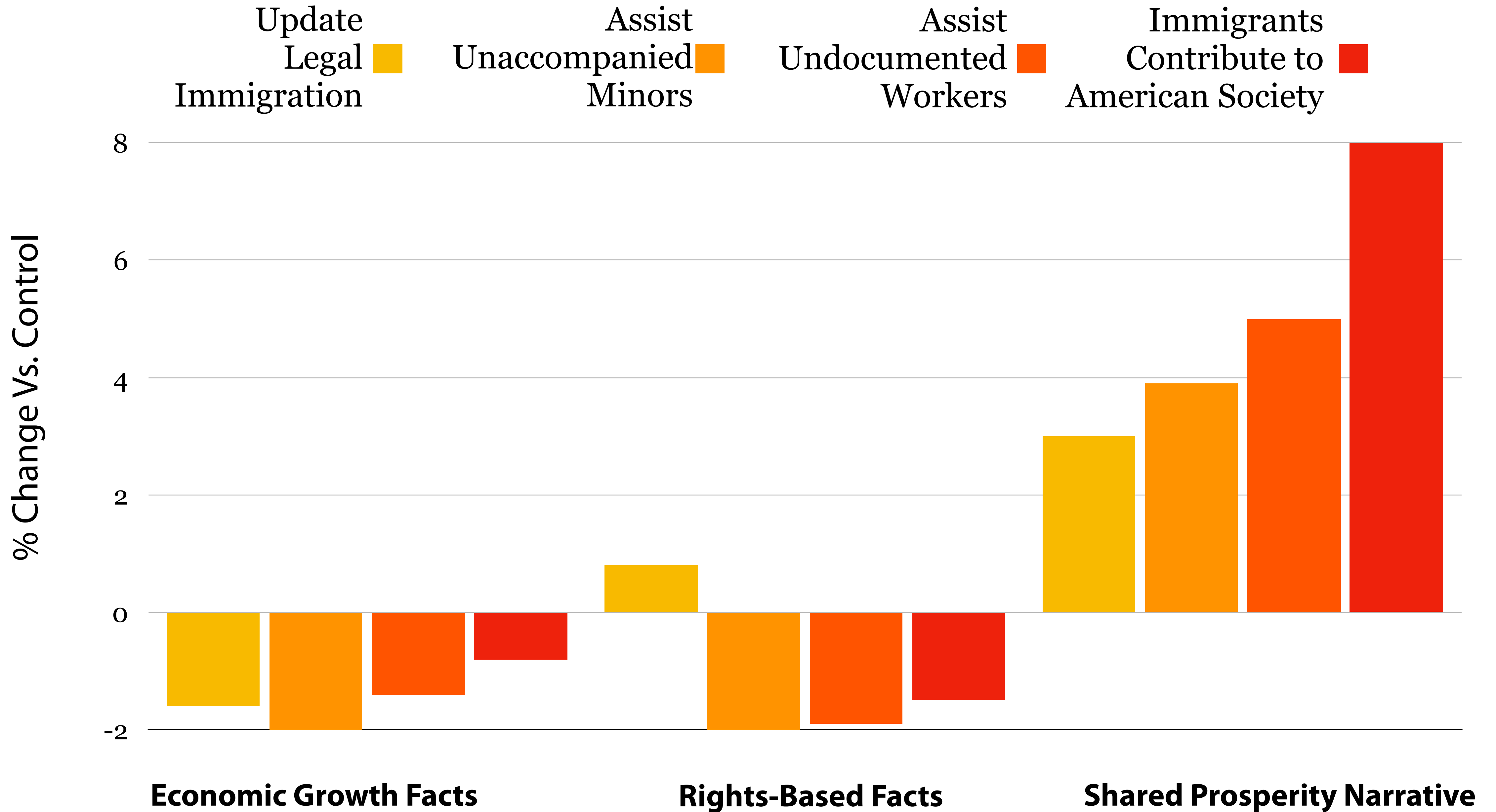
Viewed with suspicion: whose research?
Conversation focused on science and bias, not guns or solutions

**We Can All Agree that
Reducing Gun Violence
Will Do Missouri Good**



Viewed as 'inclusive' and getting 'past political beliefs'
Participants envisioned a productive conversation following

Numbers need Narrative



- Add language to help people interpret what the number means.
- Nest numbers in narrative. (Seasoning, not the whole dish.)

Economic Impact By Fiscal Year 2024

The elimination of county and state programs will provide

\$479 Million

Total Property Tax Savings

The total savings add up to

\$127

per household annually

The savings plus the dollars paid to health care providers are passed on to other businesses, generating

\$ 1.06 Billion

in additional economic activity

This creates

16,000 Jobs

here in Idaho

With Medicaid Redesign, *Idaho Can*

Focus Our Resources

And save

\$479 Million

in state and local budgets

Build Our Prosperity

By generating

\$ 1 Billion

in new economic activity

Expand Our Workforce

By creating

16,000 Jobs

here in Idaho

Save Our Lives

By preventing

590 Deaths

per year

VS.

A Narrative Structure for Reframing Social/Scientific Issues

1. Principle

Lead with an ideal that society should uphold.

Tap into a collective concern - ideally, using a tested values message.

2. Process

Explain how the issue works.

Establish a mechanism or process at play, using explanatory techniques

3. Problem

Put some tension in the plot.

Make social conditions or structures the “bad guys.” Paint these threats as important, but not insurmountable.

4. Proposal

Point to solutions.

Highlight promising or proven collective approaches to addressing the problem.

DATA HERE!

HERE TOO!

Instead of “isn’t this awful?”

Secondhand smoke protections are essential public health measures.

Secondhand smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals. Hundreds are toxic and about 70 can cause cancer.

Since the 1964 Surgeon General’s Report, 2.5 million adults who were nonsmokers died because they breathed secondhand smoke.

There is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

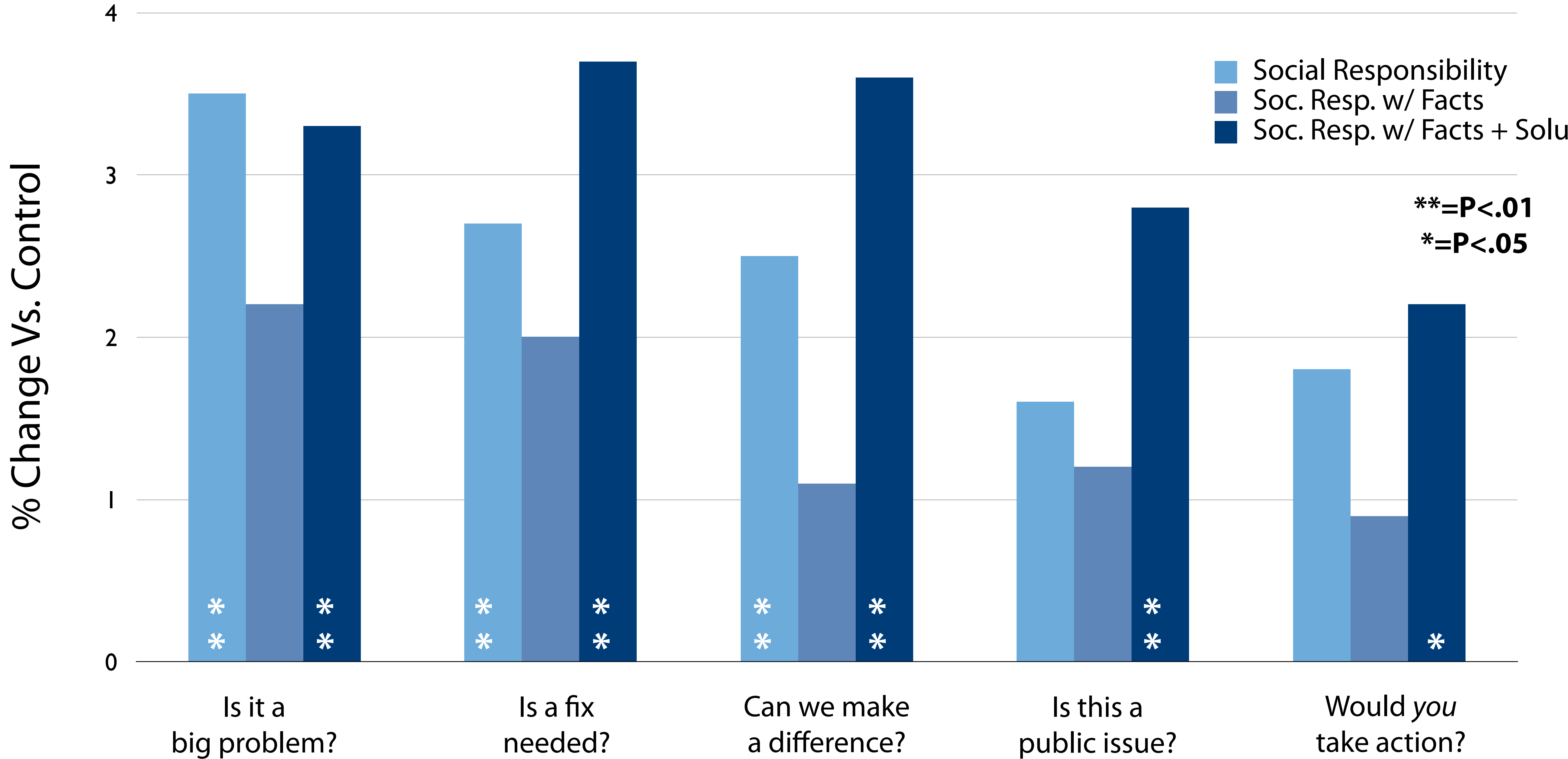
Try “couldn’t we change this?”

Everyone has a right to a safe workplace, especially when we know of particular risks like the fact that There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

We need to make every workplace totally smoke-free - with no exceptions. But right now, over 10,000 workers in our state are exposed to cancer-causing air at work.

Learn more about how cities have protected people who work in bars and casinos.

Missing solutions? You're missing out on support.



Framing fundamental #2:

Less is more.



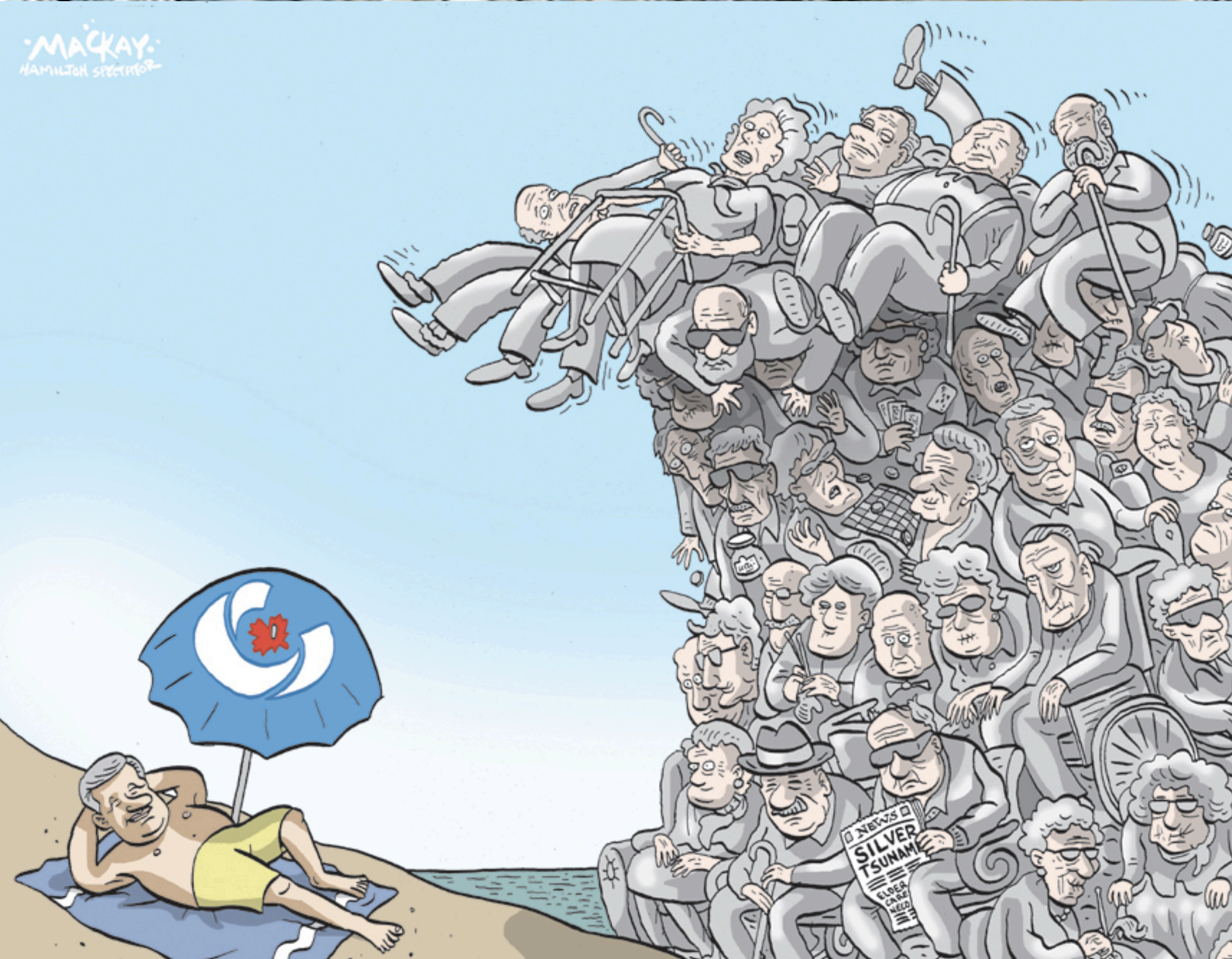
Study: Housing Crisis Fueled Racial Inequality

DAILY REAL ESTATE NEWS | MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

The spike in foreclosures from the housing crisis led to one of the greatest migrations in U.S. history among minorities and whites that could alter American cities for years to come, according to research from Cornell University, which will be published in the American Sociological Review in June.

About 9 million Americans in the aftermath of the housing crisis, including African Americans, Latinos, and racially integrated areas most heavily distressed.

Researchers estimate that the migration and between blacks and whites in distressed areas most heavily distressed. "Among its many impacts, the study found that racial integration in American cities is a byproduct of policy and analysis and...



ECONOMY IN CRISIS AMERICA'S ECONOMIC REPORT - DA

Archives

Archives
Select Month

Income Inequality Is Ravaging America's Middle Class

MARCH 23, 2016 DANIEL MILLS

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We Go the An

Over-emphasizing the problem doesn't work

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**“Is this situation perfect? No. Is it what we expected? Certainly not.
Can we do anything about it? Nope.
Am I getting more and more depressed as I talk about it?
You bet.”**

Where does our framing lead our audiences?

Traditional public health questions

How do we define the problem?

How big is the problem?

Which populations are affected?

What are the risk & protective factors?

What prevention strategies are evidence based?

Where have these prevention strategies been applied?

Equity-focused public health questions

How is this problem a matter of justice or fairness?

What are the structural roots of this problem?

Which groups are harmed? Which groups benefit?

How have communities demonstrated resilience?

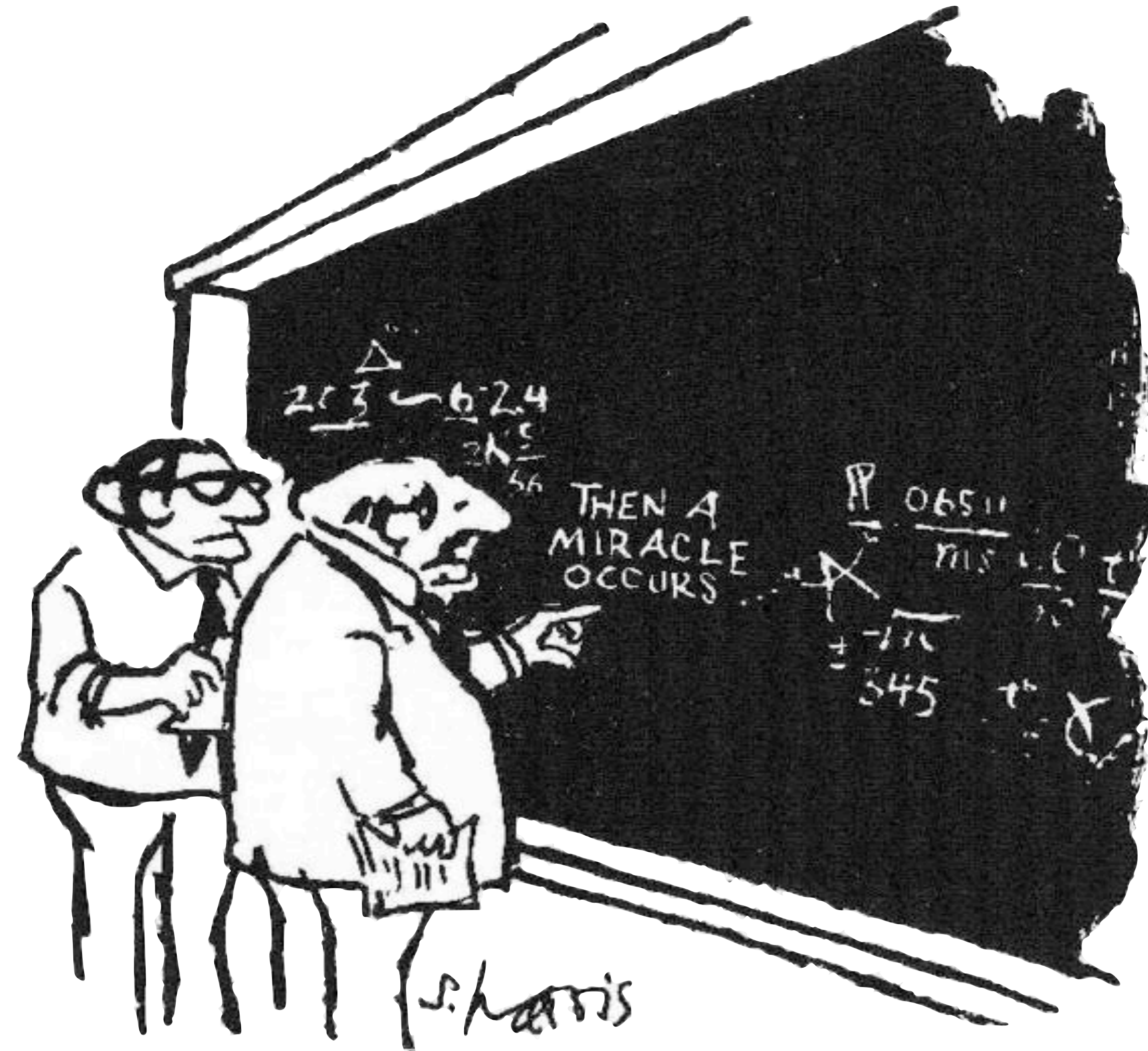
What would eliminate disparities & advance equity?

Who leads in communities on this issue?

Framing fundamental #3:

Highlight structures, not
struggles.

Missing explanation opportunities doesn't work



“I think you should be more explicit here in step two.”

Instead of this

In Georgia, one in five students has untreated oral disease. More than half of our state's third-graders children have had a dental caries experience (cavity).

Try this

Only 9% of dentists in Georgia accept the dental insurance that covers 58% of children in the state. This prevents access to oral health care, which is essential for overall health.

Instead of this

Compared to their straight peers, twice as many young people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual have smoked a cigarette before the age of 13. The rates are even higher for young LGBT+ people of color.

Try this

Young people who are LGBT+ report high levels of stress from discrimination. The connection between stress and smoking helps to explain why, when compared to straight peers, twice as many LGBT+ youth have tried a cigarette by age 13.



“Policy narratives define a problem, explain how it comes about, and show what needs to be done to improve the situation; in other words, they contain explicit and implicit ideas about what is ‘wrong’, and how to put it ‘right’.

Jones 2009. “Policy-making as discourse:
A review of recent knowledge-to-policy literature”





A talent for speaking differently, rather than arguing well, is the chief instrument of cultural change.

Richard Rorty

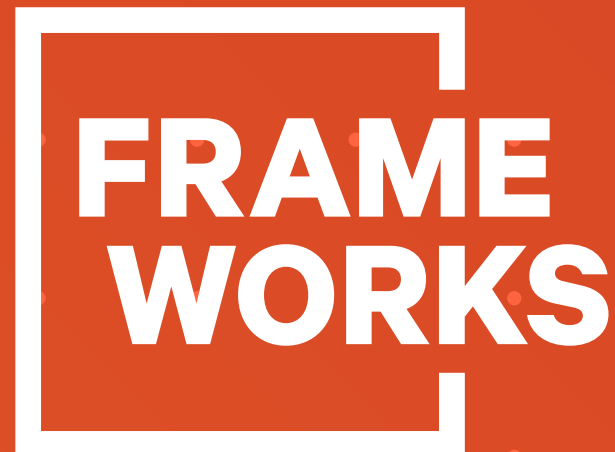
Reactions? Questions?

Thank you!

Let's continue the conversation.

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About FrameWorks

The FrameWorks Institute is a nonprofit think tank that advances the mission-driven sector's capacity to frame the public discourse about social and scientific issues. The organization's signature approach, Strategic Frame Analysis[®], offers empirical guidance on what to say, how to say it, and what to leave unsaid. FrameWorks designs, conducts, and publishes multi-method, multidisciplinary framing research to prepare experts and advocates to expand their constituencies, to build public will, and to further public understanding. To make sure this research drives social change, FrameWorks supports partners in reframing, through strategic consultation, campaign design, FrameChecks[®], toolkits, online courses, and in-depth learning engagements known as FrameLabs. In 2015, FrameWorks was named one of nine organizations worldwide to receive the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.

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