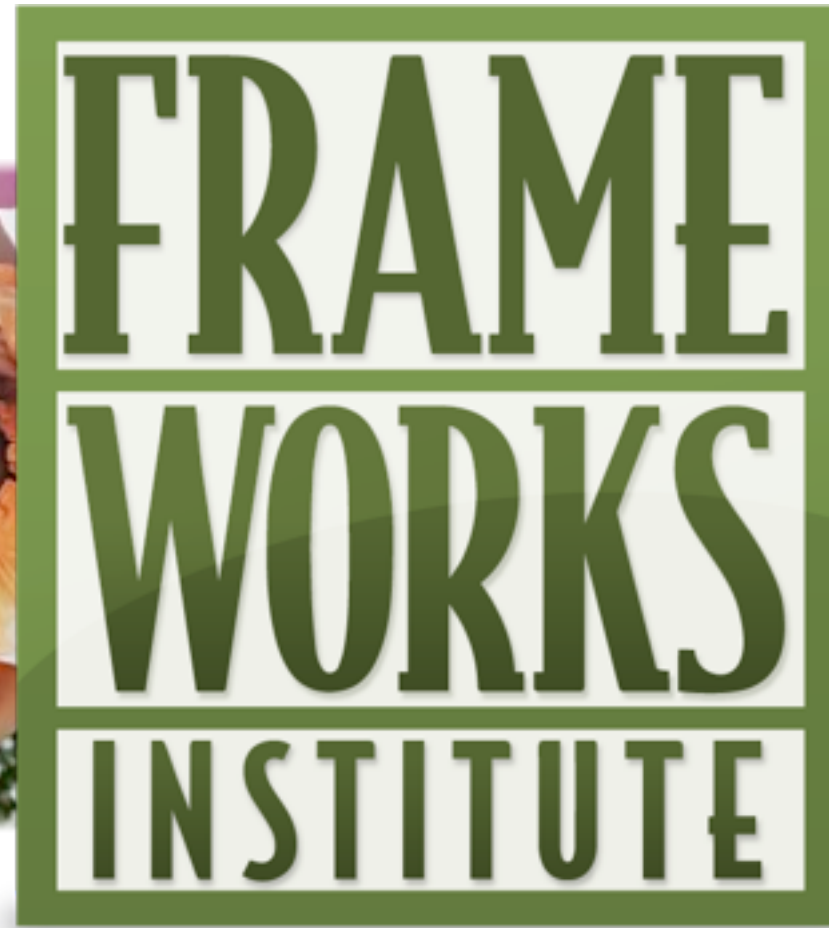


The Shape of Public Thinking

Reshaping Its Context and Contours through Storytelling



@FrameWorksInst

Presented at Accelerating Innovation Symposium - October 2013

Susan Nall Bales, *President*

Nat Kendall-Taylor, *Vice President for Research*

Julie Sweetland, *Director of Learning*

Core Frameworks Principles

- ✓ Good policy depends on good information, but “good information” involves recognizing the dual nature of social issues: social analysis and communications analysis.
- ✓ There is a science of cognition - how people think and process information - which can inform the framing of social issues.
- ✓ The framing of social issues requires an empirical approach.

Stickiness is an Empirical Pursuit

Make messages that stick in
people's minds and in the
public conversation

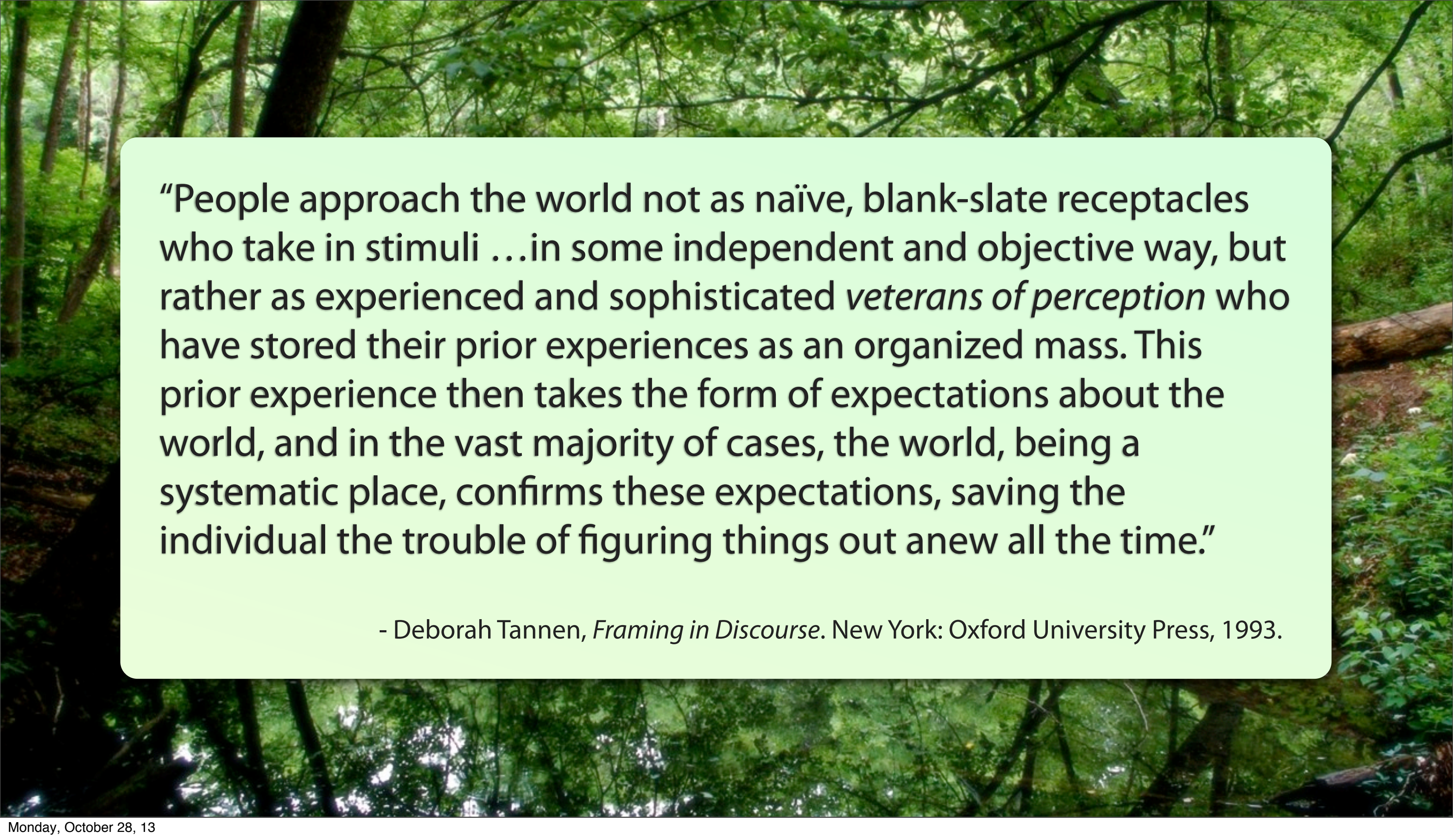
- “A good process for making your ideas stickier is:
- (1) Identify the central message -- find the core;
 - (2) Figure out what is counter-intuitive about the message -- why isn't it happening naturally?
 - (3) Communicate your message in a way that breaks your audience's guessing machines;
 - (4) Once their guessing machines have failed, help them refine their machines.”

Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Made to Stick*. New York: Random House. 2007

“That the mind lives in the brain, the brain lives in the body and the body lives in a community is the key to understanding mental health in all cultural contexts.”

—Karen Hopenwasser, M.D., *NYT Magazine* 1-17-10





“People approach the world not as naïve, blank-slate receptacles who take in stimuli ...in some independent and objective way, but rather as experienced and sophisticated *veterans of perception* who have stored their prior experiences as an organized mass. This prior experience then takes the form of expectations about the world, and in the vast majority of cases, the world, being a systematic place, confirms these expectations, saving the individual the trouble of figuring things out anew all the time.”

- Deborah Tannen, *Framing in Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Negative Outcomes

The exception
Physical appearance
Nutrition
Safety
Activities (-)

What's in the swamp of...

Developmental Outcomes and Resilience

Positive Outcomes

The norm
Follow directions
School performance
Community relationships
Confidence
Activities (+)

WILLPOWER

No challenge or adversity is too great
What doesn't kill you makes you stronger
Effort explains individual differences
Resilience is yours if you want it

FAMILY BUBBLE

Parental behavior explains individual differences

Resilience= Innate Substance


Everyone is born with it--it's in all of us
Use it or lose it

Context Matters

Employment demands shape parental behaviors




Swampy Thinking about Outcomes



Are we using the Canadian reel in Nat's talk? Why is this US?

Swampy Thinking about Outcomes

Why is it that some kids turn out well and others don't?



Are we using the Canadian reel in Nat's talk? Why is this US?

Swampy Thinking about Outcomes

Why is it that some kids turn out well and others don't?

Are we using the Canadian reel in Nat's talk? Why is this US?

???, Family Bubble, Genetic Determinism, Will Power

Communicating with Gator Bait Gets Your Message Eaten

Communicating with Gator Bait Gets Your Message Eaten

“One in three children in the province are affected by poverty.”

Communicating with Gator Bait Gets Your Message Eaten

“One in three children in the province are affected by poverty.”



The Dominant Story about Health

Why does this matter?

INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS

PERSONAL HEALTH

SYSTEM IN CRISIS

What's this about? How does this work?

???

SELF-MAKINGNESS

FAMILY BUBBLE

"GENETICS"

What's the goal?

How can we tell if its been met?

INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS

PERSONAL HEALTH

If it's not working, why not?

FAILURES OF WILLPOWER

POOR CHOICES OF INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES

"GENETICS"

Who's going to fix it? How?

CHANGE INDIVIDUALS' BEHAVIORS

WE CAN'T

Frame Elements that Help You Survive the Swamp

Frame Elements that Help You Survive the Swamp

VALUES, or goals to remind people of what's at stake, or what they already care about that an issue connects to

METAPHORS, to place issues in people's everyday action scenario, enhance their understanding of processes and mechanisms and increase agency

SOCIAL MATH, to present data in a way that is usable and fulfills a strategic communications need

EXPLANATORY CHAINS, to help people connect causes and consequences

NARRATIVE, to override people's default patterns of expectation about a complex, abstract issue by substituting the expectations of a well known narrative structure

Frame Elements that Help You Survive the Swamp

VALUES, or goals to remind people of what's at stake, or what they already care about that an issue connects to

METAPHORS, to place issues in people's everyday action scenario, enhance their understanding of processes and mechanisms and increase agency

SOCIAL MATH, to present data in a way that is usable and fulfills a strategic communications need

EXPLANATORY CHAINS, to help people connect causes and consequences

NARRATIVE, to override people's default patterns of expectation about a complex, abstract issue by substituting the expectations of a well known narrative structure

A Reframed Story about Communities and Health

Why does this matter?

 **INTERDEPENDENCE**

What's this about? How does this work?

 **BRAIN ARCHITECTURE**

 **SERVE & RETURN**

*What's the goal?
How can we tell if it's been met?*

 **LEVELNESS**

 **RESILIENCE SCALE**

If it's not working, why not?

 **TOXIC STRESS**

 **RESOURCE GRID**

Who's going to fix it? How?

 **INGENUITY**

 **PREVENTION**

Resilience Scale



A positive child outcome is like a scale that is tipped toward one side. It can be influenced by counterbalancing and by adjusting the fulcrum point.

Simple way to make the following points:

Risk factor accumulation is undeniably negative

There are limits to resilience - no child is invincible

Offloading risk factors increases chances for positive outcomes

Protective/promotive factors can counterbalance risk factors







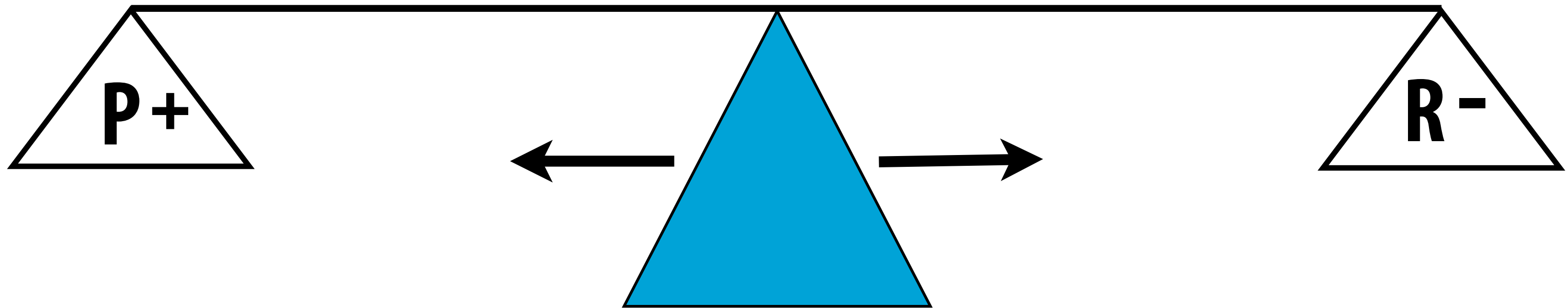
- Think of development as a scale--positive factors get put on one side and negative factors on the other--and the way that the scale tips is like the outcomes of development



- Think of development as a scale--positive factors get put on one side and negative factors on the other--and the way that the scale tips is like the outcomes of development
- The scale can be counterbalanced such that good outcomes can still happen even when there is a lot of heavy "stuff" stacked on the negative side



- Think of development as a scale--positive factors get put on one side and negative factors on the other--and the way that the scale tips is like the outcomes of development
- The scale can be counterbalanced such that good outcomes can still happen even when there is a lot of heavy "stuff" stacked on the negative side
- For every child, the fulcrum starts in a different place, which influences how the scale works and makes some scales are easier to counterbalance than others



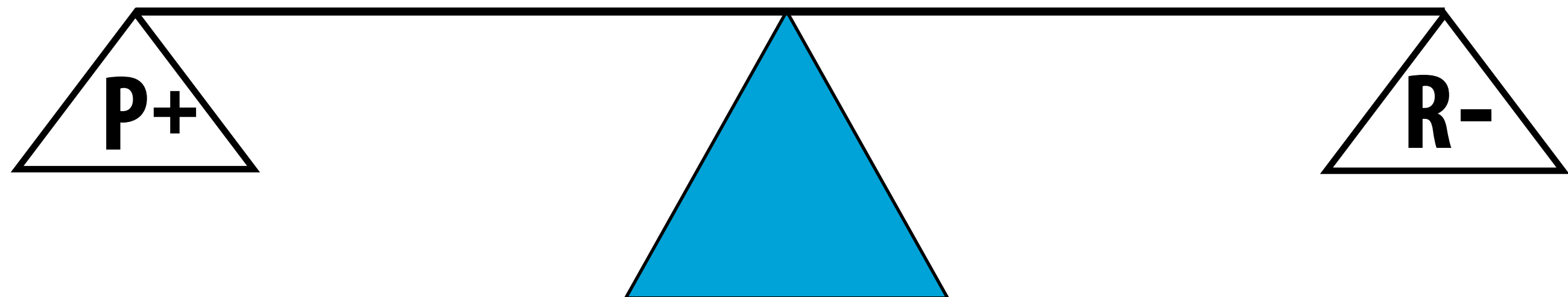
- Think of development as a scale--positive factors get put on one side and negative factors on the other--and the way that the scale tips is like the outcomes of development
- The scale can be counterbalanced such that good outcomes can still happen even when there is a lot of heavy "stuff" stacked on the negative side
- For every child, the fulcrum starts in a different place, which influences how the scale works and makes some scales are easier to counterbalance than others
- The fulcrum's not set--it can slide based on experiences over time

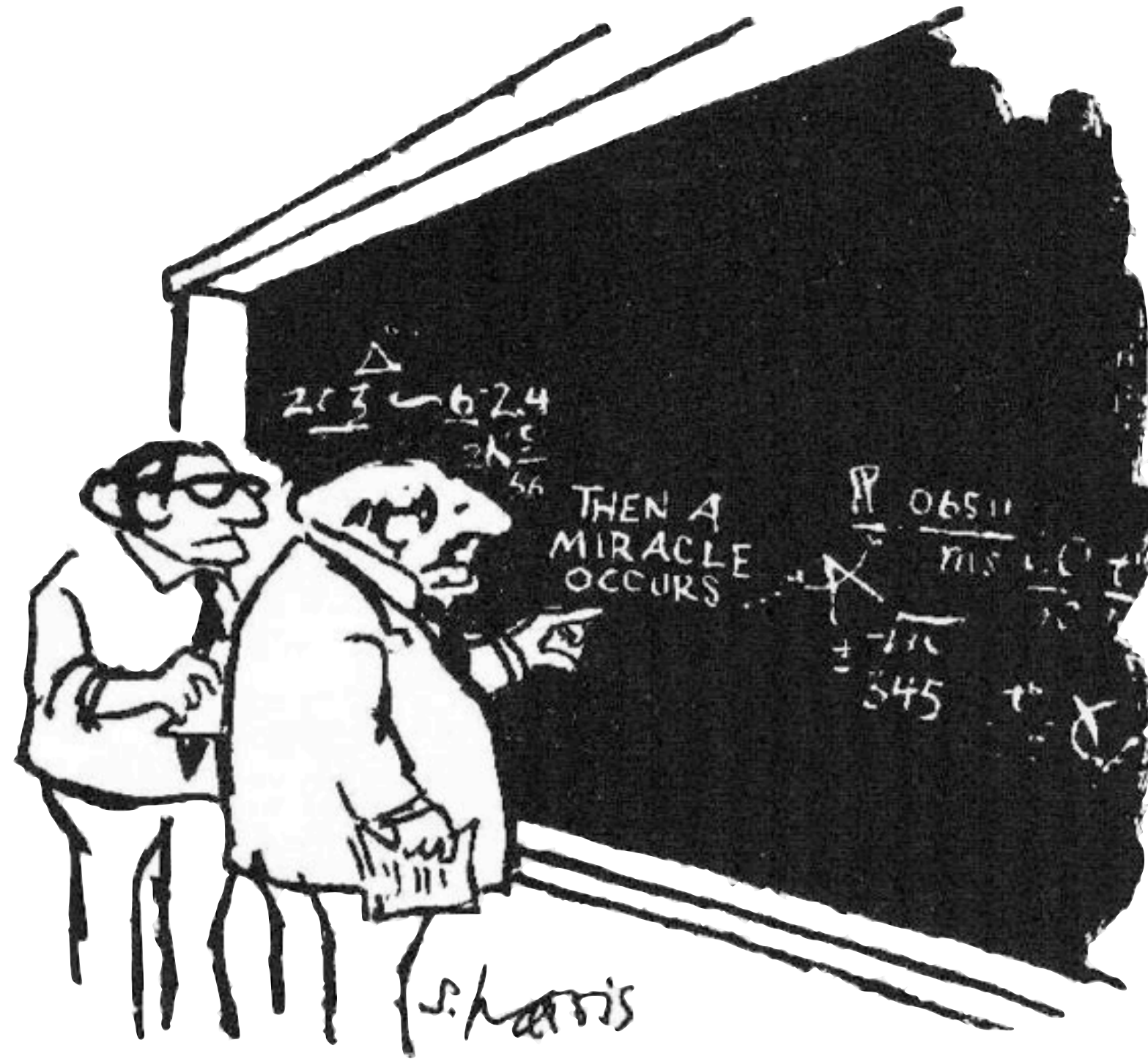
Albertans Thinking with *Scale*



Refining guessing machines with metaphor

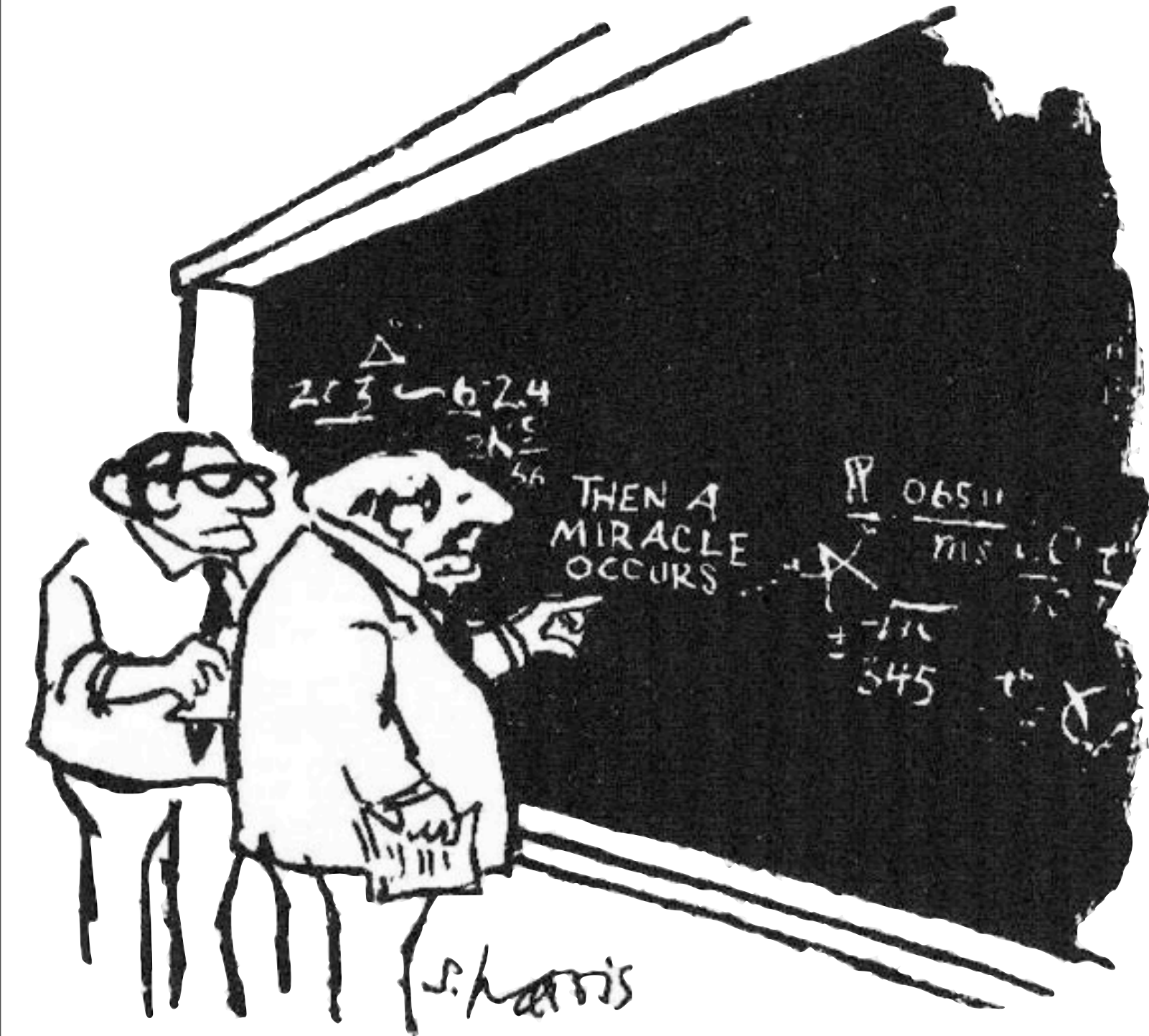
- **Because scales don't tip themselves**, the public focuses less on willpower
- **Because there is a lot of room to fill**, reasoning moves beyond the 'family bubble'
- **Because weight on the negative side can't tip the scale positive**, the public moves away from the idea that 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger'
- **Because scales are dynamic**, the public can see a place for intervention and influence
- **Because both the load and the fulcrum are always influencing the scale**, even if the public considers individual differences, they still attribute a role to environmental influences





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

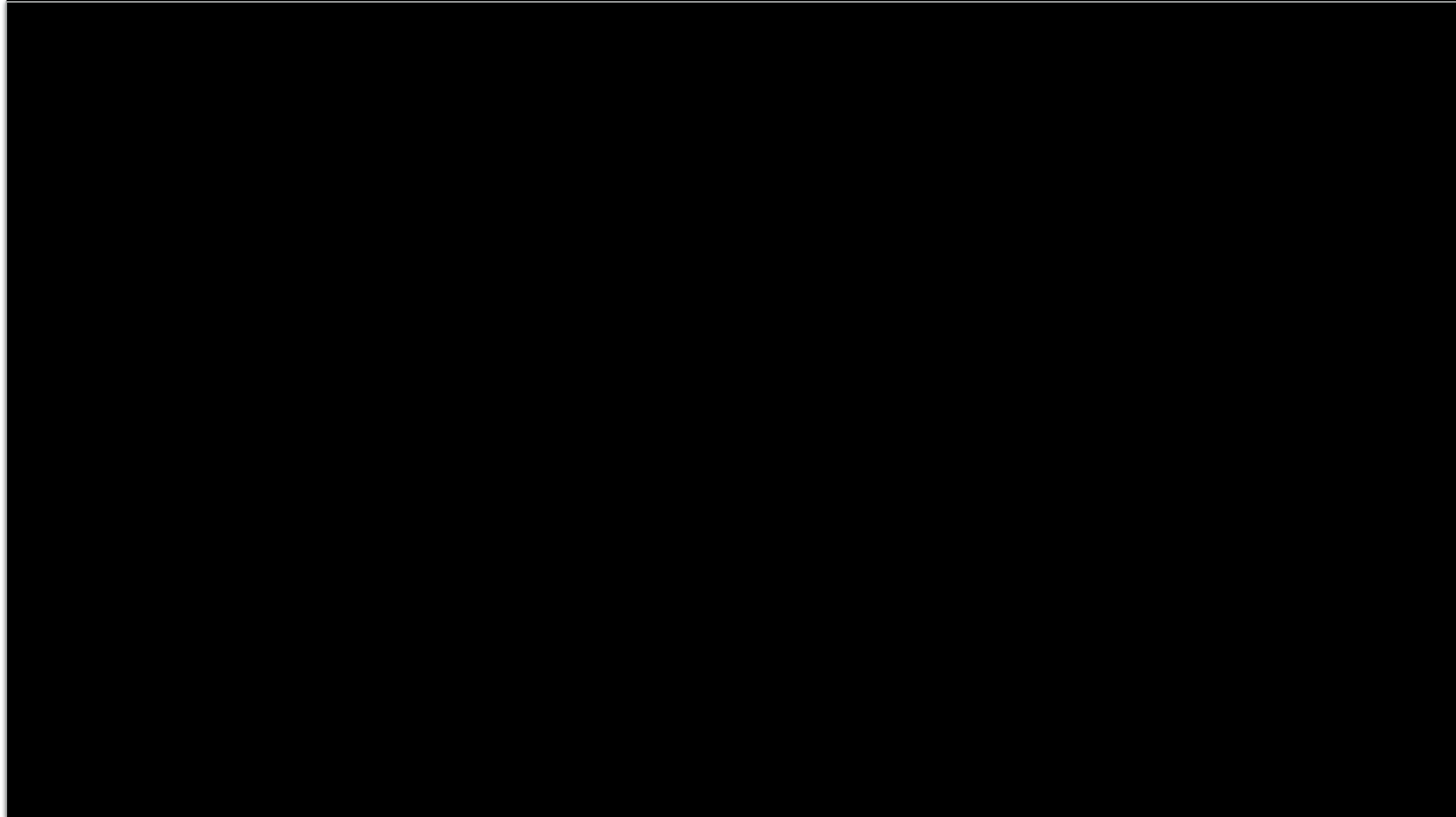
The Power of 'How'



- Explanation is an important communications goal
- Communications real estate is valuable--we need higher standards for what we use to fill it
- If we focus on explaining how things work, we help people become advocates for better change

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

What Role Could Resilience Scale Play in this Reframed Story?



Questions the Public Asks/Answers about Social Problems

Why does this matter?

What's this about? How does this work?

*What's the goal?
How can we tell if it's been met?*

If it's not working, why not?

Who's going to fix it? How?

Values Orient a Communication

- Values are broad, shared beliefs and ideals that orient attitudes and behavior.
- Values help to establish why an issue matters and what is at stake.
- Different values do different things, so it's vital that we look to evidence to choose those that allow people to think productively about our messages.

Ingenuity/Innovation: Core Ideas in this Frame Element



- Some policies make greater use of our collective ability to be clever, inventive, and resourceful
- Ingenuity allows us to outsmart challenges and obstacles
- Inventing and replicating effective policies and programs leads to long-term improvements

Ingenuity in Action

Ingenuity in Action



Framing a Social Policy on Youth: Exhibit A

Framing a Social Policy on Youth: Exhibit A



Questions the Public Asks/Answers about Social Problems

Why does this matter?

What's this about? How does this work?

*What's the goal?
How can we tell if it's been met?*

If it's not working, why not?

Who's going to fix it? How?

Questions the Public Asks/Answers about Social Problems

Why does this matter?

Teenagers are killing and being killed on the roads.

What's this about? How does this work?

Teenagers are behaving badly.

*What's the goal?
How can we tell if it's been met?*

Keep them off the roads -- but is that practical?

If it's not working, why not?

Bad parents.

Who's going to fix it? How?

I'm supposed to go to some website?

Framing a Social Policy on Youth: Exhibit B

Framing a Social Policy on Youth: Exhibit B



Framing a Social Policy on Youth: Exhibit B

Questions the Public Asks/Answers about Social Problems

Why does this matter?

What's this about? How does this work?

*What's the goal?
How can we tell if it's been met?*

If it's not working, why not?

Who's going to fix it? How?

Questions the Public Asks/Answers about Social Problems

Why does this matter?

Our licensing system is out of date.

What's this about? How does this work?

Road conditions have changed.

What's the goal?

How can we tell if it's been met?

Give new drivers more practice.

If it's not working, why not?

Vulnerabilities in system -- after hours, no adult.

Who's going to fix it? How?

New proposal to modernize our system.

Reframing: Enlarged Coalition, Led to Policy Change



Substitute for HOUSE BILL No. 2143

AN ACT relating to driver's licenses; providing for certain restrictions; amending K.S.A. 8-235d, 8-239, 8-291, 8-296 and 8-297 and K.S.A. 2008 Supp. 8-234a and 8-237 and repealing the existing sections.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

New Section 1. (a) Any person who is at least 14 years of age, but less than 17 years of age may apply to the division for an instruction permit. The division may issue an instruction permit under this section to any person who is at least 14 years of age, but less than 16 years of age only upon written application of a parent or guardian of the minor. The division may in its discretion, after the applicant has successfully passed all parts of the examination other than the driving test, issue to the applicant an instruction permit for a period of one year.

(b) An instruction permit issued under this subsection shall authorize the permit holder to drive a passenger car under the following conditions:

Graduated driver's license law credited with reducing accidents involving Kansas teens

Oct 20, 2012

The number of accidents involving teenage Kansas drivers has dropped sharply over the past few years, and safety experts say the graduated driver's license law that took effect Jan 1, 2010, has played a major role in the trend.

“I think that's exactly the outcome we expected,” said Suzanne Wikle, director of policy and research for Kansas Action for Children, a nonprofit group that pushed for the law. She said other states have seen similar results after enacting similar laws.

Strategic framers tell stories that *redefine* social problems in order to help people see how actions they could take would affect those problems.

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

-Richard Rorty



For more information please visit:

www.FrameWorksInstitute.org

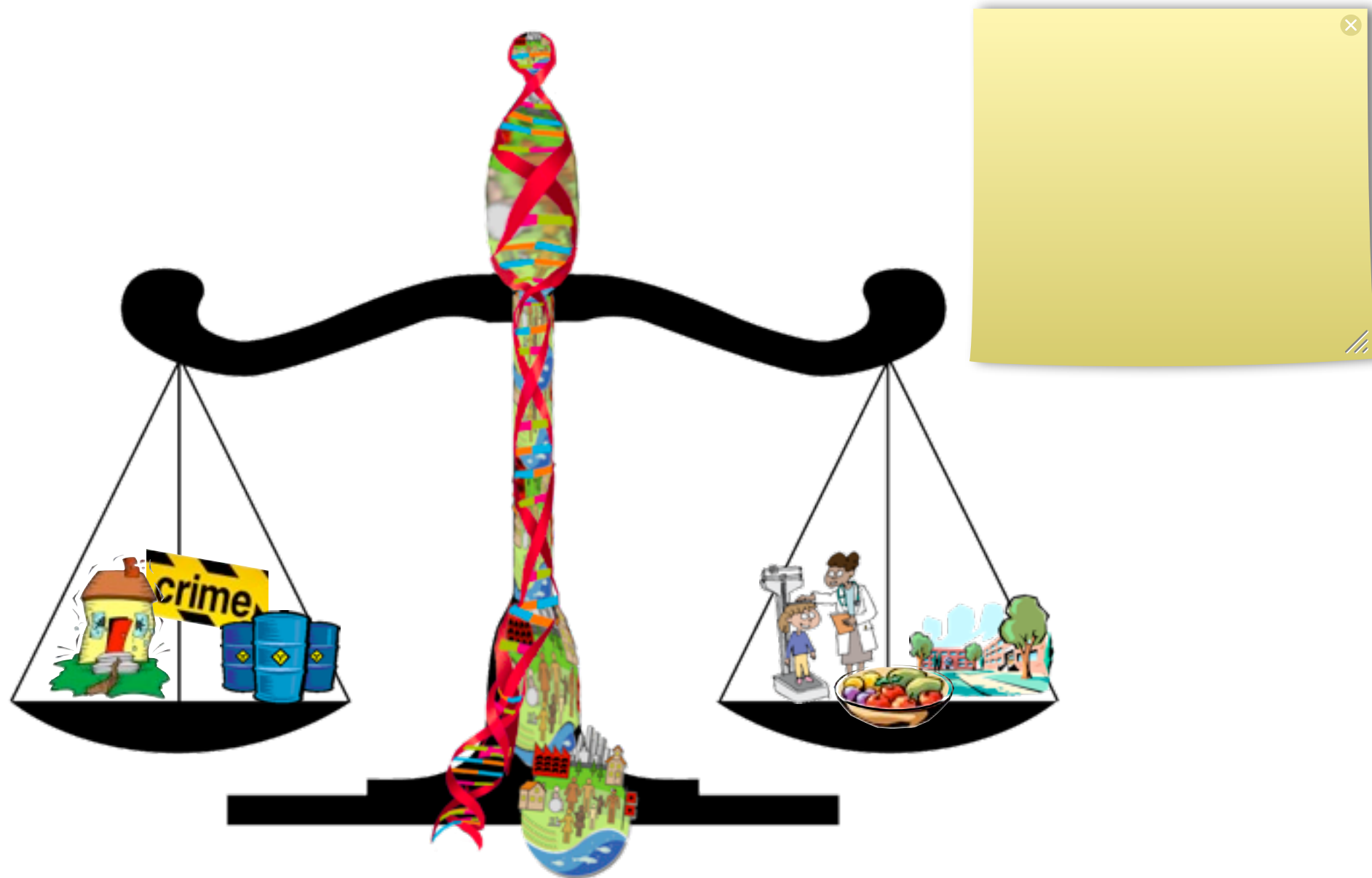
Follow us on Twitter @FrameWorksInst

Slides in this presentation were developed by the FrameWorks Institute for individual use and cannot be represented, adapted or distributed without the express written permission of the Institute. All images in this presentation are licensed for the purpose of this presentation only and may not be reproduced elsewhere.

FrameWorks Institute © 2013

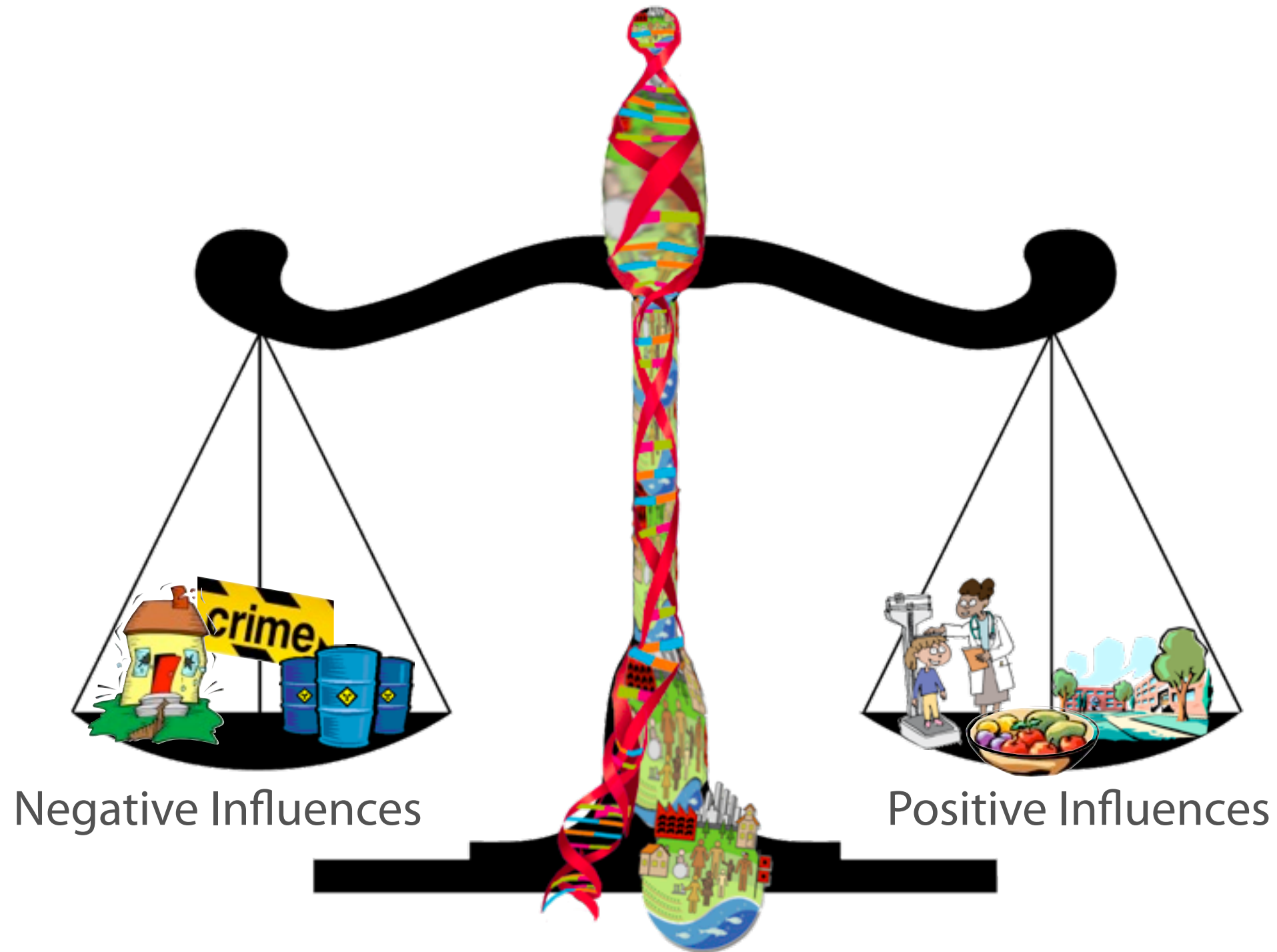
Resilience Scale

*Communicating a Developmental,
Environmental Perspective on
Outcomes*



Resilience Scale

Communicating a Developmental, Environmental Perspective on Outcomes



Resilience Scale



A positive child outcome is like a scale that is tipped toward one side. It can be influenced by counterbalancing and by adjusting the fulcrum point.

Simple way to make the following points:

Risk factor accumulation is undeniably negative

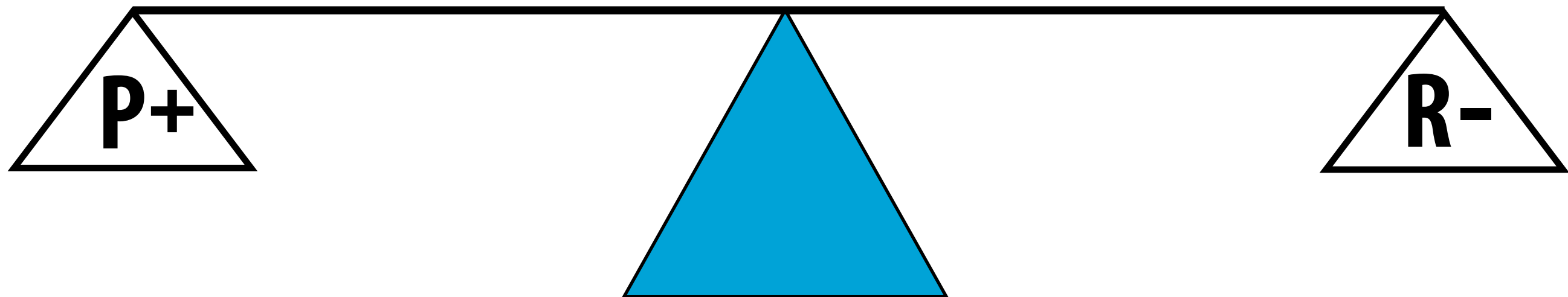
There are limits to resilience - no child is invincible

Offloading risk factors increases chances for positive outcomes

Stacks of risk factors can be counterbalanced with stacks of protective factors

Highly Effective in Inoculating Against:

- **Will Power:** scales don't tip themselves
- **Family bubble:** too much space to fill
- **Stress Does the Body Good:** negative weight never tips the scale positive
- **Determinism:** scales are dynamic
- **Percentages of Influence:** its always both the position of the fulcrum and load



Scale: What Worked with Albertans

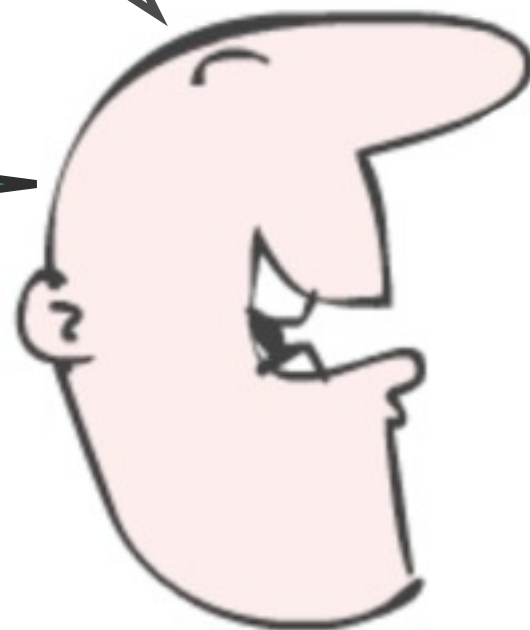
- General concept, and the analogy, was readily understood by public
 - A scale has two sides; when weighted, it tips to one side = possible positive or negative child outcomes
 - Weights influence the tipping = protective and risk factors
 - Both fulcrum and load influence the tip = interplay of individual characteristics and environmental influences
- Language related to scales was available and sticky: *load, stack, tip, positive/negative side, balance, balance point, weight, counterweight...*
- People talked about well-being and what children need in order to turn out well



“Once you live in poverty, you can never forget the experience and the hardships you endure,” explains 23 year-old Cindy Christensen.

Once homeless, now a university student...

change Harvard to university



ADVOCATE



PUBLIC



A Reframed Story about Communities and Health

Why does this matter?

 **INTERDEPENDENCE**

If it's not working, why not?

 **TOXIC STRESS**

 **RESOURCE GRID**

What's this about? How does this work?

 **BRAIN ARCHITECTURE**

 **SERVE & RETURN**

Who's going to fix it? How?

 **INGENUITY**

 **PREVENTION**

*What's the goal?
How can we tell if it's been met?*

 **LEVELNESS**

 **OUTCOMES SCALE**

The Dominant Story about Health

Why does this matter?

INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS

PERSONAL HEALTH

SYSTEM IN CRISIS

If it's not working, why not?

POOR CHOICES OF INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES

"GENETICS"

WILLPOWER

What's this about? How does this work?

SELF-MAKINGNESS

???

FAMILY BUBBLE

"GENETICS"

Who's going to fix it? How?

WE CAN'T

CHANGE INDIVIDUALS' BEHAVIORS

What's the goal? How can we tell if its been met?

INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS

PERSONAL HEALTH