

# Berkeley Media Studies Group

## Framing for Public Health: More than a Message

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[www.bmsg.org](http://www.bmsg.org)

# Berkeley Media Studies

## Group

- Research on news coverage of public health issues
- Media advocacy training and strategic consultation for community groups and leaders
- Professional education for journalists

# Basic Questions

Will improved health status come about **primarily** as a result of:

individuals getting more knowledge about personal health behaviors?

or

groups getting more power to change social and economic conditions?

# Moving Upstream

## Brand X Media

Individual Focus

Warns & Informs

Mobilizes

Personal Change

Message

Information Gap

## Media Advocacy

Issue Focus

Pressures &

Policy Change

Voice

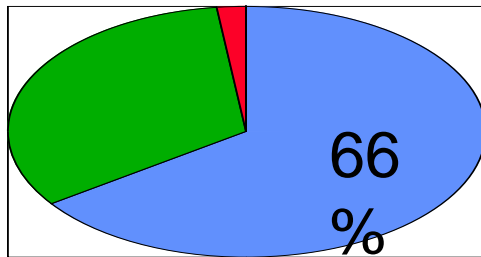
Power Gap

# Message Is Never First

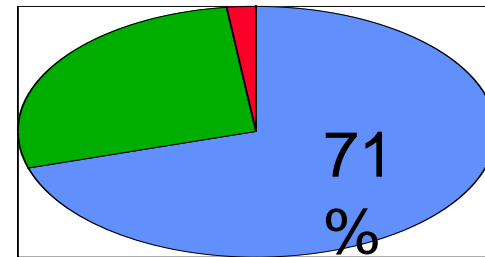
- What do you want to change in the world?
- How will you change it?
- Why do you want it to be changed?

# Public Opinion Isn't Enough

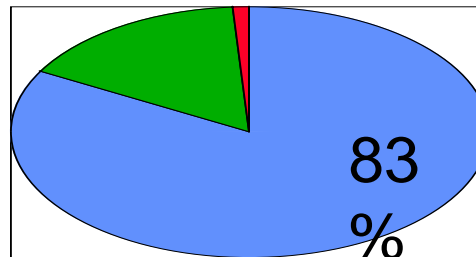
## NRA Supporters



## Gun Owners



## Voters



Who Supports Handgun Licensing? Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates, May 2001, for the Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence

# Accelerating Policy on Nutrition

- Lessons from tobacco, alcohol, guns, & traffic hazards
- Expert meetings of public health researchers & policy advocates
- Recommendations for building a movement

# Ingredients for Social Change

- Policy Goals
- Framing
- Political Opportunity
- Resources

# Policy Moves Upstream for Healthy Environments

- Develop a menu of policy options
- Move on several policy fronts at once
- Be wary of behavior change couched in policy change language
- Involve the communities most affected by the problem

# Political Opportunities: Local policy

- Seek out new local policy efforts and foster those already underway
- Ensure local efforts are nurtured in the communities that suffer most

# Political Opportunities: Industry

- Cultivate a public health voice independent of industry
- Create tactical opportunities for productive relationships with industry

# Obesity is the Wrong Word

- Narrows the problem
- Stigmatizes people
- Favors the food industry
- Focuses downstream

# Framing Terrain

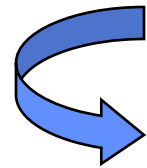
Media Context

Cultural Context

Policy Context

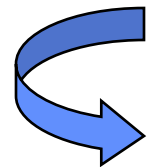
# Key Functions of the News

Setting the Agenda



*what we think about*

Shaping the Debate



*how we think about it*

# The News Context

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are needed to see this picture.

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*A report on obesity  
plunges into  
controversial areas.*

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are needed to see this picture.

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

## Food banks' 'catering'

Editor -- Regarding Cecilia Vega's article, "Food banks cater to immigrant taste" ( June 20): Shouldn't the food banks' only priority be filling hungry stomachs? If the people they "cater to" throw out perfectly good food, they must not be very hungry and certainly aren't in need of free food.

Hungry people do not throw out food. Caring people donated that food. The thought of those receiving it tossing it into the bushes really makes me angry and also makes me reluctant to donate to food-bank drives ever again.

**KATY FRANKLIN**

San Francisco

# The Advertising Context

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Just a few cues...

HEALTHY EATING

...might surprise you

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## It Depends on How You Ask

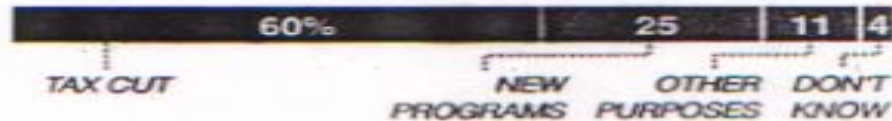
The public's desire for tax cuts can be hard to measure. Pollsters asking what should be done with the nation's budget surplus got different results depending on the specifics of the question.

### THE QUESTION

*President Clinton has proposed setting aside approximately two-thirds of an expected budget surplus to fix the Social Security system. What do you think the leaders in Washington should do with the remainder of the surplus? ...*

#### Variation 1

*... Should the money be used for a tax cut, or should it be used to fund new government programs?*



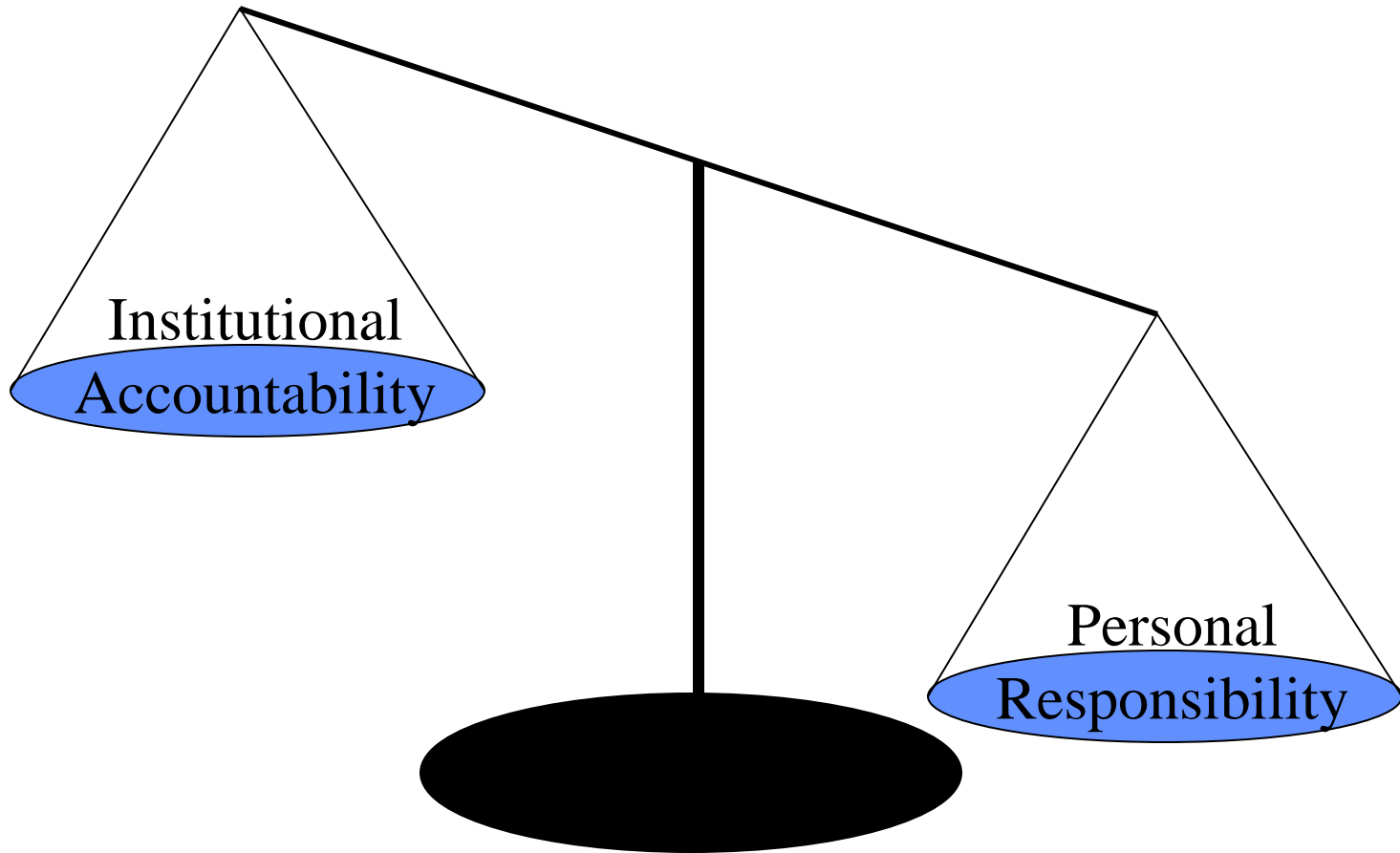
#### Variation 2

*... Should the money be used for a tax cut, or should it be spent on programs for education, the environment, health care, crime-fighting and military defense?*



Source: Pew Research Center

# The Need to Reframe



# Drunk Driving Death Toll Rose in '95

## First increase in decade worries safety experts

By Tom Ichniowski

Washington

Deaths involving drunken drivers jumped 4 percent last year to the first increase in a decade, as overall traffic fatalities rose from their three-year low, the National Safety Council said yesterday.

And, a report says, that might be bad for the 17,000 to 18,000 people who die each year from traffic deaths in the United States. The report says that the number of deaths from drunk driving has risen 4 percent since 1985, but that the overall number of traffic deaths has fallen 10 percent since 1985. The report says that the number of deaths from drunk driving has risen 4 percent since 1985, but that the overall number of traffic deaths has fallen 10 percent since 1985.

They single out alcohol as the top cause of traffic deaths in the United States. Alcohol-related traffic deaths rose in recent years, but fatalities last year grew faster than other deaths, according to the safety council. Safety experts pointed primarily to higher speeds, as more states have raised their limits and drivers everywhere have exceeded all limits. They also cited a demographic trend, as the so-called baby boom enters the road. They called for tougher enforcement of speed limits and drunk-driving laws and seat belt laws, as well as the improved auto safety features.

### OTHER FINDINGS

In addition to auto fatalities, the National Safety Council's report included information on other causes of accidental deaths. Among the findings:

- Accidental deaths, including car crashes, poisonings, falls, drownings and fires, increased 2 percent to 93,300 in 1994.
- Poisoning by adults and by kids, including illegal drugs, caused 10,000 deaths in 1994, up 13 percent from 1993, the first time poisonings caused more deaths in the United States than did accidental falls, which caused 27,300 deaths in 1994.

# Public Citizen, an advocacy group, called for the federal government to impose new safety requirements. But car companies responded that the key to greater safety was changes in driver behavior.

...while you are in, because you, in my experience, if you please, and you do nothing, it's going to get worse," he said.

A spokeswoman for Mothers Against Drunk Driving, in Irving, Texas, Miss Cox, cited a similar factor in the increase in drunken driving, saying, "The problem becomes immediate compliance. People may have a feeling that drunk driving has been solved."

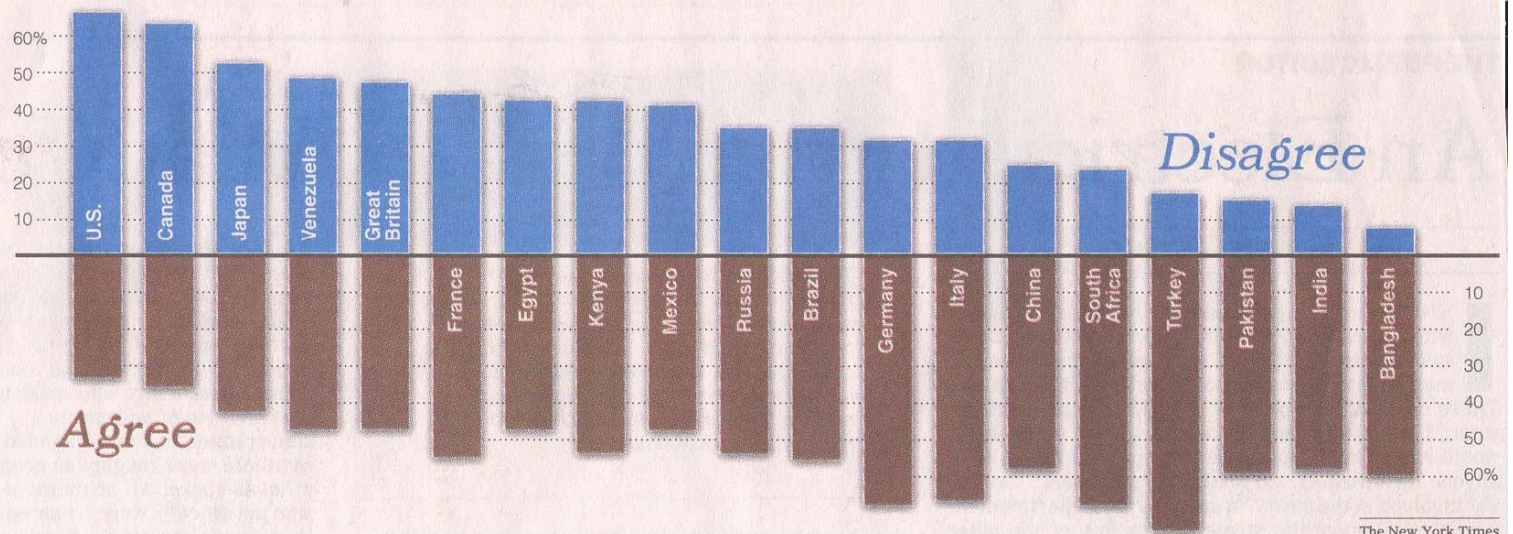
Introduction of new technology into the nation's motor vehicle fleet — which is now at 204.1 million — has also had an effect, but not entirely for the better.

Faith in the Future

# Why America Sees the Silver Lining

‘Success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our control.’

— A Pew Center poll in 2002 of 38,000 people in 44 countries. Americans, more than any other respondents, disagreed.



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TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2005

## Blaming poverty for fat

Editor --- I thought we were done making excuses about fat, but Suzan Bateson of the Alameda County Community Food Bank (Letters, March 21) persists in the paternalistic belief that fat people are just victims.

She blames obesity on poverty despite the fact that 60 percent of Americans are overweight, clearly including the vast majority of the middle class. It doesn't take a social scientist to people-watch at an airport or Fisherman's Wharf and see well-off obese people with plenty of food and options.

When I was a "starving student" 30 years ago, I subsisted on a healthy diet of whole grains and fresh vegetables. I couldn't afford prepared foods or soft drinks. Eating healthy was the cheapest thing for me to do.

**ROGER DROSD**

San Francisco

# Lakoff's Conceptual Levels

- Level 1: overarching values like fairness, responsibility
- Level 2: issues like housing, children's health, food, living wage
- Level 3: specific strategies like tax breaks for developers, health insurance for kids & families, setting nutritional standards for foods in school

# Message Development

- Statement of concern  
What's wrong?
- Value dimension  
Why does it matter?
- Policy objective  
What should be done?

# Layers of Strategy

- Overall strategy
- Media strategy
- Message strategy
- Access strategy

# Prime Directive

You can't have a media strategy without an overall strategy.

# Getting Attention

To gain the media's attention, you can't just say something; you have to DO something.

Russell Sciandra