Campaign Strategy Newsletters (as of August 2008) unedited texts

Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 1  Dec 29 2004

Thanks for signing up to this newsletter.

The first two parts of the introduction to "How To Win Campaigns" (my forthcoming book) are now at my www.campaignstrategy.org

The third and final part of the intro' will follow in the next weeks, and then I'll put a selection of the 100 tools or 'steps' up, at regular intervals before publication.

Feedback is very welcome - so let me have any thoughts or comments. Please do tell your friends or colleagues if you think they'd be interested.

There's also the story of how I learned about campaigning - mainly by doing it and learning from others in NGOs and in the media, PR, politics and business communications worlds.

Future newsletters will have topical content about campaigns and communications.

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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 2  Jan 05 2005

The climate of values

The web-published essay “Death Of Environmentalism” (1) by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Noordhaus has ignited a vigorous debate about the successes and failures of environmental campaigns in the United States. Addressed to US foundations, which in that country are far more important to NGOs than in regions such as Europe, the piece has drawn an unusual and angry public rejoinder from Carl Pope of the Sierra Cub (2). His immediate concern is also funding: he starts with “Dear Environmental Grant Maker”.

All this is understandable. One American friend says: “the talk is that the NGO's funders are concerned that they are spending lots of money on tactics that don't work, witness the election and other happenings in Congress".
It is relatively easy to find fault (3) with the Shellenberger and Noordhaus analysis. For example:

- They identify a litany of design failings in US NGO campaigns, many of which were picked up by many European campaigners at least ten years ago (such as the need to escape from, in their neat phrase, ‘literal sclerosis’ – campaigning by asserting the objective as a policy outcome; over-reliance on ‘science’; the need to adopt indirect strategies; and, the creation of ‘environment’ as a separate construct, something which has kept sociologists talking for years (4) together with the consequent need to break down ‘issue-thinking’ and issue-organisation in NGOs).

- They draw dramatic and fundamental conclusions about the ‘environmental movement’ – ‘we have become convinced that modern environmentalism, with all of its unexamined assumptions, outdated concepts and exhausted strategies, must die so that something new can live’ – without saying anything very specific about solutions.

- Their sweeping conclusions are underpinned by claims about inflexibility over strategic thinking among US campaign groups - ‘generals fighting the last war’ - which Pope says are not well supported by the evidence of their interviews (one was with Carl Pope himself).

- They point up a lot of problems in achieving change through public debate and legislation but say effectively nothing about using alternative routes to change, such as the ‘new politics’ of change via businesses, consumers and NGOs.

Yet none of this should stop anyone from giving their insightful and stimulating paper a careful read. It’s unfortunate that they pin so much of their case on the history of failed US NGO attempts to achieve government action to reduce American climate emissions: “the graveyard of global warming politics”. Because of this they have triggered an historical tit for tat debate over who did what in various failed policy-changing campaigns, and what the Apollo Project is about.

This isn’t the really big issue. American climate campaigning no doubt deserves modernisation but at least some of the solutions may be more technical – in terms of effective campaign design – and less fundamental than Shellenberger and Noordhaus imply. (Below I try to itemise some of the fearsome difficulties, which have scuppered many climate campaigns, and I will try to expand on them in the next newsletter.)

It’s what Shellenberger and Noordhaus begin to say about values, which really deserves to be explored. And here they get a line onto the subject without landing the fish.

**The Changing Climate of Values**

What you could call the ‘values climate’ is made up of the prevailing weight of values in a society at any one time, and in Europe, the US and Canada, that has changed dramatically over the last thirty years. By ‘values’ I don’t mean what’s recognized as statements of ‘right or wrong’ but whatever the dominant needs-based psychological motivations may be.

Shellenberger and Noordhaus echo the plea of framing expert George Lakoff (5), for environmentalists and other ‘progressives’ to learn the lessons of the US right wing, and organise themselves around ‘value-based’ political communication which serves their objectives by resonating with the values of key groups of the public, rather than just assembling a case made of ‘rational’ arguments.
They write:

‘Part of what’s behind America’s political turn to the right is the skill with which conservative think tanks, intellectuals and political leaders have crafted proposals that build their power through setting the terms of the debate. Their work has paid off.’

and

‘If environmentalists hope to become more than a special interest we must start framing our proposals around core American values. We must start seeing our own values as central to what motivates and guides our politics.’

Yet while Shellenberger and Noordhaus rightly castigate campaigners for policy literalism or literal sclerosis, they make something of the same mistake themselves when they come to discuss values.

While, as they point out, the right (to use the American meaning of the term) talks a lot about ‘values’, and ‘liberals’ (again in US-speak) avoid it, values in any important sense aren’t acquired by assertion or a process of conscious selection or the picking of metaphors or arguments for debate but through deeper more personal processes of development, needs and motivations.

‘Core American values didn’t come with the geology, they don’t ‘belong to America’ any more than you could find German values lying about in Germany if all the Germans left on holiday. Different sides will lay claim to ‘Core American values’ at a rhetorical level but that doesn’t make those things real. Shellenberger and Noordhaus point out that ‘the environment’ or an ‘environmental issue’ are not real things independent of humans, and nor are values are not independent real things but by using objective mapping techniques, social motivational values can be usefully mapped.

Tantalisingly, Shellenberger and Noordhaus themselves refer to a system of nationwide ‘social values’ surveys conducted by the Canadian firm Environics in Canada and the US (A similar survey is conducted in the UK and parts of Europe by a London based company Cultural Dynamics Strategy and Marketing Ltd). In their essay, Shellenberger and Noordhaus say -

‘One tool we have to offer to that process is the research we are doing as part of our Strategic Values Project, which is adapting corporate marketing research for use by the progressive community. This project draws on a 600 question, 2,500-person survey done in the U.S. and Canada every four years since 1992. In contrast to conventional opinion research, this research identifies the core values and beliefs that inform how individuals develop a range of opinions on everything from the economy’

(More can be read about the Startegic Values Project at www.breakthrough.org. )

They add: ‘this research both shows a clear conservative shift in America’s values since 1992 and illuminates many positive openings for progressives and environmentalists.’ What such research shows is in fact far more intriguing, possibly alarming, than this dangle suggests.

- It exposes a growing divide over dominant values between the US and Canada, and between the US and Europe, with important implications for any campaign on ‘global issues’. 
• It demonstrates the political consequences of changing social conditions, through their driving of values, as life for many Americans has got worse over the past twenty years
• It shows how many campaign strategies, even organisational strategies, are indeed seriously out of date because they are out of kilter with the values landscape they now operate in

The research conducted by Cultural Dynamics, and supported by the American data used by Shellenberger and Noorhaus, revealed the deeper motivations behind the attitudes displayed in the surface data. These insights are explicit in the Cultural Dynamics data and models and implicit in the data from Environics. Both data sets lead to the observation that there are three broad psychological models that can explain the data and the dynamics of the changes.

These groups were first identified by the psychologist Abraham Maslow and people fall into them according to their personal needs. We start security-driven, needing things such as security and belonging. If these needs are met we seek esteem – self-esteem and the esteem of others – and if those needs are met, we may move on to be ‘inner directed’, meeting needs such as self-exploration and the development of ethics. The power of the psychographic models now employed by Cultural Dynamics and Environics is their ability to quickly segment any sample of a population where the large nationally-representative base-survey has been conducted, into not just the three main groups but around a dozen more fine-tuned groups, explain their inter-group dynamics, track long term changes at any level, and relate these to some 70 ‘attributes’ (in the US/Canada around 100). An essay at the website www.campaignstrategy.org (6) gives more detail.

What can these studies usefully tell us about campaigns?

• the US-EU and US-Canadian Values Divide

Conventional punditry has it has it that ‘the world is becoming more American’, yet the evidence shows this is not the case. Some of the feeling that the influence of Americanisation is growing, may be due to the increasing sensitivity to this in other countries?

The striking difference between Europe and the USA is a widening mismatch of values, needs and motivations. In Europe, the proportion of ‘inner directeds’ has grown steadily over the past thirty years in – for example in Britain surveys by Cultural Dynamics show inner-directeds groups comprise 42% of the population in London, 34% in the UK nationally, with a similar proportion in France - the security driven segment has continued to shrink and age. In the USA (surveyed by Environics) there has been a 20% increase in the security (or fear) driven part of the population. The social balances in these countries are shifting in opposite directions.

Although there may be other causes, it seems likely that this has happened in line with worsening real prospects for many Americans in such terms as life expectancy, health and education over the past 20 years. In the UK, in contrast, economic, education and health prospects for the poorest have gradually improved in recent years (7) despite a widening gap between rich and poor.

As one report (8) noted in 2004:

‘Bloated, blue-collar Americans - gorged on diets of fries and burgers, but denied their share of US riches - are bringing the nation’s steady rise in life expectancy to a grinding halt.'
Twenty years ago, the US, the richest nation on the planet, led the world's longevity league. Today, American women rank only 19th, while males can manage only 28th place, alongside men from Brunei.

These startling figures are blamed by researchers on two key factors: obesity, and inequality of health care. A man born in a poor area of Washington can have a life expectancy that is 40 years less than a woman in a prosperous neighbourhood only a few blocks away, for example.

‘A look at the Americans' health reveals astonishing inequalities in our society,’ state Professor Lawrence Jacobs of Minnesota University and Professor James Morone, of Brown University, Rhode Island, in the journal American Prospect ....

‘... statisticians at Boston College reveal that in France, Japan and Switzerland, men and women aged 65 now live several years longer than they do in the US. Indeed, America only just scrapes above Mexico and most East European nations.

‘This decline is astonishing given America's wealth. Not only is it Earth's richest nation, it devotes more gross domestic product - 13 per cent - to health care than any other developed nation. Switzerland comes next with 10 per cent; Britain spends 7 per cent. As the Boston group - Alicia Munnell, Robert Hatch and James Lee - point out: 'The richer a country is, the more resources it can dedicate to education, medical and other goods and services associated with great longevity.’ The result in every other developed country has been an unbroken rise in life expectancy since 1960.

But this formula no longer applies to America, where life expectancy's rise has slowed but not yet stopped, because resources are now so unevenly distributed. When the Boston College group compared men and women in America's top 10 per cent wage bracket with those in the bottom ten per cent, they found the former group earned 17 times more than the latter. In Japan, Switzerland and Norway, this ratio is only five-to-one.

Jacobs and Morone state: 'Check-ups, screenings and vaccinations save lives, improve well-being, and are shockingly uneven [in America]. Well-insured people get assigned hospital beds; the uninsured get patched up and sent back to the streets.' For poor Americans, health service provision is little better than that in third world nations. 'People die younger in Harlem than in Bangladesh,' report Jacobs and Morone.

These people 'dropping' back into a security-driven state have come from the once-massive US esteem (or status-driven) part of the population. Canadian studies (9) have shown, that over the past twenty years Canada has become less security-driven than the USA, while the US has gone the other way. In fact the relative positions of the two countries at the start and end of the period have reversed.

In terms of values it seems the US is drifting away from Europe, Canada and maybe a lot of other places too.

Inside and outside the US, the significance of this change for campaigns, is little short of seismic. It is the inner-directed who will, by and large, do activism, entertain challenges to authority, seek new ideas, and embrace ethical causes, global ideals and international issues. Conversely the security driven tend to support and seek a lead from authority, uphold 'tradition', and are most easily motivated by FUD factors - fear, uncertainty and doubt.
Hence the security-driven dynamic of Bush politics and the widening transatlantic divide over ‘global’ issues, which are all typically inner directed concerns unless they pose a direct perceived threat to safety, belonging or identity (‘our way of life’). The esteem-driven tend to follow fashion and seek an exchange from politics — “if I support you, what do I get?”

While security motivations and politics can be turned to apply to issues such as ‘climate’, most NGOs tend to project arguments and ideas which work with some inner-directeds but fall flat when addressed to the other groups.

Most campaigners also avoid brands, the key to reaching outer-directeds (esteem-driven), as politically incorrect. They recoil from fear-driven messaging such as that used in the xenophobic, anti-Arab SUV campaign at www.detroitproject.com but not all ‘make us safe’ and ‘we belong’ communications has to be so negative.

In terms of global campaigns on topics such as climate, it is already the case that the US is now more of a passenger than a leader: maybe this internal dynamic explains why it lacks the energy to contribute. On the other hand, as Shellenberger and Noordhaus and other constantly cry, if US campaigners ‘organised’ differently, they might deliver different results. This probably requires different psychological organisation, not just alliance making, web-networking, different targeting or even better metaphorical communication.

These changing landscapes of values may also go a long way to explain why apparently similar campaigns in the US and Europe have had such different results. Take the case of UK policy on climate, cited by Shellenberger and Noordhaus. In Britain the idea that climate change is real and needs to be acted upon has been endorsed not just by NGOs with their mainly ‘inner directed type propositions, but, since 1989, by Prime Ministers from Mrs Thatcher onwards. More recently even the Queen has joined in. Such authority figures appeal to the security-driven. As of the mid 1990s, big brands such as Shell and BP (icons of success) also backed the need for action on climate. This was only partly a result of campaigns. Shell and BP for example were bounced into it by campaigns such as the Brent Spar, the Nigeria Ogoni issue and the Atlantic Frontier, along with explicit renewables-oil and climate advocacy but the prevailing values landscape meant they didn’t have to be bumped as far as an oil company would need to be in the US.

It’s the values which drive the politics, not the other way around (except, indirectly and over long time scales, through changing life experiences). At any event, an NGO strategy to ‘use values’ in campaigns at a national-picture level would have to set out to change things such as health experiences and life expectancy, rather than simply picking resonant language, and ‘selling’ values by assertion. On the other hand (see below), specific, limited propositions can be designed to fit with values, and if so, are far more likely to succeed than if a campaigner simply tries to sell something ‘that works for me’ to others with different values.

- The Norming of the Environment

Shellenberger and Noordhaus make no mention of the ‘norming’ of the environment. They do write ‘Protecting the environment is indeed supported by a large majority — it’s just not supported very strongly.’ You could however say the same thing about ‘environment’ in most European countries. Indeed, although campaigners often talk glibly of reaching ‘the public’, few campaigns have ever relied
on truly mass support or engagement for their success, though large scale and organised opposition (as is perhaps now the case in the US) may stop them.

What has certainly happened in the UK, almost certainly in Europe and probably in North America, is that since the 1970s-1980s ‘hey day’ of environmental campaigns discussed in The Death of Environmentalism, ‘environment’ has been normed. It is this, perhaps, which has died: environment as a huge cause in itself. Once accepted, it is no longer ‘an issue’, no longer demands immediate attention, is no longer newsworthy of itself. Achieving change then becomes a whole lot more difficult because campaigns lose their media gearing.

By tracking the movement of the ‘ozone friendly’ attribute in the UK Value Modes attributes map since the 1970s, Pat Dade from Cultural Dynamics has shown (10) that environment went from being almost a sole concern of inner-directed, to being one shared by the esteem-driven (in the UK around the late 1980s), and then one also shared by the security driven (late 1990s). Good news? In some ways but while there is a consensus over the general problem (making it non-newsworthy) there is disagreement, between the psychologically different segments of society, over how to move forward. Moving forward is of course, the purpose of campaigns. This leads to a logjam of ‘violent agreement’. As they have different action-modes, they can agree on the need for action and get stuck debating how to act.

The solution to this is not to address all groups with the same propositions, or (as government tends to), to create a great-debate or negotiation over how to move forward. As Shellenberger and Noordhaus say it is to ‘craft proposals framed around vision and values’ but, and this they don’t say, by segmenting campaigns into channels which meet the different psychological needs of groups who all will subscribe to the same ends or consequences but won’t use the same means.

This isn’t so different from their idea of alliances and mechanisms to meet for example explicit social needs with beneficial global-warming consequences but it requires planning strategies based on segmented psychology, rather than looking for winning formulae for national, public debates in the media, or conjuring up ‘American values’ or other magic bullets. Indeed, one can argue (11) that too much reliance on the news media, which is not mentioned in Death of Environmentalism, is itself of those ‘unexamined assumptions, outdated concepts and exhausted strategies’ of environmental campaigns which needs to be junked.

Another strategic consequence of norming is that breaking a norm is then the only thing which automatically evokes a rapid response across all segments of society. For Europeans for example, this included the moment when G W Bush walked away from Kyoto but there will be American expressions of environmental norms too – over mercury perhaps?

**What Do Campaigners Need To Do Now?**

To ‘craft’ campaigns that may work, campaigners ideally need to research and plan a strategy in terms of instrumental change (where one thing leads to another), including

- Finding frames which (the relevant) people are ‘ready’ to use which enable them to recognize the issue and actions desired by the campaign in useful terms
- Devise, test and refine action propositions which work for the relevant groups according to their psychological needs (social values)
Campaigners need to think of psychologically different groups as constituencies being as real as economic or other social groupings.

In its execution, a campaign then needs to stick to the language and mechanics which the proposition requires. This may for example mean ‘campaigns’ run almost entirely through promoting consumer goods and services, to engage the esteem-driven groups. This in turn may mean organisation which looks completely unlike a ‘campaign’ or ‘advocacy’ group.

**Why Campaigning On Climate Is Difficult**

In the next newsletter I will try to explore this question by expanding on these ten factors

1. Scientists defined the issue
2. Governments ran off with the issue
3. There was no campaign [sequence]: NGOs adopted secondary roles
4. The issue had no public
5. The media were left to define the issue in visual terms
6. Governments soft pedalled on the issue
7. Scientists led calls for education of the public
8. Many NGOs tried to make the Framework Convention ‘work’
9. Other NGOs tried to connect it with “bigger issues”
10. There is no common proposition

references

See the blog [http://www.thebreakthrough.org/blog.php](http://www.thebreakthrough.org/blog.php) for more.

(2) There Is Something Different About Global Warming – Carl Pope - available at the blog at (1)

(3) See my own Commentary under ‘resources’ at [www.campaignstrategy.org](http://www.campaignstrategy.org)

(4) For example Phil McNaughten and John Urry, Contested Natures, pub SAGE 1998, ISBN 0 7619 5313 2


(6) A Tool For Motivation Based Communication Strategy, Chris Rose under ‘resources’ at [www.campaignstrategy.org](http://www.campaignstrategy.org)

(7) Jospeh Rowntree Foundation, October 2003 - Ref 043 Progress on poverty, 1997 to 2003/4
[http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/043.asp](http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/043.asp) and
[http://www.jrf.org.uk/pressroom/releases/200597.asp](http://www.jrf.org.uk/pressroom/releases/200597.asp) Embargo: for publication after 00.01hrs Tuesday, 20 May 1997 Welfare spending yields only modest reduction in widening gap between rich and poor

(8)Lifespan crisis hits supersize America, Robin McKie, science editor, Sunday September 19, 2004, Observer (London) [http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,5019402-110878,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,5019402-110878,00.html)

(10) ref (6) op cit

(11) see Chris Rose, *The Golden Age of Pressure Groups* under ‘resources’ at www.campaignstrategy.org

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**Why Campaigning On Climate Is Difficult**

In Britain and elsewhere in Europe NGOs are getting together to launch joint campaigns to ‘mobilise’ the public on climate change. In the US, the ‘failure’ of climate campaigning has sparked controversy over whether ‘environmentalism is dead’ (see last newsletter). Carl Pope of the Sierra Club has argued there’s “something different about climate change”. Read about ten factors which have made it hard to campaign effectively ‘on climate’. It's not an exhaustive list.

www.campaignstrategy.org/resources.html - Why Campaigning On Climate Is Difficult

**“Constructing RASPB propositions”**

The proposition sums up what the campaign is about and usually needs to include:

* Responsible party (the enemy - who’s to blame)
* Action - the action you want people (who ?) to take
* Solution
* Problem
* Benefit

Read about how to construct them in the latest extract from my forthcoming book which is now available at www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html
Making Room To Go Beyond Kyoto

Congratulations are due to everyone who has worked to bring the Climate Convention's Kyoto Protocol into force. Undoubtedly it will act as something of a driver to further action but I'd argue campaigners need to look at it differently.

It's probably impossible for NGOs to completely avoid more effort to secure ratifications and promote the negotiation of new 'instruments' that require bigger emission reductions but NGOs need to resist the temptation to get too involved, and to allow themselves to be placed in the driving seat as well as pushing from behind the bus and trying to sell tickets.

Treaties like the Kyoto Protocol are really a measure of campaign work to create the social demand for action on climate, not a driver of it. At any event, that's what is sorely needed now.
Today's governments are sucked and pushed into action by social pulls and pushes rather than forging a way ahead themselves. Only NGOs are likely to clear the ground and make the space for further action, and that means going out and organising campaigns well away from convention centres, the climate policy community, or think tanks. This is where 80-90% of the time, money, thinking and effort of NGOs trying to 'work on climate' should be going. Progress on KP2 and its successors will reflect that more than drive it.

So what should they do?

Campaigners face one problem in countries such as the USA, where those in power deny the need for such climate action, and another in countries (such as the UK) where the rhetoric of those in power is aligned to the objective but the action is weak.

The American Administration (and perhaps others?) use a values-strategy to oppose action. They have sustained themselves in power by stoking the fears of the security-driven part of their population. The climate-campaigning NGOs mainly appeal to the hopes of the inner-directed part of the population. The two audiences hardly overlap politically and the two motivational propositions do not connect. Result for most US campaigns – close to impotence.

Some among the US NGOs have responded to this by calling to 'change people's values' but this is largely beyond the scope of campaigns (see other material at this website). Instead they could work to test those in power on non-rhetorical grounds, by encouraging a questioning atmosphere. Where are the promised results? This is all the more plausible in a second term.

Don't talk about the doctrine or the values or the competing visions of society. Find ways to get supporters of the government to ask for the results.

Results for example in terms of security, fuel prices, jobs. Over time, questioning will erode confidence that the Administration is right.

At the same time, work with forces inside and outside the country to marginalise the impact of the Administration's strategy. Achieve more State-based policies and practices that deliver climate benefits, and sell the social and economic benefits that these deliver. The more this is fronted by businesses, the more convincing it will be to the esteem driven segment of society, and the more it will make the Administration's doctrinaire objection to measures such as Kyoto look simply irrelevant.

Here, businesses and industries with an international perspective can make a big contribution.

Outside countries such as the USA, campaigners need to make the political space for governments to move into. Using Maslowian values to segment society into the three main groups, here are some hypotheses as to what might be useful strategies (they'd need testing with research).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population segment</th>
<th>Security driven</th>
<th>Esteem driven</th>
<th>Inner directed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Push factors (problem driven)</td>
<td>Loss of belonging, real seasons, local identity; perceived associated threats eg terrorism</td>
<td>Falling real estate /house prices in areas vulnerable to climate change; uninsurables/rising insurance cost</td>
<td>Equity issues; environmental refugees; appeals for help with global connections; critical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull factors (solution driven)</td>
<td>Saving money; safer homes; resilience of communities eg energy independent; community and family organised activities</td>
<td>Fashionable branded products eg Prius; lifestyle makeovers; prizes and awards; top rated goods and services;</td>
<td>Connecting with others, meeting new people; creating new networks; developing your own lifestyle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the above cells contains the essential elements of a strategy – they are not campaign propositions in themselves (eg a campaign might be ‘about’ renewable energy). Few of them would be simply pursued by admonishment or advocacy and none by urging a policy result.

The above audiences need addressing separately, and with channels and contexts which work for them, not the others. Politics will move into the territory prepared by behaviour change, and that will be driven by working with motivational (needs based) values.

The media usefully picks up on two things. One is conflict, for example between aspirations and social acceptability. If SUVs become questionable social assets for example. Activists confronting four by four drivers in London streets are doing the right thing. Another is rising trends. The news media exaggerates the significance of the new (“everyone is doing it/saying it”) and downplays the established. When new things move from the territory of the inner directeds to the esteem driven, the media typically says something has “arrived”. Until then it’s not credible, or ‘serious’, or it’s ‘fringe’ or ‘unrealistic’.

All along, the campaigns themselves have to be kept real, based on achieving human-human interaction not ‘getting things into the media’.

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With this newsletter I have also published the ‘ambition box’ section from the forthcoming book ‘How To Win Campaigns’. This can be used to assess and chose targets for campaigns. One way to select which, or which combination of campaigns to run using the matrix above, is to examine the strategic effect, which is the ‘significance’ dimension of the box.

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Campaign Intelligence

Many campaigners spend a lot of time polishing their policy ideas and then launching them on a unsuspecting world. We've all done it. Sometimes it works and hey presto, a company, government or Mrs Smith next door thinks "gosh that's a good idea - I'd never thought of it like that before", and the campaign is a hit. But not often.

One reason why it frequently doesn't work out so well, is a lack of real intelligence - ie understanding of how things work, and how change can be brought about - in the relevant business, government department or the Smith household next door. Campaigns usually have to be outsider enterprises but they need an inside track on the dynamics of change. Here are two examples.

GM Dynamics

A senior executive from a leading UK retailer recently told me how he has been repeatedly lobbied over gm foods by an equally well known campaign group, which in his view had an overly optimistic belief that the current non-GM policy of the British supermarkets is secure for the foreseeable future.

He says "In practice a number of profound, but complex changes deep within food supply chains, particularly relating to non-GM animal feed, are conspiring to jeopardise this position, something some retailers are only too keen to use as an excuse to move away from non-GM. It's only by understanding how modern supply chains work that NGOs can anticipate these pressure points, identifying the optimum place and means to intervene to affect change."

As an example of the type of analysis NGOs need to do, he gave the value chain of clothing, drawing up a matrix which along the top read:

Fibre production, Dyeing and finishing, Garment production, Shop, Consumer use, Disposal

and down the side read:

environmental and social issues; supply chain challenges; potential legal, political, voluntary and market solutions.

NGOs he suggested, needed to analyse each cell of the matrix in order to understand where and when to campaign, what to try and change, and what needs to be changed in order to ensure the result they want. He suggested hiring people who had worked in the business, although you could also acquire the same intelligence by consultancy or other means.

Campaigners who want to change business, need to get an inside track on the dynamics of companies - the tastes and ambitions of key managers, the dynamics of ownership and shareholder pressure, competition in all its guises, internal competition for funds, and company culture, as well as the 'rational' factors outlined in my friends matrix. (The more significant the decision, the less important the
'rational' factors really tend to be, although the more they will be called on for post-hoc justification.)

Political Airmiles - Taxes And Politics

Political insiders have it that a few months ago, the eternally bickering UK Chancellor (finance minister) Gordon Brown and his globe trotting Prime Minister Tony Blair agreed to pursue action on taxation of aviation fuel because it was one of the few things they could agree on. (Iraq, education, health and the economy all being ruled out). I don't know if campaigners were aware of this but it's a good example of the perverse effect of personal politics elevating an important but politically marginal issue to the forefront of a government's agenda.

It also just so happened to be expedient internationally - with the EU reviewing its post Kyoto climate commitments, and the UK about to take the 'lead' in its EU Presidency and in the G8, where climate also gave Blair a benign way to distance himself from G W Bush, at least for domestic consumption. All this of course is far from being anything to do with the merits of action on climate change as perceived by environmental campaigners. As Saul Alinsky wrote in the now old, but still readable tract 'Rules For Radicals', "With very rare exceptions, the right things are done for the wrong reasons".

Not much has happened, not least because an election is now pending in the UK and, as Blair himself pointed out to MPs when quizzed on taxing aviation fuel, none of them want to suggest to voters that their holidays may get more expensive in order to make self-sacrificial gestures in favour of the climate. (The sole exception being a LibDem MP who wasn't standing at the next election). After publishing a White Paper on aviation and airports which foresees an ongoing expansion in air travel, the UK Government announced on 4 March that it would 'offset' its own air travel by investing in carbon-reducing measures such as renewable energy for cooking in developing countries. NGOs rightly panned this as tokenism but it should not be discounted entirely - it indicates an internal tension in government: they know that soon, 'something will have to be done' (and though the offset isn't THE something, it's something).

Air travel is a culturally iconic (a hangover from the 1960s/70s) and sensitive topic. It's a golden opportunity for campaigners looking to make climate change an immediate and talkable proposition. It passes what John Scott of KSBR calls the 'chip shop queue test': it's hard to resolve, triggers dilemmas, and is full of paradoxes. It prolongs conversations, it doesn't shut them down. People can't resolve it - they want both: climate protection and air travel but they also know that much air travel is simply frivolous. They're not sure what to think so a campaign conversation could go viral.

Politicians have treated it as an 'insoluble opportunity' but this isn't necessarily so. For example behind the apparently solid opposition of the airline industry to any form of taxation or the inclusion of pollution from air travel in emissions trading schemes, there is a big fault line. Campaigners need look no further for a good briefing than the website of their bete noire, global PR firm Burson Marsteller (www.bmbrussels.be). In a moment of open-ness (presumably they have no clients in this area) two BM apparatchiks Simons Leavitt and Simon Bryceson have published an intriguing online essay 'THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY - IMPROVING THE CLIMATE FOR EUROPEAN FLAG CARRIERS?'. It's worth reading but the key paragraphs states:

"... not all airlines are equal. In the traditional business model, the cost of aviation fuel is approximately 14 - 16 % of an airline's cost base. In contrast, for some newer, leaner airlines with a lower cost base in other parts of the business, this figure can rise to around 20 - 25 %.

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Internalising the environmental costs of air travel through a rise in the price of aviation fuel would therefore be comparatively advantageous to airlines whose cost base is higher in other areas of their business. It would also raise the barrier to entry for new market entrants, making market entry more difficult than it has been in the last few years. Further, governments, realising that the growth projections in air travel are overestimated with added costs built in, would invest less in new airport infrastructure, removing another potential foothold for new entrants.

The primary airline customers to be affected by an increase in the cost of fuel would not be Northern Europeans flying to the sun. Because take-off and landing add disproportionately to the usage of fuel, under a system which fully took the environment into account, it would be the regular short-haul city-to-city flights which increased in price by the greatest amount. Although businesspeople for some journeys would move for example to rail, in many cases, a large proportion of the increased cost could be passed to business customers. The model would move nearer to the cost of business flights in Europe a few years ago. The cost advantage of "low-cost" airlines would be reduced.

Overall, adding to the cost of aviation fuel would reduce the size of the future air travel market in Europe. It would however reduce the cost differential between existing airlines, and would raise the cost barrier for new entrants."

This explains why, although they appear to be campaigning against taxes, airlines such as Al Italia, Air France and British Airways will be rubbing their hands at the prospect of ‘environmental’ taxes putting low-cost competitors out of business. Another case of Alinsky’s rule? Maybe, if the campaigners help force it to a head. Working against that may be the fact that the French and Germans have started proposing their own version of air taxation - and Blair may not want to be seen to follow a Franco-German lead in his EU Presidency ... (see ENDS DAILY www.environm entdaily.com - ISSUE 1824 - Friday 18 February 2005).

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Problems, Solutions And Spin By Media

Recently a BBC report was headlined “Local Food ‘Greener Than Organic’” (1). This sort of media coverage of campaigns is not uncommon. It’s ‘news’ because it’s ‘surprising’ - taken as a ‘news value’ (2) by journalists. Organic is supposed to be good for the environment so here’s an unexpected finding - it’s not after all!

In addition, it’s well-market news, aimed at a controversial area (organic v non-organic food) and framed so as to resonate with the prejudices of some readers. Some will be pleased or relieved to hear that they don’t need to buy, or fear other people buying, organic food.

Other examples of this counter-intuitive news format include ‘aid is bad for poor people’, ‘recycling is worse for the environment than throwing rubbish away’, and ‘biofuels are bad for the climate’. Journalists and editors know that these pieces generate interest: they make some readers pay attention to the piece below the headline. So the headline-writing, done by sub-editors, also often follows the old media dictum, “first simplify, then exaggerate”. The greater the incongruity, the better it works, just as “survey finds nuns more sinful than average person” would do.

On closer inspection, the ‘story’ often relies on deliberate conflation or rests on the sort of misleading categorization which many journalists delight in attacking campaigners for. If the only sin surveyed was envy, for example. This is spin but by the media, to create ‘better’ news.

In the organic food case, the BBC said below the headline: ‘Local food is usually more “green” than organic food, according to a report published in the journal Food Policy. The authors say organic farming is also valuable, but people can help the environment even more by buying food from within a 20km (12-mile) radius.’

The actual article ‘Farm costs and food miles: An assessment of the full cost of the UK weekly food basket’ seems to make no such claim. It contrasts locally produced/consumed food with food transported a significant distance by road (see www.sciencedirect.com and abstract posted at www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/abstract_foodpolicy_foodmiles.doc). Of course only a tiny fraction of this involves organic food. So ‘the problem’ it illustrates is mostly just road-transport of conventional food but it’s easier to make a news story out of the assessment of organic food.

In this case it seems that the selection of the organic v non-organic angle as the ‘story’ was done by the media – or perhaps arose at a press conference. Either way it illustrates how allowing any ambiguity or plurality of meaning in a ‘campaigning’ piece can have unintentional or even perverse effects.
The press release issued by the publishers of Food Policy, Elsevier, is also posted at (www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/elsevier_release_foodmiles.doc). It begins quite differently from the BBC story: ‘If people bought and consumed more local and more organic produce and if their journeys to and from food shops were made on a bus, by bike or on foot rather than in a car, there would be more than £4bn in environmental savings to the British economy. This is the principal claim of a groundbreaking new economic study’ The BBC angle isn’t there at all.

The campaigning target of the Pretty Lang study and press release was clearly food-miles. In significance terms (see the ‘ambition box’ at the website), organic food is not a significant target for food-miles either in the immediate term (it’s a tiny part of the food market), or as a lever for long term change (changing organic to be more local probably doesn’t exert any leverage over transport of conventional food). So as a campaign target, organic would be a poor target.

Then there’s the use of the category ‘greener’ and the attempts to weigh all sorts of environmental factors together - death of wildlife against human cancers against climate change for instance. The BBC did this by the use of the vague term ‘green’, and the authors by using ‘economic externalities’. But the main problem here relevant to conduct of campaigns is how the campaigning professors seem to have lost control of the definition of the problem. They aimed at food miles and ended up hitting organic. Perhaps this also illustrates how the news media is a high-risk communications channel. To simply blame the BBC is like blaming barmen for people getting drunk – customers can always chose to avoid going into the bar. Likewise, campaigners don’t have to try and use the news media, and if they do, they need to understand how it works.

News polarises and reduces. It draws a line of division at the point which produces the most dramatic polarity. News always resolves things into black and white: so never put anything into the news which isn’t in black and white, irreducible terms already. In this case, a journalist can be expected to dig about in the material and draw their own conclusions about what the ‘best’ story was, and this is especially likely if the story as you present it is rather dull, lacking in dramatic polarities or surprises.

Going up to the design level: If Lang and Pretty had just looked at typical-food miles and costs, and not at organic and non-organic production, the variables would have been reduced and this loss of control or focus could not have occurred.

Or possibly, if it came out at a press conference, they may (I don’t know) have let slip their own view that watching food miles makes a bigger difference (somehow ...) than buying organic. The trouble is that whereas academic discourse thrives on ambiguity, news just exploits it. Throwaway remarks in the seminar room don’t get published: the whole academic publication and peer review system sees to that. Throwaway remarks in a press conference are the ones most likely to be published!
Two good rules about press conferences are first, don’t have one if you don’t absolutely need one (and this story didn’t), and second, as with any interview, work out your headline message, your three proofs, and your back up facts and anecdotes, and stick to them. Say these and nothing else. Inventive journalists are adapt at creating a better story than the one you want to tell, if you give them the components. (See the “Interview Suitcase” extract from How To Win Campaigns, www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html).

What is more, if the target is really ’your own side’ using news to convey the message is even dodgier. News clarifies but it also calls a division because it’s often about a difference of opinion. If we speculate that the authors had wanted to change organic standards to include a measure of local sourcing, they might better have framed their study or subsequent publicity materials as how-organic-could-be-improved/’ be ’even better’. It would have been unlikely to make news but it might have been more persuasive among advocates of organic. As it is, those most likely to be most affected by the subsequent media coverage (organic-not-green) are probably experimenters or contemplators who were thinking about buying organic. Some of those (most are actually motivated by their health, not ’environment’) might now feel confused about whether it’s really the right thing to do, so they may not bother.

Lastly, looking again at the design level, remember to make only one point at one time. Lang and Pretty may have wanted to make two points: the food miles one, and the organic-ought-to-be-local one. As these are two different points, they need dealing with separately, with different research, different events, different occasions.

(1) http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/4312591.stm
(2) See “News ‘Values’” extract from How To Win Campaigns posted at the website www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html

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More On Food

Readers outside the UK will have to forgive me for this newsletter. It may amuse or puzzle you to discover that in the period before the 2005 UK General Election was called, “school dinners” (lunchtime meals provided to children) became a top political issue. All the political parties have fallen over themselves to agree with a tv Celebrity Chef, Jamie Oliver, that something radical needs to be done to improve Britain's terrible school food.

This follows more than ten years in which schools were allowed to manage their own budget business-style, awful state-supplied food was progressively replaced with often even worse food supplied by parents as 'packed lunches', and the offer from a mix of privatised school meal 'services' often boiled down to the cheapest possible pre-prepared dried, frozen and generally processed mush, high in fat, salt and sugar. In my children's school, potatoes come immersed in bleach within sealed plastic packs.

The group which has now successfully led a campaign to break this trend is the UK's strange hybrid 'Soil Association' (see for a lot of detail www.soilassociation.org) which is a promoter of organic food, a setter of standards and a standard-bearer for organic farmers.

Jamie Oliver has made headlines with a reality-tv series on UK's Channel 4 tv, in which he retrained 'dinner ladies (cooks) in making real food rather than heating up pre-prepared lunches. Oliver ended up in a high profile chat with the Prime Minister, and dominated tv ratings. Behind his ‘campaign’ however, is a meticulously prepared campaign by the Soil Association (SA), which has a number of interesting aspects for others.

First, the SA has won credibility. The SA provides how-to help advice in the form of a part time school meals policy advisor, Jeanette Orrey who, as a dinner lady in a primary school for 16 years, has introduced mainly locally sourced, unprocessed and organic school meals herself. She publishes her story in a book this week.

Second, the Soil Association's campaign objectives are based on a pilot scheme they ran in several schools where they had contacts with activist teachers and parent governors. This showed the potential to convert, within a year, from processed food and/or reliance on packed lunches, to school meals using 70% unprocessed fresh food; 50% local food and 30% organic. With these objectives proven achievable, they went on to work with more schools on the ground. In Swindon, two mothers formed a company and took over production of (organic) school meals themselves. The number of children buying school meals increased from 40 to over 200. They now work directly with a local organic farm (Sheepdrove). In Essex, a Primary School in Chelsmford now uses locally produced organic food, from Ashlyns farm which already ran a box scheme.

So they proved feasibility before they started mainstream advocacy. (See section on problems and solutions from How To Win Campaigns).

Third, they’ve sold the benefits in terms that count with key decision makers. Prince Charles, the Soil Association’s President, met with senior executives from 15 Local Education Authorities to discuss how some Authorities had achieved such changes. In a follow-up study of subsequent experiments by the Authorities, by Business in the Community, a group set up by Prince Charles, 13 of the 15 reported
improvements in children’s attention, ability to learn and a reduction in bad behaviour in the afternoons, after a switch to better food at lunch time.

That if you like, was the ground war. We’ve since had the air war on tv, thanks to Channel 4 and election timing - part luck, part hard work by the SA.

For weeks Channel 4 tv has aired a programme with celebrity tv cook Jamie Oliver shows him giving a ‘makeover’ to school meals at a Greenwich school, and working with the ‘dinner ladies’ to retrain them in devising menus that use far less processed and more fresh food. The programme included a meeting between Oliver and the then Education Secretary, Charles Clark. On the face of it this was something only obtainable because of the power of celebrity, except, the Soil Association already had two meetings with him on school meals before that. Similarly, when Tony Blair then met Oliver, that had been preceded by a meeting between the Association’s Director, Patrick Holden and Blair to talk about school meals.

Rather than reject Oliver’s crushing condemnation of the quality of government-approved school meals (remarkably seen on tv being eaten by politicians), the government has positively embraced the criticism, crying that ‘something must be done’, as if it was nothing to do with them.

Central to the back room shenanigans over ‘something’ seems to have been the struggle to overcome opposition from within the UK Department of Education (DFES). At first sight this seems strange: the Prime Minister’s office and Department of Health have been pushing for improved school meals, parents want it, the media want it and there is good evidence that real food with less sugar, salt and additives leads to better pupil behaviour and improved learning. Yet the Education Department drags its feet - why?

The answer appears to be twofold. First the Department wants more money - far more money has been taken out of school meals by a decade or so of withdrawal of state services in pursuit of "value for money" than has now been put back in (below). Second, officials feel they only have a limited amount of political capital to use up with teachers: fixated as they are with negotiations with teachers rather than what actually happens to children, they are simply reluctant to add yet another thing to their list of demands, targets and assessments. The fact that the DFES is apparently bereft of a nutritionist could also play a small part but this is not likely - it may well be deliberate.

Rather than tackle this head on within government, No 10 seems to have chosen to embrace the onslaught of a Celebrity Chef and agree with him. By so doing of course they have aligned Blair with a popular figure - at no cost to themselves - which must be a welcome break from standing shoulder to shoulder with G W Bush, who probably eats Turkey Twizzlers anyway.

Oliver and the Soil Association have now won a limited commitment to improve school meals, plus a delaying tactic from the Department of Education in the shape of a new advisory body. The government has agreed to set at least some new nutritional standards, limiting salt and sugar content, which will be inspected alongside educational standards. It has also used the Big Lottery - public money which doesn’t count as public expenditure - to provide £45 million towards a School Food Trust. The Trust, is a £60m quango announced by the education secretary, Ruth Kelly, to advise schools on healthier school meals, as part of a new government pledge to spend £280m on improving food in schools.

Aside from dinner ladies expertise or the lack of it, money is central to the dispute. The Observer reported on 3 April that in France £1.10 is spent on each school meal. Of those local education authorities in England which agreed to declare their meal costs to the Soil Association, the minimum
spend was 37p. Supplier Compass said that costs should have been 60p or 70p a meal. The SA estimates £200m is needed each year just for primary schools in England if they are to match the improvement made in Scotland. Glasgow spends 70p - £1 on each school meal. 75% of local education authorities in England allocate less than 50p. The government commitment is now for 50p minimum for younger children. The Soil Association hopes that the extra cash available and the pressure from parents and others will now induce many more schools to opt for taking meal provision back in-house, and using fresh and locally sourced supplies. Since the campaign peaked, the contracted-out food suppliers Compass, Rentokil (!) and Scolarest have all reported difficulties or had pulled out of the school meals market following the public criticism or pressure to improve from media and Local Authorities.

Some lessons from this campaign:

First, policy work alone would not have achieved change. It has stayed 'real' by being run at a local level, and those results were put into policy-shifting terms for subsequent lobbying. Actions and solutions were proved feasible on the ground.

Second, the nutritional targets and increased use of fresh food, the literal demands, are not the ultimate objective of the campaign - to convert agriculture to organic - but that becomes almost an inevitable consequence once you start down that road.

Third, tv brought the pictures, and the compelling drama of tearful dinner ladies working (unpaid) overtime to try and make proper food instead of processed rubbish. Minor dramas but real nonetheless. Better than a million reports.

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New survey maps values that underlie changes in UK politics

In the UK a General Election is pending (May 5) and everyone's saying that 'values' are important in politics. Commentators such as Peter Kellner and Andrew Neil are forecasting a sea change in British politics, with 'cultural values' rather than the old ideologies at the centre. But many then go on to analyse voting and non-voting shifts in those very terms - left, right etc - or by lifestyle categories and attitudes (eg authoritarian).

With Pat Dade from Cultural Dynamics Strategic Marketing Ltd (http://www.cultdyn.co.uk) my company Campaign Strategy Ltd commissioned a Voters and Values Survey which provides an independent non-political way to map the deep values that underlie these changes.

The Voters and Values survey (at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/valuesvoters/index.html) provides the first national map of how deep psychological values - defined by meeting subconscious needs - have changed the way the British relate to politics, and much besides.

Three main psychological motivational groups divide the population. 21% are 'settlers" seeking security, safety and identity. 44% are 'prospectors' seeking esteem, success and symbols of achievement. 35% are 'pioneers' concerned with 'issues' beyond simply material success or safety.

The political parties have quite different appeals to these Motivational Groups.

We publish the first psychological maps of voter identification with political parties, at a level deeper than opinion, attitude, lifestyle or behaviour.

We show how Labour has achieved its broader base, the "ethical issues" domination of the Liberal Democrats, and the security-driven base of the Conservatives.

For campaigners, take a close look at the value mode descriptions for the Pioneers and Prospectors. Note the huge differences in outlook. The profile of the UK Liberal democrats, very Pioneer based, is similar to many campaign groups. They face the same problem: to really influence the whole country, and or at least the levers of commercial and political power, they need to break out and also influence the esteem-driven prospectors. Some groups have been consciously trying to do this - WWF UK for instance - but for the most part it remains to great psycho-demographic failure of campaigns: not reaching the Prospectors. (It's also interesting to note - see diagram in Part 1 - that the Pioneers were briefly the largest single group, around the time that 'environment' became, equally briefly, the top issue in UK politics).

In the current survey we identify key battlegrounds for the parties if they are to hold or compete for the psychological groups.

We also reveal the dynamic behind Britain's large "relaxed and disinterested" slice of the population simply too content to engage with politics.

At a more detailed level, we can map political identification (and disinterest) by 12 Value Modes. Every member of the population falls into one or other of these groups. This system has been used for
decades by major corporations but never before applied to understanding political identification in this way.

The overall picture for UK political life is poor. Identification with a political party ranks in the top 3 factors for personal identity for less than 3% of the population. Settlers have been in long term decline - they were the largest group up to 1989 - they are also ageing and the old vote most. The current political system is designed on 'identity' politics - an instinctive fit only for the 21% of settlers.

Most Prospectors are finding success without connecting with politics, and many Pioneers are supporting new forms of politics, eg campaigns. Prospectors have become the dominant group in the UK since the mid 1990s.

We discuss how politics could be redesigned to engage this near 80% of the population.

As another part of the survey, we also asked questions about climate, and that and other information will be released later.

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Wind Wars

I live in a rural part of Norfolk, a corner of England looking across the North Sea to Holland. Well, looking that way if you crane your neck around to the right. There's Dutch influence everywhere here - in the architecture of houses, the old sail-powered Dutch North Sea Klipper moored in the harbour, even street names: squares in North Norfolk are 'plains', as in plein. All over the landscape there are windmills, many originally built for milling grain that ships like the Albatros (http://www.albatros.eu.com/) used to carry to the continent. When they were put up, the windmills faced stiff public opposition. In the 1600s it was opposition to land drainage (and windmills by Dutch engineers to pump water), and in the 18th and 19th centuries opposition to corn-laws that sometimes prevented people making their own flour, and associated enclosure of common lands. I'm told that some campaigners of the time opposed windmills as an alien Dutch influence on the landscape. Now they are treasured as icons of Norfolk.

In Cumbria, at the top left corner of England, a modern windmill battle is now underway - this time of course about wind turbines. What's "interesting" about this dispute is that it has pitted 'green' groups against one another. The Guardian newspaper reports [1]:

A seven-week public inquiry that opened yesterday will have to decide whether one of the biggest wind farms planned for Britain will make a major contribution to renewable energy sources or be a hideous blot on the landscape of the Lake District. Chalmerston Wind Power (CWP) wants to build 27 turbines, each 115 metres (377ft) high - taller than St Paul's cathedral - on a windy ridge at Whinash, between Borrowdale and Bretherdale, close to the M6 in Cumbria ... In the run-up to the inquiry, the proposed wind farm has already divided accustomed allies: the Campaign To Protect Rural England and the Council For National Parks (against) are lined up against Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth (for, because of global warming caused by carbon dioxide emissions).

It has to be said that the British 'wind lobby' hasn't been very clever about its campaigning. That's partly because it hasn't had to campaign much - it's moved forwards under the skirt of government policy, which favours a slow expansion of renewable energy. It's also because, like the 'green movement', it doesn't really exist as a coherent lobby: groups like Friends of the Earth are devoted to making arguments, Greenpeace to seeking political and cultural leverage, and the renewable energy companies simply to winning business on a project-by-project basis. On balance, they are gradually winning, not least because government has found that once farms are built, a lot of public opposition evaporates, especially if there are local winners - such as landowners getting rent or local employees, or in a few cases, where a community has been given a stake in planning, owning or reaping economic benefits from a wind farm.
Both advocates and the UK government have also been careful to place most emphasis on developing wind offshore, although that is not without its problems, especially where consultation of fishermen has been inadequate or insensitive siting has led to conflicts over seabird populations. But that’s just avoiding the ‘hard nut’ problem (see ‘significance box’ - extract from How To Win Campaigns at www.campaignstrategy.org).

Wind promoters might have been more successful if they’d implemented a communications strategy based on psychology rather than simply relying on winning the policy arguments and waiting for government to overcome the various lobbies - which include groups that are simply fronts for the nuclear industry. Take a look at the Voters and Values survey on my website www.campaignstrategy.org for a psychological map.

Broadly speaking the opponents of wind farms are using arguments which resonate with the 21% of the population who are security-driven ‘settlers’ (disliking a new foreign intrusion into a traditional landscape) and, more importantly, with the esteem-driven prospectors (44% of the UK population, opposed to anything that threatens their status, achievements or self interest). The proponents tend to rely on a pitch that is framed almost wholly in global terms (eg action on climate change for global benefits): something that appeals mostly to some of the inner directed pioneers (35% of the UK population). This is brought into sharp relief by the current dispute in Cumbria: ‘green’ groups are using opposing cases which are separated by a psychological divide, not ‘facts’, and they pass each other like ships in the night.

The way this interacts with political identity - with the Liberal Democrats overwhelmingly a party of the pioneers - is graphically illustrated by the maps in the Values and Voters survey. If wind advocates had wanted to build a strategic platform, they could have created pilots, demonstrations and secured processes and policies which resonated with the settlers and the prospectors. For example, wind projects could emerge from a community analysis of the need to retain local jobs. They would then be job-projects, or job + village projects, which just happen to involve wind energy.

For the prospectors, wind could be - or have been - made fashionable. In that case it might be perceived as promoting house values rather than depressing them. A few tiny experiments have been tried in this direction - awards for beautiful design of turbines for instance but nothing serious. If wind power was made a consumable (something you could buy into for example at the scale of your garden, or like ‘white goods’), fashionable and visible, then the instinctive or ‘natural’ constituency would be far larger and stronger than it is today. If wind was made a normal part of life for millions, then it would be ‘unrealistic’ to oppose its expansion. So long as it remains in the realm of a few large scale power-station style projects justified through abstract ‘issues’, it will only be an easy sell to the pioneers.
At present the Cumbrian dispute involves two sets of people making rather rarefied arguments but it could quickly get more small-p political and then 'gut instinct' (read psychology) begins to drive the outcome, especially if it is 'decided in the court of public opinion', ie trial by media. To start with neither side probably looks much more empathetic than the other but the outcome may well be decided by which is seen to be the most deserving case. The current posting of a section from How To Win Campaigns (see website) is 'Staying On The Side Of The Victims'. Potential victims here may be the residents of Tuvalu (homes will probably be drowned/ are being drowned by climate change) and other climate-victims human or otherwise, on one side, and those with an interest in preserving the current view on the other.

The advocates themselves are probably not terribly appealing. Greenpeace campaigners with an unusual enthusiasm for talking terawatts or long-winded water colourists who see a wind turbine as unspeakable desecration of a particular view will tend to come across to many people as 'talking a foreign language'. The result of the dispute may well be decided by who best manages to show that they are on the side of those who "really deserve our sympathy", and who make those victims visible.

**More On Air Travel**

The politics of climate and air travel (see previous newsletters) continue to get more interesting [2]. The British Airports Authority has now come out in favour of subjecting the industry to an emissions trading scheme as soon as possible. While opposed by the American airlines this is a view shared by many in the European carriers. Of course their motivation is to avoid something worse, and in the case of high-cost airlines, to put some low-cost competitors out of business.

A lot of campaigners are mulling how to tackle this issue. They don't necessarily need to form a public alliance with the BAA but they'd probably be well advised to add their weight to moves that split the industry. It's much easier to exert more change once the target is on a slippery slope than to try and get it moving in the first place. They also need to remember that the lubricant on such a slope is mostly cultural. Governments will do the possible - how far the air industry gets pushed down the route to zero-carbon will depend very much on what 'the public' wants. That's the thing that only campaigners are likely to influence, so they need to make sure they supply it, rather than focussing too much on devising 'policy solutions'.

Create the right context and market competition will magically make all sorts of change practicable. Equally, if campaigners don't get on the case at all, the BAA and their ilk may succeed in getting governments to adopt a scheme which is 'stable', change may grind to an early halt and the issue could rest there for some years, once the attention of policy makers wanders off to something else and momentum is lost. This is a critical moment.
F-gas Spin

Real campaign anoraks may enjoy the current dispute over the UN f-gas report. OK - so only real anoraks will enjoy it.

A joint report from scientists in the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - covers greenhouse gases) and the Montreal Protocol (covers ozone depleting gases) has examined the problem with f-gases aka Potent Industrial Greenhouse Gases (some of which are both greenhouse gases and ozone depleting gases, and all of which contain fluorine, hence 'f-gases').

The f-gas industry (the chemicals industry) enjoys considerable penetration of the international policy-making machinery on ozone-depleting gases. The group MIPIGGs (Multisectoral Initiative on Potent Industrial Greenhouse Gases), of which I have to admit, I am a part time coordinator, has detailed numerous instances of the influence of the American chemicals industry over US, UNEP/international and even 'European' policy on these gases. Until now their influence on the work of the IPCC, the scientific advisor to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, has been relatively slight. Of course this is partly because though the US is a party to the Climate Convention, it has rejected the Kyoto Protocol, which is the mechanism by which the Convention tries to place on controls on a 'basket' of greenhouse gases, including f-gases. So this joint working group, known as the IPCC-TEAP group, gives the American f-gas boys a back door into that policy.

A week or two ago, the joint group produced its report [3], to enthusiastic applause from the f-gas industry [4]. MIPIGGs posted a ten point critique [5] and asked the Austrian, Danish, German and Swiss governments - those who'd done most to adopt policies requiring alternative technologies avoiding f-gases - to ensure it didn't form the basis of policy. IPCC has now posted its riposte to MIPIGGs [6]. It's a small earthquake in f-world.

Campaigners who don't share an obsessive interest in this environmentally important but obscure subject don't need to read any of the papers but the key point is much more widely applicable. Apparently the joint panel did some very good work. Word has it that the scientists and techno boffins involved have examined the mountain of evidence that essentially shows that what works in a slab of insulation foam or a fridge in Switzerland or Germany could work in say, a slab of insulation foam or a fridge in Australia or the USA. But funnily enough this detail and balance and certainly this can-do-better impression, hasn't made it into the Executive Summary for Policymakers.

Even funnier, the Executive Summary has been released, complete with press release from the IPCC but the full report won't be released until it's published by the Cambridge University Press in the summer. And there we have it. It looks like the industry has secured the publication of a summary for policy makers which gives the impression it wants (f-gases are really not much of a problem, if they are, the problem is being dealt with, and 'alternatives' are themselves jolly problematic or not yet ready), while scientists will be able to truthfully be able to say that all sorts of detail is to be found in the full report. Only that probably won't have any impact on policy. Not only will it be very long and very expensive, it will come out during the northern holiday season and the 'policy makers summary' was published months before. Chemical industry spin can be added to the list of causes of climate change, as if you didn't know that already. An example of the importance of timing, and of a few other things besides

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[1] See Battle of the turbines splits green lobby: Inquiry into plan for £55m wind farm generates passion in Cumbrian fells
What are campaigns for? And what's wrong with the UK environment movement?

In the wake of the horrible mess which US environmentalists have dug themselves into while debating the arguments around 'Death of Environmentalism' by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Noordhaus, a milder British version of much the same thing has emerged in the UK press.

Taking as their hook the low profile of 'environment' in the current General Election campaign, articles in the New Statesman (a left leaning weekly) and The Economist (a right leaning weekly), both take the environment movement to task for being ineffective.

It's hard not to agree that the UK 'environment movement' is rather ineffective - and it's a good thing if campaign groups have to answer their critics - but these stories are both framed by familiar journalistic clichés which make them 'good stories' but unreliable analysis of what's actually going on. Writing in New Statesman [1], Jonathan Leake says:

"what has happened is that the green groups have let themselves be suckered. After 1997 [when New Labour got elected], filled with the euphoria of having helped eject the Conservatives, they turned their backs on the activists who had so scared the politicians. Instead, they focused on working with the new government in the belief - naive as it now seems - that they could be more effective inside Labour's "big tent" than outside it.

Leake cites me in support of this thesis but at least for the period 1997 - 1999 while I was in charge of the campaigns at Greenpeace UK, this wasn't my experience.
I well recall a visit to Greenpeace’s office very soon after the 1997 Blair victory, by two female Labour MPs (one being Angela Smith) which annoyed the whole staff, most junior included, because of their pitch that we all had to pull together to support the Government because it was Labour. Apart from the fact that not all the staff had voted Labour, even those who did were horrified, as much at the naivety of the politicians as anything else. That year and next we ran the Atlantic Frontier campaign against expanded oil exploration - in which for example I received a $1m writ against me from BP - as a result of encouragement from Ministers (who hid behind BP). If anything, I think the media were much more in love with New Labour than NGOs ever were. A few years later Greenpeace’s then Executive Director Peter Melchett wound up in jail for trashing a GM maize crop, in direct opposition to government policy.

So Jonathan Leake is being simplistic to say that large NGOs just tried to work inside the ‘New Labour Big Tent’. What certainly has happened, though, is that there is now a large pool of youngish policy “wonks” that have moved between the Labour administration, NGOs and leftish think tanks, while the early 1990s roads movements and other activists melted from the scene. But as I describe in How To Win Campaigns, this wasn’t because those activist groups were in some way closed down or eclipsed by the larger NGOs: they dissipated through a lack of organisation, brand-strategy and exhaustion. The swollen policy communities that now adorn issues such as has climate are indeed an enormous problem for effective campaigns - they anchor the focus of NGOs in the wrong place: policy instead of politics, policy worlds instead of popular culture.

While I doubt many NGOs thought they “could be more effective inside Labour’s “big tent” than outside it” they have rarely been very effective wherever they are in relation to the political canvas. The most convincing explanation I’ve seen for why this is concerns the effect of ‘norming’ the environment (see page 184 - 187 of How To Win Campaigns and this edition’s posting) leading to a logjam in which different groups in society agree that something should be done but disagree over how to do it. Perhaps this is too complicated to be reported in New Statesman but it seems to me to be more credible than simply asserting as Jonathan does that the NGOs are suffering a "lack of vision, poor leadership and a naive trust in new Labour". At the same time, NGOs have become less activist, and more dominated by staff who are concerned to maintain their credibility in policy communities and less willing to take risks in case it affects their reputation. Here I agree with Leake - effective new campaigns are most likely to emerge from small new activist groups.

Leake’s piece raises important criticisms and asks good questions even if some of his answers are trite but the same can’t be said of the latest attack on environmentalists in The Economist.

For those who don’t know it, The Economist can be relied upon to pour scorn on campaign groups except where it needs them to shore up its opinions. Despite assuming a magisterial style, and frequently a smug tone of worldly-wise expertise, the attitude of The Economist towards environmental campaigns can be wildly contradictory from one issue to the next. Perhaps this is because even more than most journalists writing about ‘the environment’ in the British press, those at The Economist have never actually tried to do anything about it, and never run a campaign? Who knows? As they are all anonymous it’s hard to find out.

At any event, and inspired by ‘Death of Environmentalism’ by Shellenberger and Noordhaus, the 21st April Edition of The Economist provides a classic lecture to environmentalists [2] under the modest banner “Rescuing Environmentalism”.

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Not surprisingly, it turns out the solution to being more effective is to use more market mechanisms. There follows the usual list of things *The Economist* doesn’t like - such as opposition to nuclear power, GMOs, the Precautionary Principle, regulation and litigation - and those it does like, such as innovation, market mechanisms, and monetizing ecological services. The latter, it says, have been rejected by ‘unthoughtful’ greens. This isn't true - NGOs have promoted most or all of the mechanisms which *The Economist* says they have ignored.

“‘Mandate, regulate, litigate.’ That has been the green mantra' says *The Economist*. So what about the non-regulatory Forest and Marine Stewardship Councils initiated by WWF or Greenpeace's cooperation with renewable energy and refrigeration companies? *The Economist* has simply got its history wrong.

But if we take its views at face-value, where *The Economist* is really naive is in what it seems to take NGOs and campaigns to be. It suggests that they should adopt cost-benefit analysis, for example:

A more sensible green analysis of nuclear power would weigh its (very high) economic costs and (fairly low) safety risks against the important benefit of generating electricity with no greenhouse-gas emissions.

and

Some things in nature are irreplaceable—literally priceless. Even so, it is essential to consider trade-offs when analysing almost all green problems. The marginal cost of removing the last 5% of a given pollutant is often far higher than removing the first 5% or even 50%: for public policy to ignore such facts would be inexcusable.

The point which seems to have eluded *The Economist* is that campaign groups aren't conducting 'public policy'. Making those trade-offs is the job of government, not NGOs. They are advocates and agents of change whose role is to change what is possible, not negotiate within the realm of what is possible. The ‘pragmatic’ decisions which *The Economist* is so keen on are framed by a context made in part by campaigners but their job is to try and change the world so that, for example, the 'priceless things in nature' are not traded off. Campaigns are not the same thing as government.

Campaigns (see the ‘ambition box’ at [http://www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html](http://www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html)) are more about creating long term strategic change, not finding the most cost-effective way to spend a limited resource on, say, environmental protection. Instead of addressing its frustrations to the largely illusory ‘green movement’, on this subject *The Economist* would do a service to its readers and the world if it utilised its considerable intellectual resources to address itself to governments, whose job it is to craft and implement the best public policy. It may be splendidly bufferish to dismiss ‘greens’ as an irrelevant fringe one minute and claim the next that they ‘shape policy making’ but it's unworthy of a magazine which wants to be taken seriously.

Finally, and connecting like Jonathan Leake's piece, with electoral politics, *The Economist* says that if its advice were followed:

*the green movement could overcome the scepticism of the ordinary voter. It might even move from the fringes of politics to the middle ground where most voters reside.*
Here again it is wrong. The environment movement's problem is that its concern is now shared by the middle ground but that militates against action rather than fostering it (see the latest posting from *How To Win Campaigns* at this website 'Reading The Weather') - and in the UK system, environment isn't seen as an *electoral* issue by the main political parties.

There are several reasons why environment hasn't much featured in the current UK election, and though the failings of the environmental campaigners are no doubt a contributory factor, they are far from being the major ones. Here are four:

1. **Psephology** - as Andrew Marr pointed out in his book *Ruling Britannia*, with increasing professionalisation of the election planning, politicians focus on a few 100,000 'key' voters. Political offers are then boiled down to what most cleanly divides them, usually on Labour v Conservative lines, and everything else gets dropped from the agenda. ie the Parties drop 'environment' along with all sorts of other stuff. The same cannot be said of the Liberal Democrats or, of course, Greens. The media then reports that agenda. Then it criticises the agenda once it gets bored.

2. **Cultural** - Most UK politicians have really ignored environment for generations. It's been treated as an increasingly unavoidable subject for government but not something for elections. Most UK politicians know almost nothing about it and certainly less than many schoolchildren. They still tend to think like Mrs Thatcher prior to her 'conversion', who said at the time of the Falklands War, something like "it's nice to have a real crisis to deal with when you've spent most of your life dealing with humdrum issues like the environment". Indeed, politicians have by and large ignored the issues and ideas of campaign groups [3] leading to the emergence of consumer-NGO-business 'new politics' without politicians, though this seems to have passed *The Economist* by.

3. **A deal was done** - It has often been said that in the past, Labour and Tories did a deal not to criticise each others environmental policies in Parliament. It made life easier. I heard this again recently, from someone who works for a well-known former UK Environment Minister.
4. Psychological values - The Values and Voters survey at www.campaignstrategy.org shows how Labour and Tories are mainly playing to parts of society where non-material issues (not just environment), indeed “issues” in general, are not top of mind or instinctive priorities, whereas they are for Liberal Democrat supporters. Hence Labour and the Conservatives have little to gain by promoting their environmental ideas because LibDem supporters are fewer and very loyal. This will only change if the UK electoral system changes to allow the Green Party or LibDems to be more of a threat, and/or if campaigners start serious work with the security-driven and esteem-driven parts of the population. (More on this in the next newsletter, taking the example of climate change, and a new survey on climate and values which will be posted at www.campaignstrategy.org.)

[1] http://www.newstatesman.com/200504250009 How the greens were choked to death
Jonathan Leake, Monday 25th April 2005, NEW STATESMAN
http://www.economist.com/printedition/displaystory.cfm?Story_ID=3888006
[3] How To Win Campaigns Chris Rose, pub Earthscan p 196

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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 11 - 9 May 2005

Blair’s Razor

Every now and again, a politician or some unusual event creates a ‘cross-over’ context in which campaigns can suddenly appeal to a far wider section of society. These rare moments are gifts, which if exploited, can enable change in a matter of months, that otherwise may have to wait for decades or generations. Just four days after the UK election it looks like Tony Blair has created just such an opportunity. At issue is whether government adopts a ‘greed is good’ doctrine, which sacrifices ethics, equity or the interests of the poor, the weak or future generations, in favour of conspicuous consumption.

Blair has reportedly [1] ‘ruled out making changes to “living standards” to tackle global warming, and is building up plans to build a new generation of nuclear power stations to reduce carbon dioxide emissions instead’.

Because of the grounds on which Blair is embracing nuclear power, he has drawn a line which puts him
in opposition to any campaign or cause which requires a change in "living standards". This is the
opportunity: Blair has created a fundamental test, far more significant than 'just' the nuclear, energy or
even the climate issue.

Should society simply be organised to allow the comfortable to be greedy and selfish? Is the role
of government just to facilitate material consumption? Can we write off the interests of our children and
grandchildren so that our generation can merely party as if there was no tomorrow? Should political
leaders always put off hard decisions in favour of soft options? Is greed good?

If you follow Blair's reported new policy, the answer to all these questions is yes.

By basing his pro-nuclear decision on short-term comfort and consumption rather than any ethics, Mr
Blair has forged a blade which can be used to sever any commitment which constrains avarice or reins in
materialism. The same logic can be applied to aid, development or even health. If 'living standards' are
affected - for example, the acquisition of four-by-fours to take your children to school - then Tony Blair's
razor can be used to cut help to the poor, the environment, future generations or any 'cause' which
doesn't contribute to covetousness.

Anti-nuclear groups can and no doubt will invigorate their campaigns. They can open the chest of
plentiful arguments against nuclear power. There is the unsolved problem of radioactive waste, the
unpopularity of living next door to any nuclear facility and the unfailing track record of public subsidy to
underwrite and eventually pay for nuclear energy. Then there's security: nuclear increases vulnerability
to terrorism and nuclear materials facilitate proliferation. They may play on the divisions between the
Treasury and No 10, or Blair's Environment Secretary Margaret Beckett and No 10, over nuclear
power. They can show that nuclear power can't 'solve' the climate problem but other measures can. And much
more. But if this is all they do, they'll be making a mistake.

First and foremost, they need to make sure this isn't seen as just a 'nuclear issue'. They need to work
with others, and to work against the reasons for his decision - the promotion of short-term selfishness -
not just the reasons to be against nuclear power.

Other organisations should pay attention to Blair's razor, for it could cut them too. Environment groups
such as WWF, which champions 'sustainable development', should see Blair's razor for what it is: a
disciple of comfort before conservation. Development agencies such as Oxfam or Christian Aid should
see in it a logic that threatens their world too. It can equally put consumption by the well-off before help
to the 'third world'. Saving the children, with this policy, comes second to saving the cost of holiday
flights. If opposing conflict diamonds means jewellery will be more expensive, then let's have the blood
and abuse of human rights because it will help raise our "living standards".

The world's major religions recently decided to invest all their considerable funds according to their own
ethical standards. It would be surprising if that included investing in nuclear power. What will they, and
the companies which have adopted 'corporate responsibility', or the 'ethical investment' community,
made of Mr Blair's ethics-free reasoning in favour of nuclear?

No doubt Mr Blair will try to make a case that nuclear is needed to combat the greater threat of climate
change but this case is holed below the waterline by his reasons for promoting it. If you can't stem gas
guzzling by Chelsea Tractors (a UK term for SUVs) or limit ever cheapening air travel using planes that
churn out millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases because this would affect "living standards", then
there will be no payback from making a pact with nuclear power.

The political pragmatism which presumably underlies Blair’s championing of “living standards” is not hard to fathom. As we showed in the Values and Voters study (see www.campaignstrategy.org), like the US, the UK is now dominated (at 44% of the population) by the esteem-driven, whose guiding if unspoken mantra is to identify, acquire and display symbols of wealth and success. For them, the proposal “you can have more now, and you won't have to pay” has an appeal they are loathe to question.

This is not to counsel despair. Even the esteem-driven face threats from climate and nuclear power: health and house prices for example. If campaigns are designed to make sense in terms that resonate with a range of public psychologies, then even Blair's free-lunch policy can be successfully opposed. What won't work is simply to project ethical arguments - which have a natural resonance with the inner-directed part of the population (35%) - at the esteem-driven.

All ethical causes are put in jeopardy by Blair’s promotion of “living standards” above any other consideration. Those who care about such causes need to fight this outside Parliament more than within it, not least because this is where their power lies.

A question remains: when it comes to presenting his nuclear option, will Mr Blair drop the trade-off for "living standards" in favour of something else? It seems unlikely. Tony Blair is a man of convictions, and he doesn't like to be seen to retreat from them. His convictions are not usually based on principles so much as political expediency. In this case he's decided to opt for cheap flights at the expense of future generations. It was, as he may well say, "a hard decision which someone had to take, and I took it". A hard decision in which he took the soft option.

A generation ago, UK politicians toyed with the idea of making the "quality of life" an electoral issue. Mr Blair now seems to have abandoned quality in favour of quantity. Humanity, reason and ethics say that he is wrong. The question for campaign groups is whether they can make the politics say that too.

[1] “Blair demands nuclear power to protect high 'living standards'”, by Marie Woolf, Chief Political Correspondent, Independent 09 May 2005
http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/politics/story.jsp?story=636853

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HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS pub April 7 2005 Earthscan by Chris Rose see
UK Climate and Values Study Results

The first nationally representative study of motivational psychological values and climate change (posted at http://www.campaignstrategy.org - see ‘Climate Change Communications – Dipping A Toe Into Public Motivation’[1] and ‘Climate Values Study Data Set’[2]) shows:

- Climate is a ‘mature’ issue, widely understood in similar ways across the main psychological groups of society, with little difference between the ‘pioneers’ who set trends and explore new issues, and the bulk of the rest of the population. Achieving change will not be brought about mainly by building awareness but by providing ways for people to change behaviour.
- The majority (53%) of people select ‘we are all responsible’ as the principal social cause (responsibility), over and above choices such as ‘oil companies’ (8%) or people with big cars (6%) for instance.
- Very few (9%) espouse the ‘excuse’ option that it’s just a natural change for which no-one is responsible - but these are overwhelmingly from the motivational group ‘settlers’ making up 21% of the population who are conservative late followers of trends, and any campaigns targeted at changing their views are likely to be regarded by the rest of the population as worthy and irrelevant.
- Unlike the United States, God (3%) is not what springs to mind when the British think of climate change, nor is it seen as a God-like ‘judgement on us’ (4%).
- When asked who would have to act to make a ‘real difference’ so that Britain could become a ‘world leader’ on climate change (the ambition of the Futerra/government strategy - see links in the main paper), the British put George Bush (24%) ahead of Tony Blair (11%) alongside ‘individuals’ and ‘business and industry’. Community groups (the main channel favoured in the official plan) score only 4% - suggesting a dissonance which will undermine any government plan to mobilise community action around the notion of making Britain a world leader (a framing problem).
- The UK respondents see a stronger case for limiting oil imports to safeguard against climate change than against terrorism.
- The ‘emergency’ frame, popular with many NGO campaigners, ranks only 11% amongst a set of choices, though there is probably scope to increase this among the esteem-driven ‘prospectors’ (44% of the population). However there is a wider risk that invoking the idea of an ‘emergency’ will lead to mismatches between experience and expectations. The study suggests the type of actions and results which will lead to reinforcement.
- While a great number of British people think of climate change as coupled with ‘the future’, very few couple it with ‘far away places’, and more associate it with everyday evidences such as weather forecasts, nature and wildlife, homes and families, suggesting that at least some of the rationalisations as to “why people don’t act”, are wrong, and there is considerable...
scope for basing action around everyday cues rather than elaborate attempts to educate people about complex processes or concepts.

Why does any of this matter?

Well for one thing, both the UK Government and a consortium of UK NGOs are planning major campaigns to ‘mobilise’ the public - or mobilise public ‘concern’ - about climate change. Neither project has any nationally representative information about public motivations and climate.

The £12m official project for example, has a 92 page summary of existing research on public opinion and perceptions yet none of these studies (see links in the main report) tell us anything much about motivation, and nothing at all about the underlying psychological drivers which determine whether or not people will act and how to get them to do so.

There is no group of clever people with the 'right answers' about climate change, although many clever people see it as the greatest single threat to humanity in our time. The study reported here is simply a small dip of the toe into the motivations which must be understood if campaigns for change are to move beyond telling large numbers of people what they ought to think, and what ought to motivate them, and instead work with what does motivate them. What is needed is a similar but larger study, shared between government and non-government groups trying to do the right thing.

Many of the rallying calls that work for campaign groups which need only to connect with a small fraction of the population - if they campaign so that their best tactics have a strategic effect - will not work with larger populations. While it is certainly true that if ‘everyone’ acted differently, the problem could be solved, that does not necessarily mean that it is effective to try to achieve that. Even so, if one does try to do that, then any communicators so engaged need to understand "what works" for the target audiences, not just for themselves.

[1] ‘Climate Change Communications – Dipping A Toe Into Public Motivation’
http://www.campaignstrategy.org/valuesvoters/climatechangecommunications.pdf (90kb)
[2] ‘Climate Values Study Data Set’
http://www.campaignstrategy.org/valuesvoters/climatevaluesstudy_dataset.pdf (1.2Mb)

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Icons Not Celebrities

Non-UK readers may not know this but the British media has been devoting heavy coverage to a concert and campaign about debt, backed by Bob Geldof and Bono of U2. The Make Poverty History campaign and the proposed Live 8 concert, scheduled to coincide with the forthcoming G8 meeting at Gleneagles, Scotland, focus on debt forgiveness, particularly to Africa.

Everything that Tony Blair does in relation to this event now gets framed by the campaign. Bono and Geldof have become political actors in their own right. When Blair went to see Bush to plead for US support on his two G8 priorities – climate change on debt – he came away short-changed on both, and rather than NGOs or opposition politicians, the media turned to Bono and Geldof for comment and explanation. On climate however, he won nothing at all.

Undoubtedly one reason for this is that Bono and Geldof are focussed on debt, not climate. Consequently media selects action on debt as the test of public sentiment, itself represented by the people’s politicians Geldof and Bono. Because the rock stars aren’t headlining climate, we can expect to see little or no action out of the G8. In PR terms Blair will get away with it if he gets a pat on the back from the two Irish bellwethers of caring, for making at least some progress on debt.

This is not just because Bono and Geldof are celebrities. They are now icons. Years of campaigning have given them a track record and personal credibility on matters such as Africa, development and aid, at least as great as any OECD Minister but with few of the disadvantages of holding office or compromises made in getting elected. There are loads of other ‘celebrities’ – Michael Jackson or David Beckham or Kylie Minogue for instance – but their backing for a campaign on debt wouldn’t be the same at all. Bono and Geldof have shown by their actions that they care about debt, aid and the plight of Africa, from Live Aid onwards.

There are two lessons here that campaigners who care about the climate might want to ponder on as they watch their cause getting ignored at Gleneagles.

First, to garner the same sort of media focus and political response, they’d do well to back any chance they get to start a similar sort of process to Live Aid, to aid the climate. Live Aid started as a show of caring but went on to do more – it created a generation of rock politicians with a cause as a political agenda.

Second, communication of the debt issue, the plight-of-Africa and aid and development problems in general, have been full of feeling and sensing, not just judging and perceiving. There’s a lot of emotion, identification with human victims, and pictures of suffering people. Just the opposite, in short, of what politicians and civil servants will tell campaigners to do, if they “want to be taken seriously”. Fortunately, rock stars aren’t up to much when it comes to policy ideas or writing reports. Unfortunately, many climate campaigners love that sort of thing, and climate campaigns are notably short on human drama, the plight of suffering individuals, even vanishing islands and starving wildlife. Instead they are heavy on modal shifts, gigawatts, Joint Implementation and Clean Development Mechanisms. ‘Rationality’ and well argued proposals are what you’re told to produce; raw emotion that plays on conscience is what actually makes a difference.
To be effective, campaigns do need to be multidimensional - see posting from my book, How To Win Campaigns - but if you fail to win on the emotional-psychological front, you always lose the campaign.

**Helpful Rules**

Here, courtesy of public affairs exec Simon Bryceson, is a handy list to think about if you’re ever putting a proposition to politicians. (You can contact Simon via [www.bryceson.com](http://www.bryceson.com))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW INTERESTING TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS IS THE PROJECT ON WHICH I’M WORKING?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A CHECK LIST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNIQUENESS:</strong> The political process is crucially concerned with the new. If your proposal appears to be a</td>
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<td>way of doing more efficiently that which is already done, it will be an administrative rather than political</td>
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<td>issue. You may find sponsors, you won’t find champions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS:</strong> The above not withstanding, politicians love to show that their radical idea</td>
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<td>works very effectively elsewhere.</td>
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<td><strong>COST:</strong> Is this proposal likely to be financially viable? A standard process of financial assessment, not to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be confused with Treasury assessment. (See below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TIMESCALE:</strong> Are the alleged advantages of this scheme likely to appear on a timescale relevant to other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>factors? A project that is likely to encounter electoral opposition but not come to fruition before the next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>election is unlikely to be thought ‘interesting’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL ADVANCEMENT:</strong> Will sponsoring this proposal benefit my personal reputation? Is it an issue I am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historically, and positively associated with? Can I take ‘ownership’ of the issue and, if so, how bad might the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>downside be?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA FRIENDLY:</strong> Is this an issue that the popular press are going to like/take an interest in? No publicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is normally perceived in politics as no advantage.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ELECTORALLY ACUTE OR DIFFUSE:</strong></td>
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<td>“There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, nor perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success,</td>
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<td>than the introduction of a new order of things, because the innovator has for enemies all those who have</td>
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<td>done well under the old conditions, and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new” Niccolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machiavelli. 1532.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do those likely to lose under the new scheme know? Do those likely to gain care? A small group of electors who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>care a lot always outweigh a large group of electors who have other things to worry about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRONGFOOTING THE OPPOSITION:</strong> Politicians have an inordinate interest in their continued</td>
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<td>occupation of office or the rapid acquisition of it. This, of course, is entirely a matter of the public interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>since the other lot are so awful one has a duty to prevent them holding office if at all possible. If your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proposal embarrasses the opposition it will have interesting aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TREASURY POLICY:</strong> In most modern countries there is Government policy and there is Treasury policy, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trick is to be in accord with both whilst noticing that they are rarely the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELITE SUPPORT:</strong> Will a clever dick who knows something about the area catch me out? Have the proposers of this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idea checked to see where informed opposition might come from and indicated how it might be minimised?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARTY FUNDRAISING:</strong> Politics is a very expensive game; there is therefore a constant need to raise money. Can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you show that your project has desirable implications for this process?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lastly – worth a look:

http://www.sorryeverybody.com/ - some Americans talking to the rest of the world
http://www.listentoyourmother.org/ - some Americans talking to each other
http://www.storewars.org/flash/index.html – vegetables the movie
http://www.bushflash.com/pl_lo.htm – depleted uranium

Next issue – remarkable evidence that environmentalism isn’t dead after all – from the unlikely source of Joseph Luntz, premier pollster to the US Republicans

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To offer contributions or comments contact the author chris.rose@campaignstrategy.org
HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS pub April 7 2005 Earthscan by Chris Rose see
www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1853839620/ref=ed_ra_of_dp/202-6151204-2796606 or at a discount from www.earthscan.co.uk

Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 14, 5 July 2005

Environmentalism Kicks: News of Death Premature

Is environmentalism really dead (see previous newsletters on ‘Death of Environmentalism’ by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Noordhaus)? Perhaps not many thought it was but here’s some evidence that announcement of its death was rather premature.

Out Of The Woods

Some years ago, with my colleague Steve Shallhorn, I visited campaigners in British Columbia who had been waging a long and pretty desperate struggle against clear-cutting and destructive logging in the temperate rainforest. Sitting in a small house whose owner showed us photos of black bears raiding the kitchen, we worked through the status of the campaign.

Things, they told us, were pretty bad. In the past the major timber companies had pretty much ignored them in the media and political circles and relied on brutal action by logging gangs, ‘security’ and the police, against road blocks and tree blockades in the forest. Now they also had the personal attacks, campaigns of vilification in the media, the hiring of major American PR companies and an advertising offensive to contend with, as well as attempts by the industry to wrong foot them by wheeling out its own ecological ‘experts’, set up dialogue groups and woo politicians and the public not just in BC but in the end-markets of Europe and elsewhere. The campaign they faced had grown like topsy.

We listened and talked, and enumerated the changes one by one. Soon we concluded that these were
signs of success, not of failure. End buyers and pulp processors in European markets were up in arms about the impact of clear-cutting, and demanding alternative supplies. Major companies such as MacMillan Bloedel were heading for a reversal of key policies. The BC Government was coming to a realisation that damage to its international image – and industries such as tourism – was more costly than the gain to be made by continuing to prioritise 'strip mining' of forests. While the battle was at its most intense, it was now being won by being fought both in the forests and along the whole supply chain – territory where the 'forest' industry was socially and politically vulnerable.

That 1990s campaign scored major – though by no means complete – successes [1]. Now on the same continent, there are signs that far from losing on the climate issue, the battle is gradually being won. Not the war but at least the battle to break the logjam in which the USA is the biggest plug in the pile.

**Signs We Are Winning On Climate**

Consider this: the US is isolated over Kyoto, and Kyoto exists: it was not replaced by some US-led alternative and nor did it die from lack of ratification. A growing network of both American States, and American Cities, are taking unilateral action 'in line with Kyoto' (at least in sympathy with it – action to reduce emissions), effectively starting to do global politics despite and in opposition to the US Federal Administration. Car companies are rushing to produce hybrids – still a small part of the market but a rapidly growing one, and hybrids are being developed across all the main market segments, socially, psychologically and technically. Climate-induced-actions are becoming the norm in many industrialised countries: in the UK for example, with acceptance of wind power.

This is a very different picture from a world successfully locked into inaction by a G W Bush White House controlled by Exxon. On top of this Bush's ratings are plumbing new depths, and the Iraq war, inextricably associated with oil, is unpopular in the 'States.

Hybrids are also particularly favoured by the American Washington right wing. Their reasoning is not climate but energy independence. The formula espoused by the Detroit Project for some years ([http://www.detroitproject.com](http://www.detroitproject.com)) and picked up by Kerry in his campaign, has become mainstream. We are seeing what is so often seen in the execution of a u-turn: the opposition is embracing the substance without the rationale. That will eventually come later, once there's no face to be lost. An acceptable American will discover that human-made climate change exists and action is needed.

This could all be put down to the rising oil price and politics of Iraq if it wasn't for clear evidence from the Republican spin machine that they've not succeeded in overcoming (let alone killing) environmentalism.

**The Luntz Memos**

Two memos by Frank Luntz, pollster, framer and spin supremo for the American right, provide significant waypoints which to chart these developments. Thanks to public spirited leaking and publication on the internet you can find them, and more besides, at the website 'Political Strategy' in an article by Tom Ball (3 March 2005) [2].

Two pieces of Luntz’s advice to Republicans are particularly revealing. In the first memo “The Environment: Cleaner, Healthier, Safer America”, Luntz tries to provide counters to environmentalist (especially Democrat) arguments and campaigns in general. [3] This is dated 2002.
Luntz begins:
“The environment is probably the single issue on which the Republicans in general – and President Bush in particular – are most vulnerable. A caricature has taken hold in the public imagination: Republicans seemingly in the pockets of corporate fat cats who rub their hands together and chuckle maniacally as they plot to pollute America for fun and profit. . .”

He adds:
“The fundamental problem for Republicans when it comes to the environment is that whatever you say is viewed through the prism of suspicion”.

He cites the movie Erin Brokovich as a story too powerful to overcome with contrary “exposés”. He points to polling to show that the environmental vulnerability is real. Most interesting though is his account of the Bush Administration’s failure to bury a last minute Clinton commitment to limit arsenic in water.

Arsenic, says Luntz, “was the biggest public relations misfire of President Bush’s first year in office” and “the first chink in President Bush’s approval ratings”.

Facts of course, according to Luntz, supported the Republican view but “facts only become relevant when the public is receptive and willing to listen to them” (he’s right there).

Luntz then goes on to give pages of advice on how Republicans could frame their ‘messages’ so that the American public hears only things it agrees with, and none of the dissonances which might trigger opposition. It’s an extraordinarily useful ABC guide for American environmentalists as to how to frame their arguments – and better still design campaigns – so as to resonate with environmentalist instincts and beliefs. In some cases all you need to do is to expose realities behind controversies – for example where big business is both the advocate and the beneficiary – something that is relevant to his second memo, in which he describes how Republicans can champion oil drilling in ANWR and more nuclear power. (For convenience, both Luntz memos are posted at this site but it’s worth reading the analyses at the American websites referenced).

Bush accepted the Arsenic regulation. Hardly a sign that environmentalism – even in this most old fashioned top-down regulatory form – was dead.

Luntz has nothing much to say about Kyoto, which was undoubtedly the major international foreign policy blunder on 2001 (pre 9/11) but he does say: ‘the scientific debate is closing [against us] but not yet closed. There is still a window of opportunity to challenge the science’. This is reminiscent of previous u-turns and tactical retreats. On the clear cut issue for example, I remember industry spokesmen trying to challenge the evidence of ecological damage with increasingly desperate and feeble arguments, even including the magnificent “but you see a lot more bears in clear cuts!”. Since 2002 the science debate has closed even further against the ‘no problem’ camp, with contrary statements from waves of eminent American scientists and papers from the Pentagon, among others.
In 2002 Luntz wrote that Kerry would argue 'that we have the most innovative, technically advanced business community that can easily adapt to stricter anti-global warming regulations .... [others]... use scare tactics to convince audiences that global warming will lead to doom and gloom. Both have one common argument. The future will be a better place if we take the necessary actions today. Let me warn you that both arguments do resonate with some people when they make the case that short-term pain will yield long term gain. Americans are still forward thinking and likely to respond favourably to sacrifice if they can see a light at the end of the tunnel'.

Which brings us to the 2005 memo. Ball writes: "In the ninth installment of the text version of the Luntz Republican playbook, Frank leads the crusade for nuclear energy and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)" [2]

Luntz starts off "AN ENERGY POLICY FOR THE 21st CENTURY" (2005) as follows:

'It was a year of home heating fuel spikes, $50 a barrel for oil, and gasoline approaching $2.25 a gallon. It is not surprising that now, in 2005, over 70% of the American electorate believes the energy situation in this country is either in crisis or a significant problem. The prospect of somehow, someway reducing America's dependence on foreign oil and developing/diversifying America's own energy sources are top priorities among Republicans and Democrats alike. You read that correctly. For the first time in recent memory, energy has become a bipartisan issue.'

Luntz's 2005 memo bases nothing on taking action to avoid climate change but perhaps this is because it would be unpalatable to the intended audience. And its prime purpose is purely political: to wrest back the political initiative on energy from the Democrats. But in its effect, it aligns the Republicans with one or more very strong environmentalist arguments. It is against oil imports (on security grounds) and thus against something to do with oil: in fact against quite a lot to do with oil. It suffers demonological confusion. It tries to be pro American oil (and thus pro developing ANWR) while being anti foreign oil. This is perilously close to the anti-SUV logic of the Detroit Project. It's hard to be credible while saying there's an oil crisis, look at the prices, look at our vulnerability, if you admit that we're mostly dependent on imported oil (though Iraq was nothing to do with that), yet continue to use as much as you like, so be pro oil-use. The growing popularity of hybrids on the right as well as the left, even hybrid SUVs, suggest that few will buy this.

Luntz's 2005 memo also produces a lot of well worn old arguments in favour of nuclear. These are going to be tested against newer arguments for renewables, which he admits have a stronger case in terms of safety and public appeal. By and large, old arguments get less play. This is another weakness.

Most important, the old simplicity of the 'Republican' position: America-right-to-be-strong-defend-our-interests-use-all-the-oil-we-like-there-is-no-climate-problem, is being replaced by a complex, greyed-out, highly qualified, rather torturous series of linkages which get boxed in and tripped up by internal contradictions, and are aligned with established environmentalist argument. Luntz is replacing simplicity with complexity: not good, especially not good on tv. Luntz is also charting a path onto environmentalist territory – the demise of an oil future – while still trying to face a different direction. Public instincts will work against him. It's a sign that he's in an end game he can't win, which is, in his words 'closing against us'.

Like his 2002 memo, in 2005 Luntz provides an unintentionally entertaining and tactically very useful list of weaknesses in the Republican pro-oil (pro-nuclear case). Here are his eight top points:
AN ENERGY POLICY FOR THE 21st CENTURY

THE EIGHT ENERGY COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR 2005

1) A threat to America's energy security is a threat to national security. Our "dependence" on OPEC and foreign oil entangles us in the Middle East and makes us dependent on countries that are hostile to America and American interests. The greater America's dependence on foreign energy, the greater the threat to American national security. This is the single most important communication recommendation.

2) Articulate the need to move toward American energy independence and energy self-sufficiency. It is the optimistic, hopeful flip-side of the national security argument. It is not enough to say what we don't want. We need to offer a positive goal.

3) We need to take a BALANCED approach to solving our energy needs through DIVERSITY of supply. These two principles are closely linked and crucial to demonstrating that your approach is both long-term and comprehensive.

4) Reject talk about "choosing between more energy and a cleaner environment." Assert clearly that "we have to do both." The key principle is "responsible energy exploration." And remember, it's NOT drilling for oil. It's responsible energy exploration.

5) Innovation and 21st Century technology should be at the core of your energy policy. Articulate how 21st Century technology and innovation will provide the solution to our current energy situation. The following sound-bite works best: "We have the best scientists, the best engineers and the best technicians in the world. It's time to put them to work to develop a 21st Century energy program that leads America toward energy independence and self-sufficiency."

6) Stress alternatives that are CLEAN, EFFICIENT, and AFFORDABLE. Alternative sources of energy aren't really viable unless they meet these three criteria. Stress that increasing energy supplies MUST be done by "using energy more cleanly and efficiently and ultimately making it more affordable."

7) There is an important role for conservation. Whether through technology that allows our products to burn energy more efficiently or an effort to get Americans to be more careful when and how they use energy, we do want conservation to play a role in our energy future. Any policy without conservation will fail the public opinion test.

8) We need to say yes to a comprehensive, common sense energy policy for the 21st Century. It's time to hold accountable those who stand in the way and refuse to accept the energy needs and the energy opportunities facing America now and in the future.

Here are some of his no-words:

Words Never To Use
NEVER SAY Government INSTEAD SAY: Washington
NEVER SAY Privatization/Private Accounts INSTEAD SAY: Personalization/Personal
NEVER SAY Tax Reform INSTEAD SAY: Tax Simplification
NEVER SAY Inheritance/Estate Tax INSTEAD SAY: The Death Tax
NEVER SAY A Global Economy/Globalization/Capitalism INSTEAD SAY: Free Market Economy
NEVER SAY Outsourcing INSTEAD SAY: Taxation, Regulation, Litigation Innovation, Education

When you use the words of your opposition, you are basically accepting their definition and therefore their conclusion.
We should NEVER use the word outsourcing because we will then be asked to defend or end the practice of allowing companies to ship American jobs overseas. Rather, we should talk about the "root cause" why any company would not want to hire "the best workers in the world." And the answer: "over-taxation, over-regulation, too much litigation, and not enough innovation or quality education." Because it rhymes, it will be remembered.

NEVER SAY Drilling for oil
INSTEAD SAY: Exploring for energy
It's the picture people paint in their minds, the difference between an old-fashioned oil rig that gushes up black goop vs. 21st century technology and innovation that provides us the ability to heat our homes and drive our cars. When you talk about energy, use words like "responsible" and "balanced" and always address your concern for the environment.

Instead of just being entertained, campaigners need to think beyond words. Don't just say oil drilling, show it. Make things happen to provide visual evidence, not verbal arguments, that remind people of realities and allow them to draw their own conclusions, inside their heads, rather than relying on a war of words.

Similarly, on renewables (which he tries to sideline in favour of nuclear), Luntz says:

**Words That Work**
*When we talk about energy in general, we have to talk about renewable fuels, because we are on the cusp of new technologies that are going to make renewable fuels much more affordable and environmentally friendly while ultimately creating all kinds of new jobs that we can't even imagine here in the United States.*

He also writes:
*"We cannot wait for the day when alternative sources of energy -- like solar and wind -- can meet our nation’s energy demands. We need to focus on clean, reliable and sustainable sources that are available today*."

Well, organise campaigns that show renewables exist, do serious sized work for homes, communities and industry, and are here today. Take persuadable people to see large scale use elsewhere, even (!) abroad.

Best of all though, do not set up 'demonstrations' or examples but events which will act as evidences. Things for example which show serious players (by size and money) and aspirational figures (Hollywood for instance, fashion leaders) are investing, installing and using renewables. Make the profit or the investment or the commodity or consumable the point of the story, not the energy argument.

Hybrids are again, an interesting example. Shellenberger and Noordhaus were probably right to say that US NGOs could have made more progress by working with in new alliances with the car industry than just on emission standards. However it was the wrong car industry. The hybrid explosion has come about via hybrids first becoming fashion statements, not policy prescriptions, and by the Japanese manufacturers meeting a market demand, not any attempt to 'rescue' the American car industry.

To find further points of social leverage American environmentalists need to do their own qualitative research to find out what people would take as evidences of a new reality – one that gainsays, without
any debate, the Luntz vision. This is the sort of research done much more in Europe than in the States: about mental constructions of reality and symbols and signs of change, not opinions or 'key words' and polling.

Strategically the pro-oil, pro-nuclear anti-climate opposition are losing: the greatest gains are probably to be made in going around them, not seeking them out for a head-to-head argument. That will only delay the obsolescence of their arguments. You can use the weaknesses which Luntz helpfully reveals, eg

You cannot talk about nuclear energy without discussing the safety and security of nuclear power and nuclear power plants. And you cannot credibly argue that nuclear plants are 100% safe and secure without addressing them directly at the opposition. Make these unassailable asides, calling for and explaining alternative forms of progress.

A victory at ANWR could be a signal turning point in the politics of oil, America and the climate. I have little idea how feasible this is but it might particularly persuasive if it was achieved with the help of the American towns, cities and industries which are now pursuing action on renewables, efficiency and climate change.

Anything important about American climate politics gets the attention of campaigners abroad. Try googling for parts of the text from Luntz's memo on energy and you'll find it being used by right wing bloggers and speech makers. It's in circulation and campaigners from outside the USA can learn from it but shouldn't either take it as a literal template for developing campaigns elsewhere, nor as evidence that what he says about Americans is true about people anywhere else. All campaigns need their own strategic and tactical research.

The Luntz memos are classic research material for communications or campaign students and a persuasive example of how framing can be used to manipulate public debate. Most striking though, is the way they show that environmentalism, even old-school, seems to be alive and kicking.

Stop press: Bush rejects Kyoto-style G8 deal [4]
President George W Bush has ruled out US backing for any Kyoto-style deal on climate change at the G8 summit.
Speaking to British broadcaster ITV, he said he would instead be talking to fellow leaders about new technologies as a way of tackling global warming. But he conceded that the issue was one "we've got to deal with" and said human activity was "to some extent" to blame.
Tony Blair is hoping for agreements on climate change and Africa when he hosts the summit in Scotland this week.

Economic impact
Mr Bush said he would resist any packet of measures that are similar to the 1997 UN Kyoto protocol, involving legally binding reduction on carbon emissions, that Washington never ratified.

The Mother Of All Campaigns?

In idle moments, critics of campaigners have sometimes resorted to calling them ‘terrorists’. More seriously though, does our understanding of campaigns and communication have anything useful to say about how societies might best respond to terrorism?

Three Levels Of Thinking

It’s often useful to think of campaigns at three levels.

At the first level there’s the level of desirable end states or final objectives: how the world ought to be.

At the second level there are things, which if they happened, would make the world that way.

At the third level, there are things which really can make that happen. That is a strategy with the resources and activities required to actually succeed.

If campaigns are planned only at level one then they are a specification for somebody’s utopia. Level two is pundit land – without any accompanying machinery and strategy to organise resources and activities to bring these about, they are simply possibilities. This is also the world of democratic political manifestos: “here’s what I would do if you elect me and thus give me the power to put this into effect”. If campaigners (as they too often do) behave as if they were political parties in waiting for their turn at
government, they fall into this trap of remaining advocates, pushers of ideas rather than makers of change, for they are never elected and their ideas are at best appropriated and cannibalised.

So what’s this got to do with terrorism? Well, there’s a lot of level two thinking masquerading as level three thinking in the political worlds of the UK and the US right now.

Those accustomed to be in control – governments and their agencies – may make this ‘level two’ mistake because, in their world, they usually can ‘make stuff happen’, whether by force, by law, in war gaming or whatever. This can breed a false confidence or even induce cognitive dissonance. See for example Malcolm Gladwell’s account in his latest book *Blink*, of US war gaming about Iraq in which the rules were eventually fixed so as to stop the ‘red’ team, led by retired and maverick US Marine Paul Van Ripper, from exacting unacceptable damage on the conventionally minded but far more powerful ‘blue’ team.

Among more peaceful social campaigners, the error is usually down to being so in love with your own ideas that you can’t imagine they won’t simply be taken up by those who do have power to control outcomes. Both campaigners and military politicians may assume ‘because we are right, we will prevail’. Currently, after each ‘terror attack’, media and political discussion generates a swathe of ‘if-this’ prescriptions for ‘dealing with terrorism’. Some are technical, some are military: ‘if they can be stopped on the way to the railway station’, ‘if we electronically take over their phones’ … some are social: ‘if they were living in a democracy’, ‘if they weren’t religious fanatics’ … some are psychological: ‘if they had hope through politics’. After 9/11, the Americans launched a renewed global PR effort for capitalism and their ‘way of life’, spear-headed by Charlotte Beers, former brand manager for Uncle Ben’s Rice [1].

Journalist Robert Fox [2] has recently reported on divides among the US and UK ‘security chiefs’ about how to ‘tackle the global terrorist threat’. ‘The British fear’ writes Fox, ‘that despite the rhetoric about social and economic engagement US commanders still believe in military force as a first resort’. If they are dead, the terrorists can’t strike (level two). But for the Brits, the lessons of Northern Ireland and elsewhere are that a military solution can’t be made to work (level three). The State Department apparently advocates ‘new “public diplomacy” initiatives in the Middle East’. Fox quotes a ‘senior British special forces representative’ as saying “The primary conditions for successful coalitions are unlikely to be met in the present circumstances”.

In *How To Win Campaigns* I wrote about how our professionalized form of politics, in which the primary relationships of governing politicians are with business and the media, and not the public, has forged the downward spiral of public trust in politics. See current post at www.campaignstrategy.org – ‘How Campaigns Became Politics’. These same factors have helped make terrorism a modern form of warfare.

The increasingly episodic soundbite form of news coverage, shrinking news audiences and consequently narrowing news agenda all encourage the reduction of political responses to terror attacks to denunciation, and declarations of opposition.

In the for-us-or-against us framing that ensues, level three analysis is squeezed out. Sometimes the communications strategies of Bush and Blair seem intended to use moralistic ‘wedges’ to outlaw questioning of whether particular anti-terror plans can actually be made to work. Restrictions on debate and speech may be an extension of this.
Only the military retain a media-licence to publicly doubt the efficacy of relying on punitive retaliation or constraint. When Tony Blair’s wife Cheri Blair commented after an Israeli suicide attack by Palestinians: “As long as young people feel they have got no hope but to blow themselves up you are never going to make progress” [3] her husband quickly ordered an apology. He added that it was important to provide hope for the future through a political process “and I am sure that is what Cherie was saying”. While the nature of the media dialogue does not help us arrive at strategies that may work, the embedded agenda of promoting a global economic market for large (mostly American) companies, is more problematic. We have yet to hear leaders of multinationals, or the likes of Alan Greenspan or Gordon Brown speak out like the generals, and express any doubt that the projection of force to help spread the ideal conditions for corporate benefit could have anything to do with the underlying problems behind ‘global terror’.

Introducing Nancy Snow’s pamphlet on the official USglobal propaganda strategy [4] Michael Parenti quotes US President Woodrow Wilson, from almost 100 years ago. In 1907 Wilson said:

Since trade ignores international boundaries and the manufacturer insists on having the world as a market, the flag of his nation must follow him, and the doors of the nations which are closed against him, must be battered down. Concessions obtained by financiers must be safeguarded by ministers of state, even if the sovereignty of unwilling nations be outraged in the process.

Plenty of anti-globalisation critics are outraged by such sentiments. Noting that Eisenhower echoed this in 1953, Parenti asks ‘What no US President has ever explained is: What gives the United States the right to dictate the destinies of other nations...’ Or perhaps, in the words of many Americans after 9/11, “why do people hate us?"

Since the end of the Cold War, as Snow points out, making the world into an extension of the American business park has been the driving logic of US Foreign Policy. Are we now seeing the practical limits of that strategy? Along with opening markets, globalisation has led to increasing dependence on production, resources and services from abroad, making countries such as the US vulnerable. From this, economic weakness may follow marketing success. Globalisation – economic, travel, communications - has exposed the assets, people and interests of America and other rich nations to the politics of the rest of the world. Right and Left in the USnow regularly highlight dependence on foreign oil. ‘Freeing up’ more foreign oil with military action looks a shaky long term plan. This is just one dimension of how globalisation may have made America an unwitting victim as much as it has been its agent.

Meanwhile professionalized media politics makes it harder to develop effective responses, and the just-in-time, low-resilience, globalised world with high expectations for undisturbed material prosperity is exquisitely vulnerable to the sort of damage which ‘unconventional’ warfare can impose. Leaders such as Bush and Blair tend to exclude any mention of the loss of insulation caused by globalisation, when they discuss ‘global terror’. It’s easier to stick Hollywood-style to if-only ‘special’ solutions, or to imply that ‘terrorists’ are insane, beyond the world of politics, rationality or logic.

Yet those who seriously analyse terrorism and suicide attacks have long since discarded the idea that the people undertaking it are psychopaths or in some way very different from the rest of the population. Some have even shown that killing yourself can have an evolutionary logic [5].

Seeking the psychological, cultural and social roots of ‘terrorism’ and in particular suicide bombing, many analysts are converging on a view that it is primarily political warfare. In its many and various
forms it may often seem politically incoherent and thus not open to connection to our political system but perhaps that’s because ours is not connected? Maybe we need to create mechanisms and agendas where grievances can become public with some hope of resolution.

In a 2004 article ‘The making of a suicide bomber’ [6] Michael Bond noted ‘killing yourself while killing your enemy is not a modern idea. It was practised against the Romans in 1st-century Judea by Jewish Zealots, and by the Islamic order of Assassins in the Middle East from the 11th to 14th centuries’. Japanese kamikaze pilots, Hezbollah, and the Marxist-Leninist ‘Tamil Tigers’ are among its diverse adherents – from various religions and none. Millions of young men went ‘over the top’ to face machine guns in WWI not because they feared the punishment if they refused but because their friends were doing it too.

Bond asks: ‘What, then, would lead a sane, rational, educated and comfortably-off person to do something so irrational and extreme? The key, many researchers agree, lies with the organisation that recruits them. In the modern history of suicide terrorism it appears that every mission has been authorised and planned by a resistance group’.

He quotes one researcher:

"Suicide terrorism is an organisational phenomenon," confirms Merari. "An organisation has to decide to embark on it." Another study has found that almost without exception, ‘the decision to engage in suicide terrorism is political and strategic… the aim is always the same: to coerce a government, through force of popular opinion (apart from a few isolated cases, modern suicide terrorism has only ever been used against democracies), to withdraw from territory the group considers its homeland.

In another piece [7], Bond explains that it’s easier for ‘comfortably-off, well-educated young men’ to become a suicide bomber than people might imagine. ‘The key’ he says, ‘lies less with the bombers themselves than with the organisations that recruit and prepare them’. He states

Virtually every suicide attack in modern times has been conceived and managed by militant groups, and they all employ the same methods. First, find people, usually young and male, who are sympathetic to the group’s cause and organise them into small units. Second, exploit their motivation to fight for the cause using religious or political indoctrination, emphasising the heroic nature of their mission and the nobility of self-sacrifice. Third, have all members of the unit make a pact declaring their commitment to what they are about to do. Beyond this point, it becomes psychologically very hard for them to back out.

What Can Be Done?

If there is a process at work here then it should be possible to develop strategies to deal with it. Colin Tudge, who has reviewed the ways in which self-sacrifice can ‘make sense’ in evolutionary terms [8], comments:

As we draw together the various threads of evolutionary psychology it becomes easy to see how young men in particular want both to display their bravery, and are deeply offended by injustice, and on both counts may risk their own lives even to the point of certain death. When these people are on our side we call them heroes and martyrs; when they are not, we label them terrorists.
Once we perceive that even such extreme behaviour is in principle comprehensible, and that it is very probably rooted in the deep, human, evolved sense of justice and injustice, and perpetrated by young people who feel done down and have a yen for martyrdom, then we at least have the basis for sensible and perhaps effective strategy.

Nor is this far from the utterly peaceful actions of the Quakers and others who put their safety, liberty or lives in danger for a cause they believe in – such as the peace campaigners who have been killed in the front line of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

No doubt everyone remembers where they were when they first became aware of the awful New York aircraft attacks on September 11 2001. A friend told me about it, on the ‘phone. Had I heard that people had flown aircraft into skyscrapers in New York? My immediate reaction was that it wasn’t a surprise. If a super-power launched cruise missiles against its enemies with apparent impunity then sooner or later some enemy would find a way to get back at it [9].

At the time we were running a campaign called Families Against Bush, rewarding companies which opposed the Bush stance on Kyoto and boycotting those who supported it. That stopped the same day because it would clearly become impossible, in the aftermath of tragedy, to run any criticism of Bush which would not be taken as anti-American and, even by perverse extension, pro-terrorist. We suspended the website with a message declaring our sympathy and solidarity with the people of America.

One of the big differences between campaigns in the sense which I usually write about and the campaigns waged for and against ‘terrorism’ (ie forms of war) is that campaigners usually seek to persuade others in the country where their targets lie. That is they hope to spur politics not to over-ride it.

In the case of Sri Lanka or Northern Ireland terrorism has arisen over the geographic sovereignty of the country. In the case of 9/11 and the bombers in New York there was no attempt to engender the sympathy or support of the US population. If there was anything it was indirectly a bargaining strategy, or simply, a moment of symmetry in the asymmetrical struggle between the US and an opponent. A moment when Osama Bin Laden could act as if he could bomb the opposition into submission, however unlikely it was that such a long term strategy could succeed, hoping perhaps to inspire others [10].

So what useful sense can be made of this? I do not claim to be an expert on terrorism or foreign policy but in terms of support for activism in pursuit of a cause – irrespective of whether we see it as right or wrong - it seems to me there are three important sets of people here.

First there are the operational activist ‘terrorists’. These people are committed. Detection, policing, containment, the law, and force can be used against them by governments and in some cases, they ‘cross over’ to become seen by former opponents or victims as legitimate politicians, even world statesmen. There are examples from South Africa, Israel, Ireland and elsewhere. A strategy focused on them is however, simply a form of warfare in which the conventional faces the unconventional. The Van Riper case illustrates where that alone may lead.

Second, there are the committed supporters: the system without which the fighters cannot undertake violence, be they bombers, suicide bombers or whatever. As Bond points out, there is no single formula or distinctive apparatus to search for but there is always some form of organisation. Yet these people
too are already aligned with both the means and the ends. So long as current circumstances prevail, their minds are made up. Dismantling their structures and harassing them may degrade their capability and reduce a threat but it just as likely to cause an ‘arms race’ in which the organisation reconfigures. Moreover, if such action is pursued in ways that are seen as unjust – infringing legitimate rights for example – that may also act as a recruiting agent. [11]

Third and most important, there are those who sympathise with the ‘struggle’ but who are not aligned to the means. Perhaps they see no other way. Perhaps they do not agree with everything the terrorists are doing but they share a common enemy, maybe feeling that they too are suffering a massive injustice from the same source. It is here that any ‘war on terror’ or ‘struggle against violent extremism’ has to work if it is to succeed. Begin to deal with the problems that these people perceive – so that they have other forms of agency for instance - and you begin to stem the problem at source.

This analysis may not be very original but is it acted upon? Tony Blair was right to say that it is important to provide hope for the future through a political process but what are his and the American governments doing to see that this happens? Are they applying the same knowledge of communications and politics to this that they would apply to their own populations? Or are they treating ‘others’ as shallow cardboard figures?

The global PR agency Burson-Marsteller is fond of its hallmark quip “perception is reality”. The relevant issues are not those which Bush, Blair or even the BBC and CNN perceive but those perceived by people who – openly or secretly – sympathise to any extent with those resorting to terrorism. This is territory which our political leaders studiously avoid. That would be “negotiating with the terrorists” they say. No it wouldn’t – not if you avoid both the activists and their supporters. I’m not advocating a strategy based on trying to negotiate with terrorist organisations but one of splitting away those who sympathise with but do not actively support them.

As much as restricting public debate or looking into new ways to track cell phones, or installing biorecognition systems to track humans, or training pets to inform on their owners, those who want to ‘fight terror’ should be listening to those of their critics who in any way sympathise with the supporters and activists of terrorism. Then they need to find strategies to deal with the issues by political means. In policing terms it is the equivalent of having the support of the community – or more precisely, the gaining the political legitimacy which the police need to operate. Otherwise it is as if we are trying to prevent terrorism by creating a police state.

The ‘terrorism’ is international, global and is unconstrained by national boundaries. Carl von Clausewitz is often said to have stated that "business is war by other means" [12]. If America aspires to global dominance with over 700 military bases in more than 130 countries (that’s most of them) and wants its version of ‘free market’ capitalism to operate as if in a single global market and if it has to achieve that by force, that ‘police state’ would need to be global. This rather fails the level three campaign test. Against unconventional ‘terrorist’ warfare, America (and its allies) can never render themselves secure just by force of arms across the whole world.

So here there is a major communications problem because dealing with the sympathising critics – peeling away the opposition until it no longer helps feed support for activist terrorism - can only be done by communications.
Through framing the problem as one of good-versus-evil or total-legitimacy versus total-illegitimacy, Bush and Blair are positioned far away from where they can have any credibility in dealing with that silent majority of critics who have something in common with the terrorists -- those who don't yet share their means but who have some sympathy with the ends, or at least a common opponent.

Of course this is not an insuperable problem if you really want to resolve it. It doesn't mean accepting the rhetoric or demands of terrorist organisations, any more than the brand manager of Uncle Ben's Rice would consider reformulating his product or brand strategy by simply taking literally a comment from a customer who preferred a rival variety -- or who forswore rice altogether. And we are dealing with more complex things than selling rice but that is no reason to behave as if we are dealing with something even simpler.

What makes the problem worse is that Bush, Blair et al need to open effective dialogues with a largely silent majority, not simply with those critics or opponents who are speaking out. This requires what is in effect a campaign, not spin or propaganda.

At the end of an illuminating article [13] about the life story of the suicide pilot Mohamed Atta 'turned from idealist to terrorist', English clergyman's son Jonathan Raban wrote of the 'American Taliban' John Walker:

As well as prosecuting Walker for conspiring to kill Americans, the US authorities might also usefully install him in a university somewhere and turn him into a research project. Psychologists, theologians, political scientists and cultural historians could then sit at his feet and draw him out on the subject of why the call to jihad answers so resonantly the yearnings of clever, unhappy, well-heeled young men, from Mill Valley and Luton as well as from Cairo and Jidda. What he says might be more alarming than anything to be found in the caves of Tora Bora, and a lot more difficult to defeat.

That was in 2002.

'Terrorism' will not be confined to a struggle between any two religions or cultures or peoples so 'the answer' won't be found simply by delving into the current conflict between 'Al Qaeda and its opponents but this may be the unavoidable starting point. If politicians can create the situation where the majority of their greatest critics believe politics and campaigns can truly deal with the issues which anger them most, then they would be well on the way to eliminating 'terrorism', just as the European Union has so far helped avoid war in Europe. Their task is primarily one of communication and persuasion.

Of course the strongest communication is 'doing' (see page 9, How To Win Campaigns). Nancy Snow has noted: 'What the United States does in the world, in practice and policy, will continue to speak louder than any words'.

At any event, business as usual is probably not an option. Bush and Blair need to show more sign that they are thinking seriously about what may really work, rather than what would be expedient if it did work.

Politicians are used to regarding campaigns as the side-shows of public life, not doing serious stuff like running wars or economies. Now though if Bush, Blair et al are to succeed, they need to run the Mother Of All Campaigns. They, and in many ways all of us citizens, face an unconventional war in which the enemy is not interested in negotiation of the sort that armies and governments are designed to deal
with. In this respect they will need to use the less direct, less formal channels of communication, even outside their direct control, and to persuade those inclined to sympathise with the opposition - not Middle England or the viewers of Fox News. As Napoleon said, ‘There are but two powers in the world, the sword and the mind. In the long run the sword is always beaten by the mind’.

‘America stood out as an object for admiration, envy and blame. This created a kind of cultural asymmetry. To us, Afghanistan seemed very far away. To members of al Qaeda, America seemed very close. In a sense, they were more globalized than we were’. The 9/11 Commission Report, p 340

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Making The Invisible Visible - visit www.savethehighseas.org

A long running problem with ‘marine’ and especially ‘over-fishing’ campaigns is that the sea looks fine even while it’s empty (of life). Most people, especially in developed countries, look at an unbroken calm blue sea with an empty sandy beach and think how lovely it looks. They don’t stop to ask where are the seals, whales, dolphins and shoals of fish which should be breaking the surface, or wonder why there’s so little sea life stranded on the tideline. We’re used to seas that have been trawled into the submarine equivalent of a ploughed field and are mostly empty.

When campaigns depict 'the problem' they often show a bulging trawl net full of fish (too much fishing) or a similar net (or even the same one) to say 'sustainable fishing'. These campaigns suffer a failure of visual language. A much better approach is to show the direct impacts of destructive industrial fishing systems but to do that you need to get underwater. Campaigns which don't invest in the logistics needed to do this are unlikely to have the visual material needed to convince anyone, and the resources they then spend on lobbying etc are largely wasted.

One project which gets part of the way there - with before and after trawling photos - is the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition. This has just launched a new web campaign to halt high seas bottom trawling, one of the world’s most destructive fishing practices. Bottom trawling, the coalition points out, is wiping out cold water coral reefs which were already more than 2,000 years old at the time that the pyramids were built in ancient Egypt. The coalition says “We think we have a real chance of getting the UN to do something about it, and we only have a few weeks left to get the Europeans on side (European countries are responsible for most of the fishing). Hence this web action. We're asking people to visit http://www.savethehighseas.org where you can send an e-card to the people who will make the decision. You can either design a deep sea creature yourself (which is fun, especially for kids) and/or send a ready made card.” Have a look.

[9] For example on 20 August 1998 US Navy warships in the Red Sea launched more than a dozen Tomahawk cruise missiles at the al-Shifa Pharmaceutical Factory in Khartoum, Sudan. US officials said the facility was involved in production of a precursor for VX nerve agent. Subsequent reports indicated that the facility ‘was probably not involved in CW production’ but seemed to be making medicines. At this time the US had also launched 100s of cruise missile and similar (eg B1) attacks against Iraq, outraging many aspects of Arab and some other opinion. More widely it had withdrawn from various multilateral agreements and derided the UN. Personally this didn’t lead me to sympathise with terrorism but I could see how for many, with less opportunity to find ways to try and influence events, this and similar factors could.


[12] in fact he said "Rather than comparing [war] to art we could more accurately compare it to commerce, which is also a conflict of human interests and activities; and it is still closer to politics, which in turn may be considered as a kind of commerce on a larger scale." On War, Book I, Ch. 3]


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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 16, 09 September 2005

What does Katrina mean for campaigns ?

Katrina’s devastating impact on New Orleans will have affected campaigning on climate but how ? Obviously it will have sensitised media and publics to the possibilities of catastrophic floods. In that respect it will give any forecast of a greater frequency or intensity of weather events - especially "hurricanes" - some more bite. What else though will it do, and what should campaigners be thinking or doing ?

The media have not yet reached the critical point where tv crews are pulled out of the disaster area, and the story needs to be ‘wrapped’. With an oil spill the classic is that the visible pollution clears - the chosen media-moment being when the sun shines the sea looks blue again. The last and often lasting impression is that the problem is solved, and this is often the cue for those who want to play down the threat of oil pollution to claim exaggeration and try and exploit any loose ends or hostages to fortune which arose during the debate while the disaster was in its early stages. This phenomenon is one reason why groups who spend a lot of time ‘problem-driving’, are wise to be cautious and stay out of the frame when a severe problem arises through an ‘accident’ or ‘Act of God’.
Right now the media story is still unfolding. With so many angry and dismayed people affected, the human interest story may take it around the United States, and abroad. But gradually it will become more diffuse, especially if the refugees are successfully dispersed and found more 'normal' lives. Equally, it may go, with or without the refugees, to Washington, and become a Battle of Inquiries - the struggle to write a version of history, between Bush and political opponents.

Disasters are not often good opportunities to make policy arguments. A car crash on a highway is not a good moment to raise transport policy issues. Attention does not necessarily spell opportunity. A key part of the media scandal factor (see p 136 in *How To Win Campaigns*) is immoral profit. If someone profited - and that can include cutting corners on necessary investments, then the scandal is increased and after the body count finishes that can become the focus. Another component by which the story gets 'legs' is if something could have been done, which wasn't done. A tragedy becomes a scandal because it was avoidable.

This is why any campaign group which appears to be exploiting the media opportunity created by a disaster can itself become a focus of anger in the aftermath. On the other hand, affected parties have the moral media licence to make all sorts of claims and attributions, because they deserve our sympathy. (See page 140 *How To Win Campaigns*). This partly extends to 'independent' pundits - and in the Katrina case, at least one American politics professor has several times appeared on a variety of tv channels to link Katrina to global warming, whereas campaigners have not.

In the immediate aftermath (which in this case is still going on at the time of writing), campaigners may decide to keep quiet and let the event develop its own meaning and resonances. If they do decide to try and speak out, which can become very hard to avoid if the media start seeking their views, then there are a number of points worth considering:

- if there's an attribution issue (in this case, was it something to do with climate change?) it's best to stick to one unassailable - or at least the strongest - link of evidence and avoid mentioning anything weaker or more disputed. Climate science suggests that strength rather than frequency of hurricanes will be increased by warming for example. Just keep repeating that point. Then any elaboration of the conversation is likely to draw in other points in support - start narrow and on firm ground so that dialogue enlarges the point rather than triggering a debate in which your point seems to be eroded.

- ask questions, seek answers. This is very hard to rebut and aligns the campaigners with the media because it's what the media are partly there to do themselves. And it helps focus responsibility on those with power. If successful, it creates opportunities for later enquiry in a context where more complex arguments can be aired.

- be seen to help - if you really can help - preferably visually. But don't make a big issue about it. Let it be discovered. You have to mean it - the people you meet on the ground are your real reward. Any media it creates has to be a secondary benefit.

- remember that your finely divided policy world is not like the public conversation triggered by a disaster like Katrina. The US Administration didn't care for the environment and allowed protective wetlands to be destroyed. Few doubt that people died as a result. Most may conclude that more care for the environment is what should now happen. That may do as much for an issue such as climate as trying to make the more specific link which is harder to understand.
- lasty, if there are things that society is thinking but aren't being said, it may be a rare occasion where simply making a statement is the right thing to do. This is where banner hanging on national monuments or advertisements etc can come into its own. Speak directly not through the media. It is vital though that it gives a voice to a common feeling. Shrill statements from the margins just remind people that a marginal concern is marginal.

Finally, there's the big question of the real significance of the event. Posted at the website www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html is a section from How To Win Campaigns in which I use the analogy of weather scales for events. Wind waves are short term squalls, arising and sustained only by political controversy. Currents are social or other changes so huge and smooth that we hardly notice them, and usually we cannot change them with campaigns, though they may cause campaigns to exist (or cease). Climate scale change is even bigger - the end of the Cold War, industrialisation and post-industrial society for example, or the questioning of global free-market capitalism [1]. Campaigns may use these currents - shoving something into them for instance, may make people realise they are there.

Katrina is almost certainly an example of something else - a social storm wave. A big mental, social, maybe economic, certainly political ripple, caused by a signal event. Martin Luther King's speech, Earth Day 1970, the Antarctica World Park, the Brent Spar campaign - such events caused widespread change far beyond their immediate meaning or significance. Katrina could change things in many dimensions. Campaigners need to be looking at how it has changed contexts (an immediately obvious one is that at least for the moment, the grain of the US and international media is unsympathetic to the Bush administration and almost all its stands for). New approaches rather than more of the old campaigns may be the best way forward in a new context.

[1] Well beyond the head-on clashes over 'global capitalism' around the G8 etc there is a gradual but growing swell of economic and political literature actively questioning conventional political use of economics. See for example Happiness: Lessons From A New Science by Richard Layard (Allen Lane, 2005) and The Impact of Inequality by Richard Wilkinson, (Routledge 2005).
Why Won’t They Do What You Want? An Insight From Organic Food

This newsletter shares some research we did for the UK Soil Association, a group concerned to promote organic farming. Although the question discussed here is about food, the principle may apply to many other campaign problems.

Among other things, the nationally representative survey asked who bought organic food. Here are the topline results for that question:

- I always buy organic food 1%
- I regularly buy organic food 11%
- I sometimes buy organic food 49%
- I never buy organic food 37%
- Don’t know 1%

For those in the food and farming business these bald figures are probably unsurprising. The numbers of people buying organic food in the UK have increased steadily, with sales growing at about 10% a year.

Most of the food (representing around 1% of that consumed in the UK) is however bought by relatively few people. In 2001 data from Taylor Nelson Sofres (TNS) showed that 75% of UK households made at least one organic purchase in the previous year, the average purchase frequency was once per month and 7% of buyers account for 61% of money spent on organic food. Our 2005 survey looks rather similar.

Say like the Soil Association you wanted to increase the uptake of organic food. All campaigns will want to reinforce or change a behaviour. In this case a great deal of attention has focussed on buyers of organic food. But what about those who aren’t buying?

Rather than base campaign ideas on what ‘people’ are or aren’t doing, it’s more useful to know which types of people. If we can sort them out, or as marketers say ‘segment’ them according to motivation, then we’re also looking directly at why they do or don’t do something.

Our survey segmented people into value groups, defined by their main psychological drivers or needs [4]. Meeting these needs frames their behaviour. By understanding these needs campaigners can help influence behaviours. This is a more robust ‘segmentation’ than for example socio-economic (wealth) based systems because in that case we’d have to guess about motivation based on how much money people had.

The three main Motivational Groups [5] revealed by this research are

- Settlers who currently make up 21% of the UK population
- Prospectors, currently making up 44% of the population
- Pioneers, making up 35% of the population

By comparing the question results to these proportions we can see where a particular motivational group is over or under associated with any particular response. (Broadly the settlers are traditionalist, conservative and cautious, seeking security, belonging and identity. This is where we all start in life.

Some then become prospectors, seeking success, self-esteem and esteem of others. Lastly some move on to meet new needs, becoming pioneers. The pioneers start things and try things out, and the other
groups follow in their different ways. For more detail visit www.cultdyn.co.uk. Pioneers = inner directed; prospectors = esteem driven, settlers = security driven).

Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics says:

"The most obvious people to study are those who already know and approve of one's offerings, the current buyers. That said, organisations can be blinded by the obvious and, as a result, can miss opportunities to develop new strategies to expand their influence. So it is a useful exercise to occasionally turn things upside-down. So ...Who Never Buys Organic Food? 37% of respondents said that they never buy organic food. This is quite a large proportion of the population given the nature of the product – food, a necessity.

Pioneers comprise 35% of the population, but only 26% of those who never buy organic foods. If the % agreeing with this response is divided by the % of the Group within the culture we get an index of 74. So fewer pioneers than would be expected by chance ‘never’ buy organic. They are in fact the least likely of the three Motivational Groups never to buy.

Prospectors - the largest Motivational Group in Britain at 44% - make up about 47% of those who never buy organic food, giving them an index of 105, about average. Settlers make up about one in five of the British population, but make up over one in four of those never buying. As a result, they index quite highly at 131.

These raw and basic figures give analysts and planners a quite robust picture of the dynamics within each section of the population, making it possible to begin to identify the different reasons why people may or may not choose to buy organic food. (It is possible to go much further and break down the population into 12 ‘value modes’, four in each of the three main motivational groups).

So here's a possible issue. Campaign planners and strategists may pick a behaviour they want to alter – for example, persuading non-buyers to buy – but may choose a strategy that only works for those that already buy.

This sounds obviously wrong when put this way but it’s a natural thing to do – repeat what works – if you don’t have the research on your audiences to understand the diversity within them. Moreover, it’s an easy mistake to make if you have no research but are a cause based group run by people who believe in the cause. Driven by enthusiasm and conviction, such campaigns may attract people like them. This may be enough to succeed – depending on the tactics, strategy and context. Or it may not. Without research that's a question dedded by pure luck. What is certain, is that if your strategy involves trying to change the behaviour of all people, you are unlikely to succeed by simply projecting onto all, what worked for a few self-starters.

Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics comments: "On organics, this profile is very similar to others on this issue that we have been collecting over the last 15 years. The only significant changes are in the total volume of people never buying organic food - it has steadily declined over the years".

"But” says Dade, the dynamic between the groups “is always the same: Pioneers are the ones most likely to try new offerings - and if the product (organic food in this instance) is up to their desired requirements, they will change their behaviours very quickly. It is likely that Pioneers in this ‘never buy’ sample have tried organic food at one time and found that it doesn't meet their requirements, whatever they may have been".
The esteem-driven Prospectors, says Dade, "are also quite likely to have tried organic food in some form or another over the last decade or so, and have found that the experience does not meet their needs". "However, it is quite possible that the Settlers in this survey have never tried organic food, preferring to stick to the tried and tested they have ‘always’ eaten".

Hence the reasons for not-buying organic food may well be very different for this group. How do you reach Settlers? For one thing, most under 15s are Settlers (though most of then don’t buy their own food – they have arguments with their parents instead !). So says Dade – "picture a 40-year old housewife with the same Settler values set as the 9-year-old. Now think Jamie’s School Dinners!" (the UK tv series aired earlier this year featuring celebrity chef – see below for additional analysis of Jamie’s campaign troubles as captured on tv).

"The strategy to persuade her to buy organic food for the first time", notes Pat Dade, "will need to be very different from the strategy designed to persuade Prospectors to try organic food again "

Things we might want to research:

- Why do the Settlers never buy organic food?
- Is it for a different reason than Prospectors? Or Pioneers?
- Can organic food ever attract these people?
- What are the keys to any communication about the purchase and consumption of organic food?
- Will they be different for the different Motivational Groups?

The key insight which this example gives to any campaign planner is that we really need to do research, preferably qualitative research. Even if it isn’t using value modes, any sort of segmentation is likely to help, so that you don’t fall into the trap of projecting ‘messages’ at people which are unsuitable for those people.

This finding also shows why it’s usually much more cost effective to try and devise campaigns which get big outcomes by influencing few people, than campaigns which can only work if they influence many (or in the extreme case, everyone). This is a far from trivial point as more and more campaign groups seem to be getting drawn into trying to influence the ‘behaviour of society’, often because governments are failing to lead or regulate. Such projects are likely to be extremely resource-heavy, and can only work if they use the techniques of mass marketing as well as alliance building, partnership working (etc).

Taking the situation where we have a campaign group which wants to work by campaigning, then the values work tells us that ‘upsetting the applecart’ is unlikely to be successful in reaching the settlers. At least they are unlikely to be attracted to an inner-directed pioneer type pitch aimed at symbols of authority (be that Tesco or Asda or the Government). They are likely to prefer family-oriented, homely local actions. In the food case for example, we might guess that they’d be attracted to the idea of food more like it used to be, more local, from known sources, with ‘organic’ in the small print.

In the case of the esteem-driven prospectors – a whopping 44% of the UK population and, latest studies suggest, 55% in the US and rising – it’s brands which may well be key. They don’t usually want to join a campaign for something new but to buy things that are successful, signs of success, what’s fashionable or desirable. Finding ways to devise campaigns to trigger or support (but rarely front) the emergence of successful brands, is key to mobilising behaviour change with these groups.
Campaign organisations accustomed to very public working can find this unpalatable. It depends partly on whether they have the research and marketing skills to craft such efforts, and partly whether they have the inclination. Business of course has no such qualms, and on the ‘organic’ front is already bet-hedging with investments in brands that may currently appeal mainly to pioneers but which are anticipating the major purchasing surge that takes place once the prospectors move into a market. Rita Clifton of Inter-Brand points out for example, that ‘alternative’ cosmetics brand Aveda (‘Caring For You And The Earth’ etc – www.aveda.com) is owned by mainstream Estee-Lauder, and the organic Seeds of Change range, popular with greenies, is owned by equally mainstream Mars (www.seedsofchange.co.uk).

Lastly, campaigners must consider what effect it will have on the people who are already ‘converted’, if they are seen to go after the hold-outs. A TV campaign for instance to pursue settler non-purchasers of organic food might look to the pioneers, who mostly buy already, as if a group such as the Soil association was becoming more ‘commercial’ and less of a ‘trusted source’. This speaks to the use of discrete channels which are closely tailored to specific audiences. On the other hand prospectors are more likely to see any such profile as a good thing, because it’s a sign of success (but not if it’s a controversy that you ‘lose’).

Coming up in future newsletters:

- what are the values of supporters of green groups?
- what do people think about more airports and air travel?

Additional Analysis Of Jamie’s School Dinners Campaign [6] – Campaign Strategy gains this insight from Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics ...

Viewers of the Channel 4 TV series watched week by week as Celebrity Chef Jamie Oliver struggled to turn around ‘school dinners’ (lunches) cooked for children at a Greenwich Primary School (SE London). His troubles made good TV – but why was it so tricky?

Using conventional research (eg segmented by age, sex and socio-economics) the 9 year old schoolboy rejecting the fresh food from the dinner lady in Jaime’s series – the maybe 40 year old woman also objecting to the food they have to make to Jamie’s recipes – would never be included in the same segmentation group ...but if Values are used as a segmentation it can be seen for the first time that they are both settlers and adverse to “new” or “different” ideas and behaviours. In other words resistance had nothing to do with “food” and everything to do with “changing behaviour”.

This is a key understanding when communications strategies are created to change the behaviour of Settlers, i.e. it is not a “food issue”, it is a “change issue”. (So for climate campaigners for example – read not climate but change – and so on, - ed.)

Jamie’s program was an absolute case study of firstly how to get it wrong when he defined his objective as a food issue and was shocked and frustrated at the rejection of his “good food” by the dinner ladies, theoretically the people most concerned with supplying “good food” to children. Once he apparently realised that it was a “change issue” (the Settler dinner ladies didn’t want to - or couldn’t - change) he had to change his development strategy and communicate in a very different way than he was used to in his kitchens filled with Prospector and Pioneer chefs looking to create the “best food possible” and wanting to constantly change their behaviours to achieve the standards they aspired to.
Once this was achieved, with a lot of soul searching and fascinating personal growth by Jamie (teaching women old enough to be his mother and as resistant to change as was possible with our society) he then faced the challenge of change resistance from people that he felt he "should" have a connection with, ie the students.

The second lesson he learned, and the viewers learned, is that the students and the dinner ladies were in effect the same people, i.e. Settlers. Jamie brought his very Pioneer world view, his value set, into their world and met with resistance that should have been expected, if he had understood values modes and values systems.

Decision makers that don't understand and "measure" the extent of the values of their targets are likely to run into the same resistance as Jamie.

Those that do understand will create programmes similar to those evolved by Jamie...when Settlers are the target the first objective of any project is to develop communications designed to change existing behaviour, rather than making "better" products. Without this focus the first thought of the Settler is to reject anything new, and by default, different. Making something familiar (not different) is the first rule in getting the Settlers to change their behaviour.

Splitting it into audiences:

The basic difference between what Jamie started to do and what he ended up doing was this:
He started with his needs, to provide good food, and never checking the psychological needs of his target audience.

What he ended up doing was to satisfy the needs of his target audience (for familiarity, safety, family and belongingness) which then lead to them changing their behaviour.

He had to learn how to communicate with the target audience; which turned out to be target audiences, before they would change their behaviours.

All his targets were Sustenance Driven, which is why he had such a hard time introducing something new!

Audience one:

The dinner lady went to work in his kitchens to see how good food was produced "in bulk" and to a timed finish...she then became a "champion" of the task and help spread the gospel according to Jamie. This is a classic Sustenance Driven strategy to enable quick adoption...win the approval of the "big dog" and the pack will follow!

Audience two:

The kids got to "play" with food and menus to make it familiar. Food became a fun thing to learn about, and trying something which they about was much easier than trying to "interest" them about some thing they weren't interested in. In the end the kids who still weren't trying the new food began to lose their sense of belonging and would become "late adopters" rather than lose their sense of safety in the group.
Audience three:

The families of the children. If the mother was expressing her caring needs (making the children happy) through supplying the children with what they wanted (sweets and TV advertised snacks) they would find it difficult to encourage them to try the "weird" food Jamie provided. By physically going into the homes of a few parents and showing them that their kids behaviour changed radically when they stopped feeding them sugar. The parents were gob-smacked as their kids behaviour changed within hours! No more carb driven bickering and tantrums! He was able to satisfy their need for "good kids" and then the "weird food" was seen as a "mothers little helper", i.e. something they knew about! The parents got what they needed, a lovely family, and Jamie and the kids got good food.

Audience Four:

The politicians. Their needs were also Sustenance Driven, they needed to be seen as Family-friendly via "it's education, education, education"; and delivering on this so they could guarantee their own safety and security (through having a job!) - Charles Clarke, probably for the first time ever - and since, was actually seen in a "friendly light".

[1] Campaign Strategy Ltd and Cultural Dynamics, for the Soil Association in the UK.
In February 2005 Campaign Strategy Ltd and Cultural Dynamics (CDSM Cultural Dynamics Strategy and Marketing) commissioned a nationally representative telephone survey of over 1000 adults, who were asked a number of questions about political identity and other issues. The political results and some on climate have already been reported in newsletters and are posted, with the full methodology, at this website. The interviewees, questioned by BRMB, were also asked ten questions about their lives which enable Cultural Dynamics to place them into 12 ‘Value Modes’ groups, within three broad psychological Motivational Groups.
Cultural Dynamics Strategy & Marketing (www.cultdyn.co.uk) advises organizations of all kinds on the implications of changing Cultural and Individual Values on policies, processes and procedures. Its methods are based on quantitative research that has been conducted since 1973, measuring the Values, Beliefs and Motivations of (primarily) the UK population. For more information contact: Pat Dade - Cultural Dynamics - +44 (0)7742 333 372 Thegurupati@aol.com.
[4] It also segmented them by age, sex, education, location, socio economic and lifestyle groups - see data set
[5] The dynamics of these groups are described at the website www.campaignstrategy

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Air Travel and Climate Change

Many groups are currently considering campaigns – or more campaigning – about climate change and air travel. In November, an important meeting of the ‘Climate Convention’ (MOP1 – Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol - see contribution by Alex Garcia below) may provide the first major international test of political will on this issue. The European Commission has recently said that airlines will be included in proposals for the EU’s carbon emission trading scheme. [1]

Air transport is currently contributing around 3.5% to total human caused global warming but is forecast by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) to rise to as much as 15% by 2050. In the UK air travel emissions are due to increase 350% by 2030 [2]. So far aviation has been counted out of calculations on climate. The Tyndall Centre [3] for Climate Change Research has recently said that to meet its targets "If the UK government does not curb aviation growth, all other sectors of the economy will eventually be forced to become carbon neutral”

What’s the possibility of organising campaigns to get something effective done about air travel?

Here, continuing the series reporting on surveys conducted by Cultural Dynamics and Campaign Strategy Ltd (see newsletters 8, 12, 17), this newsletter now draws on research on UK views about airports and air travel, conducted for Greenpeace [4].

We asked:

_How much do you think that pollution from aircraft contributes to climate change?_

The answers from 1000 representative adults were:

- Very much: 17%
- Quite a lot: 34%
- Somewhat: 27%
- Not very much: 15%
- Not at all: 3%

At first sight this is quite bad news for the air travel industry (but see below). Only 18% of people didn’t think that it was a significant source of climate-causing pollution. It also suggests that environment groups could be wasting their time if they launch information campaigns to tell people this, as they already think it.
Of course this is simply awareness of the issue but that is a first step, if you use the model awareness > alignment > engagement > action. See pages 6 – 9 from How To Win Campaigns and “2 basic guidelines: Right components... right order” at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/cr12_4.html.

We asked about specifics and inserted Greenpeace into the equation

Greenpeace believes that pollution from aircraft is a serious contributor to climate change. Given that, which of the following do you agree with?

- Air travel is now too cheap: 33%
- There should be a tax on fuel for air travel: 52%
- Air travel should be rationed by government: 20%
- No more airports should be built: 44%
- We should limit our air travel voluntarily: 61%
- There should be a pollution warning on air tickets: 61%
- Don’t know: 2%
- None of these: 10%

This should really worry air lobbyists. (Unless, as discussed in previous newsletters, some companies might actually benefit from this). It gives support to the many ideas being floated for surcharges or taxes or some sort of controls on air travel.

Of course there’s a huge difference between saying and doing. It’s often said that if 80% or more say they care about something in a survey, and 50% say they’d do something about it, only 10% will really act. But the balance is clear – a majority favour extra tax on air travel, and that’s without any large scale campaigns (air fuel for example is currently one fifth the cost of fuel for cars in the UK, due to a lack of tax). And a tax is not like a voluntary action where free-riders can exploit your best efforts – the government can make sure it is equitable and affects us all.

Perhaps most significant is the implied shift in position of air travel from being simply a ticket to enjoyment, to a problem, or a necessary evil, or a luxury with regrettable downsides (over 60% supporting a warning on air tickets).

For the UK Government, which is committed to a major expansion of air travel, the finding that 41% believe no more airports should be built could be seen as a potential problem: which is probably why they are expanding existing airports.

These results though, do seem to give the lie to the old political assumption that air travel is consumer holy cow which can’t be touched.

We then asked the same things but added ‘independent climate scientists’:

*Many independent scientists also believe that pollution from aircraft is a serious contributor to climate change. Given that, which of the following do you agree with?*

- Air travel is now too cheap: 32%
- There should be a tax on fuel for air travel: 52%
- Air travel should be rationed by government: 21%
No more airports should be built 41%
We should limit our air travel voluntarily 59%
There should be a pollution warning on air tickets 61%
Don’t know 2%
None of these 12%

The results are more or less identical. The endorsement Greenpeace, often assumed by politicians, media and researchers to be a divisive and non-credible messenger, produced the same result as the endorsement of ‘independent scientists’. This suggests that, at least at present, a group like Greenpeace wouldn't have to worry about gaining third party endorsement for any campaign about the climate impacts of air travel.

Some more analysis

As well as segmenting the respondents by age, sex, education, socio-economic group (see data posted at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/gp_airtravel_data.pdf) we also asked the ten questions which enable them to be subdivided into ‘value modes’, according to their psychological needs or drivers.

Meeting these needs frames behaviours. By understanding these needs campaigners can help influence behaviours. This is a more robust ‘segmentation’ than for example socio-economic (wealth) based systems because in that case we'd have to guess about motivation based on how much money people had. The three main Motivational Groups revealed by this research are

- Settlers who currently make up 21% of the UK population
- Prospectors, currently making up 44% of the population
- Pioneers, making up 35% of the population

By comparing the question results to these proportions we can see where a particular motivational group is over or under associated with any particular response. (Broadly the settlers are traditionalist, conservative and cautious, seeking security, belonging and identity. This is where we all start in life. Some then become prospectors, seeking success, self-esteem and esteem of others. Lastly some move on to meet new needs, becoming pioneers. The pioneers start things and try things out, and the other groups follow in their different ways. For more detail visit www.cultdyn.co.uk and take a look at previous newsletters).

Analyst Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics provides this commentary:

How much do you think that pollution from aircraft contributes to climate change?

Out of six possible responses, 34% of all respondents chose the second most ‘serious’ response – ‘quite a lot’. This was the most favoured answer.
Less than 8% of respondents replied ‘Not at all’ or ‘Don’t know’.
This pattern suggests this is a ‘mature’ area of questioning; people are aware of the issue and have a considered opinion.

Yet is this really the case? The ‘leading edge’ Pioneers, 35% of the population and those people most likely begin new trends in thinking, make up only about 31% of this group of respondents. By dividing
these two figures, an index of 90 emerges. The Pioneers are ‘below average’ in thinking that aircraft are a major pollution source.

Prospectors are the largest group, at 44% of the British population, and comprise about 45% of the ‘quite a lot’ respondents, indexing at 103 – almost average or what would be expected by chance.

Settlers are a smaller group, 21% of the British population, and usually the last group to pick up on leading edge thinking. They account for 23% of the ‘quite a lot’ respondents, indexing at 109.

This demonstrates that the leading edge of society is less likely to support the response than the ‘anchors’ of society. This immediately indicates that this response option, despite its popularity, is not reflective of leading edge thinking.

If campaigners attempted to link aircraft pollution and climate change in a ‘quite a lot’ manner – for example, by using strong linkages between cause and effect – it is very possible that it may find more agreement within Settlers than within Pioneers.

Some campaign groups have traditionally been perceived as thought leaders and an innovative organisations. Such groups attract leading edge thinkers as both passive supporters and activist members. This is both a strength and a weakness when attempting to influence personal, and global, behaviour change. This ‘quite a lot’ response set indicates that leading edge thinkers have a different orientation. This needs to be explored and understood before setting activities in motion if any group wants to maintain its reputation. Conversely a campaign highlighting this cause and effect is quite likely to attract Settlers to a greater extent than Pioneers, and Prospectors.

Questions to think about:

- Why are Settlers more predisposed to this response than Pioneers?
- Should activist groups keep focusing on the leading edge?
- Should they use the above insight to pick up more Settlers?
- Could Settlers be a new generation of activists?
- What type of communications would appeal to Settlers? Prospectors? Pioneers?

**Is airline travel just too cheap?**

Various reasons can be put forward to explain why 50% of the population believes that aircraft pollution and climate change are linked either ‘very much’ or ‘quite a lot’ - yet numbers of aircraft, flights and airports continue to expand, often financed by taxpayer subsidies and corporate tax breaks.

33% of respondents agreed that ‘air travel is now too cheap’.

Who are these people?

43% of them are Pioneers. This figure is significantly above their 35% of the population. They index at 124.

42% of them are Prospectors, giving them a slightly lower than index of 95. They are therefore about average.
Settlers - the most prudent with their money, the most likely to holiday less and the most likely to holiday in the UK - make up only 15% of these respondents, indexing at a significantly low 72. They make up 21% of the population.

An obvious campaigning issue is the linking of air travel, climate change and ‘irresponsible’ low prices by the airline companies. In a ‘polluter pays’ scenario, the airlines are levied a tax to pay for damage to climate. This would almost certainly lead to higher ticket prices. It could be argued from this data that the group most likely to agree that aircraft pollution and climate change are linked ‘quite a lot’ – Settlers - are the least likely to think it is the fault of ‘cheap flight policies’ by the airlines.

Attacking the airlines and their policies may therefore be counterproductive in attracting support from these people.

Pioneers are the group most likely to take long haul holidays and are over-represented among business travellers. This makes them the most experienced of airline travellers. And they are the ones most likely to agree that the fares are ‘too cheap’. An interesting insight to help build up a picture of a future campaign and strategy? At the other end of the response set are Settlers, who have the least experience of airlines and foreign air travel, and who do not subscribe to the ‘too cheap fares’ option.

This question – which at first appears to be a straight ‘economics’ based question - reveals that it is really an issue of ‘values’.

- Could a campaign to increase ticket prices, in partnership with the airlines, or even a single national carrier, have a measurable effect on climate change?
- Would it have a measurable effect on ‘positive customer perception’ of the airline?
- Would it have a measurable effect on ‘positive customer perception’ of the campaign organisation involved ?
- Which group is most likely to change their behaviour based on higher priced air travel tickets?
- Would the changed behaviour cause more climate change damage than aircraft pollution?

Should the government just go ahead and raise the tax on aircraft fuel?

This is an obvious way to kill two birds with one stone: raise taxes for the government for its expenditures and prevent the cheap flight policies of airlines from further adding to climate change. This is method that most, but not all, politicians seem to like at the moment and the EU has pressed for.

Sounds like a vote winner! Or does it? Let’s look at the data.

44% of respondents agree with the statement ‘there should be a tax on fuel for air travel’

40% of these respondents are Pioneers – indexing at 116. They appear to be more willing to accept a price premium than the other groups. No votes lost here.

40% of those agreeing with the statement are Prospectors. This is less than the 44% in the general population, so giving them an index of 91. In many product group categories these are the people most likely to pay price premiums. Is climate change a ‘product’ not worth paying for?
The remaining 20% is made up of Settlers, who index at 91, in line with Prospectors but for different reasons.

Perhaps a campaign organisation could mount a campaign, with the airlines and the government, that at once raised the tax base among those least price sensitive and the biggest users of airlines; and provide the airlines with a useful and brand productive exercise to raise prices (the airlines are willing to pay up for clean air). This could still end up being seen as just ‘another way to sting the taxpayer/the little guy while the fat cat gets away with it again’.

Pioneers are those people most likely to approve of any ‘user pays’ approach to activities that ‘cause’ climate change. They realise that not all activities can be changed overnight, especially if decision makers have boards and shareholders to answer to. They also realise that the dangers of climate change have been headline news for over a decade and that any organisation or person who won’t voluntarily change their behaviour should be made to compulsory pay for their behaviour. Settlers are not as happy with this approach and are quite likely to advance arguments that they get little enjoyment from life and that their holiday options are being circumscribed by greedy tax-mad chancellors and airline shareholders.

- Can campaigners forge some relationships between interested players in this market?
- Do they want to?
- Who would the target be?
- What would the best core proposition to Settlers? Pioneers? Prospectors?

Conclusions

We don’t know what if anything Greenpeace or other groups are planning to do about campaigns on air travel in future. Right now several UK groups support a pledge campaign against airport expansion (http://www.airportpledge.org.uk/sign.php).

With growing concern about climate change, air travel is a classic breaking issue. Of course there are already niche campaigns about air travel, and some campaign groups – long used to jumping onto planes to attend ‘important meetings’ at the drop of a hat – are quietly rethinking their practices.

Greenpeace UK for example says: “as evidence of the impact of flying on the climate has mounted, we have been tightening rules about when and where we fly. First we banned any flights within the UK mainland or to Brussels or Paris. Then we extended this to Amsterdam, where our international headquarters are.” [5]
The RSPB says: “We strongly encourage our staff to take the train for business travel and discourage flying or driving, in order to reduce carbon emissions. Our own vehicles are selected for their low carbon dioxide emissions. We have installed videoconferencing and telephone conferencing facilities to avoid the need for staff to travel. “

So far a lot of behaviour change is ‘under the horizon’. I’ve almost stopped using air travel altogether, and have avoided taking some jobs which effectively required it. I know others who’ve done the same, and several friends who have taken to planning their holidays using the train – see for example the excellent website ‘the Man In seat Sixty-One’ at http://www.seat61.com/ for how to plan without planes.

With a growing number of carbon-counting initiatives, environment groups can expect to come under more pressure to clean up their own act. Expect to see initiatives aimed at stigmatising both high carbon lifestyles and air travel – hopefully better thought out than some of the campaigns that have been run against SUVs and car use. A technical fix seems a very long way off.

Chris Rose


(Thanks - we provided this data to the campaigners at Greenpeace, who have agreed to share it with you. We rather doubt that the airline industry would be so open with its own studies! Nothing in this article implies any view of Greenpeace).

Additional Analysis by Alex Garcia Wylie — The Unfolding Climate-Aviation Issue

Throughout the history of international civil aviation, the interaction of different commercial interests and divergent viewpoints of a wide range of stakeholders have ensured that the sector's international greenhouse gas emissions are not controlled by any international body. If this status quo is not shaken in the months to come it is possible that aviation will continue to be sole free rider of our skies for years to come.

For over a century the aviation industry has enjoyed the tax exemptions on its enormous kerosene consumption. Now, facing growing pressure over climate change, the aviation industry is divided on the issue. Some credit for this must go to NGOs such as Aviation and Environment Federation, the Climate Action Network, Transport and Environment Federation, FOE, Germanwatch and My Climate, for influencing important political milestones within the European Union:

- At the next Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in 2007, the EU will be presenting its much anticipated proposals on charges & taxes. This, together with parallel developments on the inclusion of aviation in the EU Emission Trading Scheme, may be an important step towards finally making the sector accountable for its GHGs.
- Media interest and pressure exerted by campaigners in the UK and elsewhere have raised the profile of the debate on aviation and climate change. This is probably due to
continue given that Tony Blair has made aviation and climate change a top issue for the UK EU Presidency. Parallel to this, Jacques Chirac has managed to catch the media’s attention – and the support of countries such as Belgium, Spain, Brazil and Germany - with proposals for a tax on airline tickets to help fund development.

- The EU Commission published the conclusions of its e-consultation at the beginning of the summer. An EU Commission communication on aviation & climate change is due shortly.

A significant question is whether the EU communication will reflect the Commission’s intentions to work on the issue at the UNFCCC level, and consequently ask the Environmental Council to consider what sort of Mandate the EU should have on this issue at the Eleventh Meeting of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP11/MOP1) in Montreal in November 2005.

Political and media attention will focus on CoP11/MoP1. It will be the first meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol since it came into force last February, and will see the start of discussions on the post-2012 climate regime (also known as "Kyoto II"). Considering that control of overall greenhouse gases from all sectors is what matters, many see the continued exclusion of aviation and maritime bunker fuels as unjustifiable. Nevertheless, it is still unclear whether aviation and maritime bunker fuels will make it onto the agenda.

Even if it has the political will to do so, the European Union will find it hard to lobby other parties to include the issue – and much will depend on what NGOs do in advance.

What are the obstacles that lie ahead?

A considerable amount of political consolidation has yet to be obtained at the European level of member states and institutions such as the Transport and Environment DGs, Environment and Transport ministries, etc. This situation has not been aided by the fact that, until recently, messages from transport and climate NGO on how to tackle increasing aviation emissions have been mixed. The role of developing nations – and especially China and India - is a complicating factor. Significant hurdles ahead in 2006 and 2007 could jeopardise any future progress ahead of "Kyoto II". These include the Austrian and Finnish Presidencies, a workshop of SBSTA a subsidiary body of the UNFCCC, and the ICAO Assembly in 2007.

What needs to happen at CoP11/MoP1?

The EU must be empowered to raise the issue of inclusion of aviation and maritime bunker fuels on the agenda for discussions on Kyoto II, with a reference to what has been and needs to be done in order to establish concrete emission reduction targets for the sector.

Editorial comment needs to focus attention on the economic inequity and damaging impacts caused by the exclusion of international aviation emissions. In particular, NGOs should seek to:

- Communicate their message with an overarching voice and a simple and morally compelling stories.
- Have a long term game plan
- Challenge a scenario in which the inclusion of bunker fuels will not be discussed until 2007, when it will be too late to talk about inclusion in Kyoto II.
- Challenge other arguments and issues (e.g. aviation and economic development link, role of developing countries) in order to bring about a social, political and institutional change.
Dear Reader – Can You Help?

If you find this Newsletter useful or interesting, can you help me build the readership by recommending it to a friend or colleague? If you can, I'd be grateful. People can sign up by visiting my website www.campaignstrategy.org

Also, if you've any feedback on what you'd like it to cover or include, what's good and what could be improved, please let me know. If you've got anything to contribute yourself, please send it along. One suggestion is running some sort of competition based on 'best campaigns' or 'campaigning ideas', or maybe a survey.

Similarly, if you've any feedback to give me on the website I'd really appreciate receiving it.

Many thanks and good luck with your work

Chris Rose
chris@campaignstrategy.org

Converting an Issue into a Campaign – The Case of WWF’s ‘Chemicals and Health’

It’s an almost golden rule of campaigning that you can’t campaign ‘on the issue’ – you need to select out one ‘red thread’, a critical line that runs through the issue and along which you can make change happen.

This newsletter is about how we tried to design one campaign so that it did not get snagged on parts of the ‘issue’ which would render it ineffective, and to breathe new life into a well worn subject.

For the past three years WWF UK has run a campaign about chemicals and health (http://www.wwf.org.uk/chemicals/). From its Brussels office, WWF has run a similar campaign ‘Detox’.
The political focus of both is the European Union’s proposed new chemical regulation system ‘REACH’ – registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemicals [1]. Negotiations over REACH have been long and bitter - they come to a head next month when the Regulation is due for its first reading on November 28th.

REACH is part of a classic environmental ‘issue’ – toxic chemicals. In 2001 WWF UK asked me to help devise a campaign that could make a difference to this ‘issue’. Like many other groups, WWF’s concerns were most focused on EDCs – endocrine disrupting chemicals – and persistent, toxic and bioaccumulative chemicals.

The fundamental problem facing WWF was how to create a campaign which could work, rather than simply falling back into the default mode of trying to publicise its ideas on how policies should be changed. (What Shellenberger and Noordhaus neatly termed ‘policy literalism’). REACH was on the horizon but WWF was not wedded to working on REACH, nor was it fixed on particular campaign routes or chemicals. Over 18 months we held a series of brainstorms and workshops and conducted some formative and qualitative research to develop what became the ‘Chemicals and Health Campaign’. Since then the campaign strategy has been revised and developed in the light of experience. What follows is my perspective on a few of the principal campaign design questions, which may be of interest to readers crafting campaigns of their own.

**Developing the CHC Campaign**

Amongst WWF’s starting points was a management decision to run some sort of campaign on ‘toxics’, with these goals

- By 2005, secure actions from at least 2 of the UK’s top companies to reduce exposure of wildlife and humans to 2 endocrine disrupting chemicals (BFRs, BPA, Vinclozolin, phthalates, nonylphenols)
- By 2005, the EU Chemicals Regulation clearly incorporates WWF-UK’s “Four Tests” of environmental safety (i.e. substitution, precaution, the right-to-know, and comparative assessment)

To start with the organisation planned a ‘live’ campaign of twelve months, though fortunately this was later revised to become a more open-ended commitment.

Like many campaign groups, WWF started with discussing the objective but it also wanted to be seen to campaign (in other words an organisational communications objective), and to increase its campaigning capacity (a resource objective). In my book *How To Win Campaigns* I list five possible starting points, connected as a ‘planning star’ (see extract titled “making a campaign concept” at www.campaignstrategy.org/bookindex.html)

- the objective – the difference you want to make
- communications needs or communications objectives – what you want to be seen as or doing
- social weather conditions – how the world is changing, how change is happening
- resources and assets (available or to be acquired for or through campaigning)
- allies and interests – power analysis of players in ‘the issue’

Each or any of these is a legitimate starting point for campaign development. As a cautious and more intellectual organisation than it might seem, and with a much better developed marketing capacity than a campaign capability, WWF, like other similar groups, tends to focus on the objective – and can get stuck trying to devise the ‘perfect’ campaign by refining the objective. This is typical of an organisation
with a stronger programme capacity than a campaign capacity – it discusses what it knows. But campaigns require doing rather than formulating arguments.

Options

Early on we discussed several possible routes to change. The obvious one was political – trying to influence regulation at a UK and EU level. Another was ‘unpolitics’: influencing markets via the interaction of business and consumers, either to deliver a specific result (eg a company drops chemical X), or to have a secondary impact on politics (business having a powerful influence over what politicians see as possible), or both. A third, which in the end was the chosen path, was to try and influence what was acceptable to the ‘public’: to create norms or expectations, which in turn would influence both business and politics. A great advantage of this approach is that it’s very hard to roll back, whereas the history of issues such as ‘toxics’ is littered with examples of campaigns won by NGOs in the public domain, only to see political gains undone or rolled back once industry lobbyists get to work in the corridors of governments and institutions such as the European Commission [2].

To begin with we spent some time looking at the possibility of running a consumer safety campaign focused on chemicals such as BPA (bisphenol A), which is found in the liners of many tin cans and transparent plastic bottles (eg mineral water, baby bottles).

A strength of this sort of campaign would be that it required very little translation for ‘the public’. It made industrial chemicals domestic, tangible, personal and immediate – as opposed for example to transport of substances to distant environments where it affected wildlife (eg polar bears in the Arctic). If for instance, a well known brand of baked beans became synonymous with a problem that affected human health, one might expect some rapid response from industry. We soon ran into a problem. In the available time, WWF seemed unlikely to gain enough knowledge of the businesses which might determine outcomes (allies and interests), to devise a campaign critical path that would produce results. Without good intelligence, such an approach easily comes unstuck. The ‘target’ might have too much to lose by reformulating a package or product, or simply be unable to do so, and we wouldn’t know. They may not be able to implement the proposed change even if they want to – or there could be many other hidden internal dynamics which could stymie change, which we were simply unaware of.

Chemical Industry Strategy

It was also soon agreed to try and avoid a campaign which played to the strengths of the chemicals industry. Obfuscation and prevarication has long been the industry’s favoured defence against change. Although there have been discussions in the industry about breakaway groups of ‘progressive’ companies who might embrace ‘green chemistry’, the default has been to draw the wagons into a circle when under attack. Many companies still rely on trade groups such as CEFIC, to make the case for them with organisations such as the EU, while the big players use their influence with national governments through direct contact with industry departments and others. The trade groups tend to defend the position of the ‘slowest ship in the convoy’ – the worst performers. Chemicals industry insiders bemoan this situation but very rarely if ever do any of them break ranks.

While it plays the employment card, and sometimes tries to convince the public that its products are harmless (usually a counter productive effort), its most successful gambit is normally to try and kick
issues into the long grass of ‘expert’ processes. It’s relatively easy for corporations to muddy the waters of scientific debate so that politicians see no clear case for action. Arm twisting or bribery are not needed; all they have to do is to spot an awkward piece of research, and then commission a swathe of similar studies, ‘objectively’ designed to produce doubt by exploring alternative explanations. As industry has deep pockets, this process can often buy decades of delay.

Governments collude in this by avoiding hard decisions and opting for the cheap and easy ploy of setting up research-based technical committees to examine the evidence and report back. If, in this context, NGOs launch science-based campaigns, the usual result is at best, a series of head-to-head debates between ‘their’ experts and ‘our’ experts, often conducted in terms of chemical-speak which the public cannot understand. Or else the debate can be reduced to a dispute over what types of risk we face and how we should respond to ‘risk’. The media typically see no end to such debates and sign them off with something like “this will run and run”.

Campaigns based around wish lists of dangerous chemicals tend to lead into such a cul de sac. Only when some external event (such as an industrial accident) creates the political appetite to ‘do something’, will much be achieved by just defining the objective in a very public way.

More Options

WWF also considered other possible frames for the campaign, such as the rights of the unborn child (on which there is a UN charter) but while ‘rights’ interest lawyers and some politicians, they are not something which Mr and Mrs Average thinks about on a day to day basis. Nor do they easily lead to defined action.

Appeals to sign up to charters (in this case the Copenhagen Charter) and conventions are similarly elite rather than populist, dull and the business of governments rather than voters.

Another well explored area considered and dropped was ‘right to know’. While it’s relatively easy to win support for this type of campaign, it’s hard to make it bite in terms of impact. It frequently leads to a discussion about labelling, and literally ends in a debate in very fine print. The obvious problem, also encapsulated in REA itself, is that one can have as many labels as you like and it may not make any difference to what gets used, and thus to what ends up in bodies, water, food or the living environment. Much the same goes for testing. Such a frame implies that the chemical is ‘ok if tested’, when it may be very not-ok.

A Discovery Story

To be easily communicable, a campaign needs to be visual and to present a story. The story of a campaign could be a physical journey, or a struggle to uncover something, and of course there are other forms of story. We decided to adopt the format search - discover - act. This is, if you like, a ‘frame’ (www.frameworksinstitute.org). Having searched or surveyed and discovered things, the natural question is: what is to be done as a result? In the WWF campaign, we aimed to search for chemicals in human bodies.
Finding something unpleasant or worrying in your body also invokes the ‘grossness factor’: whereas a list of chemicals in the environment is inherently dull and scientific, finding that you or your nearest and dearest are polluted, is altogether more visceral.

We set up a blood testing programme. This also meant that the victims could become the messengers. People, unlike polar-bears, can speak for themselves. Instead of a NGO making claims based on research reports about ‘populations’, we would have real people with their own views about how they felt about being forced to carry a burden of industrial chemicals. Rather than abstract notions of rights or concepts of ecosystem integrity, we’d have a flesh and blood campaign with human interest and ‘walking wounded’.

‘Toxics’ is a ‘mature’ issue with years of to and fro debate between industry, regulators and environmentalists. Slipping back into that old groove is unlikely to gain much public interest, not least because it’s hard for people to participate in an elite debate in which only those equipped with research lab’s can become primary owners of information. (This is also one reason why the campaign did not use the term ‘toxics’).

Once you are personally affected, the issue of what’s acceptable also takes on a different hue. Of course we are all affected but with no knowledge, this is the same as nobody being affected. So long as there was no evidence industry and politicians could rely on the subject remaining a diffuse concern with an esoteric debate. With effectively no government monitoring (where there is, it’s small samples and anonymized), pollution of humans is a victimless crime – the blood sampling surveys helped change that.

**Competing Frames**

As the lobbying over REACH built up, the chemicals industry tried to play on the idea of ‘workability’. If they succeeded in triggering this frame, nobody would argue that the regulation should be ‘unworkable’, so it sowed its own seed of success – because who other than the people actually making the stuff could say what was, or was not, ‘workable’?

The question raised by the blood sampling was very different. If these chemicals are getting into our bodies, then we need to know they are safe, beyond any doubt. Routinely used chemicals should be absolutely safe, to the same degree that natural substances we have been exposed to over millennia, are safe. Otherwise natural justice dictates that industrial chemicals should not be able to get into human bodies.

In the long term, beyond REACH, this will probably mean substitution and product redesign. Campaigns to achieve this will make much faster progress by dialogue with product manufacturers and designers, rather than debate with the chemicals industry, which is going to be the last party to agree. Under REACH product manufacturers point out that they face a huge task in tracing chemicals: Ford for example says vehicles contain 5,500 substances including polymers, and 10,000 if production chemicals are included. This is something which manufacturers have brought upon themselves. A household item might for example easily contain dozens of chemicals ‘outgassing’ into the air from several types of plastic – if it was instead made of substances such as wood, steel or glass, that might be eliminated. The whole design strategy for modern products needs to be rethought. But for now, the purpose of the
WWF exercise has been to help set a norm, an expectation that industrial chemicals should stay where they belong, or not be used.

Blood To Brussels

WWF started its campaign by blood testing its own staff on the principle don’t ask others to do what you won’t do yourselves. Then forming an alliance with the Women’s Institute [3], it extended the survey to include families, politicians and other well known figures, each wave of blood testing repeating the same story of contamination with a new twist. This generated repeated local, regional and national profile, and a diverse range of people to talk about their experiences.

The WI members then took their results – and their opinions – to Brussels, to lobby MEPs. Chartering a London bus and taking the Eurostar train, the ‘blood tested grannies’ created a visual story of a journey. Blood (blood bags) and test results (people holding up papers) and family pictures of grandchildren also came with their own ‘visual language’ – you could look at a picture and see what was going on, without so much need for words.

To help magnify the effect of the campaign, WWF also worked with the ‘ethically-guided’ UK Co-operative Bank, which ran an eighteen month public campaign (www.co-operativebank.co.uk/safer. In July 2003 the bank funded biomonitoring tests of over 150 volunteers including Bank Staff, MPs and MEPs ‘to demonstrate the presence of man-made chemicals in our blood’. It says ‘Everyone tested was found to be contaminated with a cocktail of man-made chemicals’. In May 2004 it ran an awareness-raising Safer Chemicals advertising campaign hit national press, reaching 1 in 3 of the population (see the ad at the website).

By conducting a regional sweep of sampling, WWF was able to involve its network of local groups, and to help them build their campaigning experience.

The chemicals found in the blood are reported at the WWF website. They tested for 78 chemicals including persistent and accumulative substances such as PCBs and organochlorine pesticides but also newer chemicals such as PDBEs – used as flame retardants in thousands of household products (from which they leak into our homes). 95% of those tested had 10 chemicals and one had two thirds of them in their body.

WWF has continued to extend its testing across Europe, including MEPs, and worked with Greenpeace to survey chemicals in the umbilical chords of babies, finding contamination with hazardous non-stick chemicals (from cooking utensils), flame-retardants, perfumes and other ‘gender-bending’ chemicals. Its website also reports other scientific research linking such chemicals to conditions from asthma to genital abnormalities, cancer and behaviour (http://www.wwf.org.uk/chemicals/). The strength of the blood testing is its indisputable demonstration of widespread contamination - the presence of chemicals in people that ought not to be there, in places like the womb. The chemicals industry has attacked the ‘biomonitoring’, trying to draw WWF into an expert debate focused on trying to prove anything more than presence.

So far as REACH goes, WWF’s objectives were twofold – to ensure that a class of very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances were included and listed as of ‘high concern’ (this was achieved in the EC draft produced in 2003 - some thirty professors and leading scientists signed a statement in line with
this objective), and to require their substitution (not yet achieved). It’s a campaign that’s still ongoing and this was not an attempt at evaluation but there’s no doubt that the blood-testing definitely had some impact. One MEP was heard telling colleagues and a visiting chemical industry delegation to the European Parliament that WWF’s blood testing was a “disgrace to the environmental movement”, but also that industry complaints about 200 job losses here and there were not going to diminish concern about the threat to families and children now in many MEPs’ minds.

Recently WWF has launched a new ‘safer shopping’ microsite ‘from basics to bling’ aimed at interesting esteem driven shoppers in chemicals, health and consumer products –
http://safershopping.wwf.org.uk/

I hope this account has been of some use to campaigners – the design principles may apply to many campaigns.

Related campaign links:

Greenpeace Toxics Campaign (with more tests on consumer products including children's pyjamas, toys and baby feeding bottles, as well as perfumes, paints, car interior cleaners and air fresheners)
www.greenpeace.org.uk/Products/Toxics/campaign.cfm

The European Consumers Association Chemical Cocktail Website (worth a look for their interactive guide to chemical hazards in the home)
www.chemical-cocktail.org/index_en.asp

National Federation of Women’s Institutes – see ‘Simple Solutions’ booklet on avoiding chemicals -
http://www.nfwi.org.uk/campaigns/simple.shtml

Thanks – special thanks for help in preparing this Newsletter, to Justin Woolford of WWF who devised and led the campaign from its inception to 2005. Justin now works at WWF International on European fisheries - JWoolford@wwfint.org

[1] The debates over REACH are complex and often tedious – reliable accounts are found at the ENDS website: Environmental Data Services - www.endsreport.com)

[2] For a recent example see the fate of the proposed new EU regulation on potent industrial greenhouse gases (f-gases). Despite huge public concern, the European Parliament has just succumbed to pressure from the industry, throwing out proposals by its Environment Committee to introduce bans on substances such as HFCs and SF6. Instead they have adopted the line favoured by the fluorocarbons chemicals industry, promoted by a heavy lobbying campaign in Brussels, Strasbourg by the PR firm Hill and Knowlton. (See newsletters at www.mipiggs.org and http://www.euractiv.com/Article?tcmuri=tcm:29-146480-16&type=News). While the media and public focus hard questions on environment departments, the really important decisions are made by industry departments, taking their line from industry. In this case, the chemicals industry simply has much more political clout than the manufacturers of alternative technologies, which are mainly smaller engineering companies.
[3] WI - for non-UK readers this is a highly respectable women's organisation with a strong national network, rather feared by politicians after slow-handclapping a speech by Tony Blair [http://www.nfwi.org.uk]

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The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 20

Meta-spin - UK Government Picks Climate Context For Nukes

The UK Government is currently indulging in a campaign to get the media to cajole the British population into accepting nuclear power. So far it's not doing at all badly.

For months a series of leaks and briefings have laid the groundwork by letting everyone know that Tony Blair is warm to the idea of nuclear power. Like the frog that never responds to the slowly warming pond and eventually boils to death, the gradual build up is designed to make the final decision seem like an inescapable inevitability. By not putting a clear case, and not creating any decision points or events, the government briefing machine tries to create an expectation without giving its opponents a target or opportunity to call a division (see page 103 in How To Win Campaigns) which it can win. This strategy of dribbling out the bad news is often credited to Bill Clinton. The current political game plan is explored in a short article in yesterday’s Guardian, by Tom Burke of Imperial College [“The power and the unglory” http://society.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,1653490,00.html ].

On Tuesday 29 November The Independent newspaper's front page consisted of two 1970s style 'Nuclear Power’ sun symbols - “no thanks” and “yes please”, with five reasons for and against. The nuclear lobby must be delighted - the media are at least framing it as a debate of equal merits (even if the inside editorial condemned it as 'this costly dangerous and expensive distraction'.

Perhaps the main interest for campaigners though, is the context. The UK Government has now launched an ‘energy review' and called for a ‘debate’. Much of the UK media is dutifully covering the Montreal talks on the climate. This gives them the context they need, because nuclear is being promoted as an answer to climate change.
The Power of Context

Not long ago I sat down with others and sifted through mountains of evidence based studies of ‘what worked’ in communications on drugs. Unlike most other areas of communication efforts, campaigns on (illegal) UK drugs have often been thoroughly evaluated. We came up with seven factors which are necessary to make an ‘effective message’. This tool can be used to interrogate any communication exercise - the useful thing about it is that it does not use the word ‘message’. Debates about ‘messages’ often go nowhere because people are arguing past each other saying they are talking about ‘messages’ while they are actually arguing about one of the seven elements. These are:

CAMP CAT
- Channel – how the message gets there
- Action – what we want to happen (and what the audience is asked to do)
- Messenger - who delivers the message
- Programme – why we’re doing it (essential to know this to assess effectiveness)
- Context – where and when the message arrives (including what else is going on)
- Audience – who we are communicating with
- Trigger – what will motivate the audience to act

The actual ‘message’ is, like a binary warhead: the call-to-action (effectively ‘do this’), plus the trigger, or motivator (effectively ‘why you should’). They may be communicated by an example or argument, or visually, but not often as an instruction or admonishment.

The programme is internal. The audience and the action should be determined by the critical path of the campaign. Qualitative research should determine the trigger, context, messenger and channel. Campaigners have to accept that they will not always be the best messenger. (In this case the UK Government is doing its best to enlist media commentators as ‘messengers’).

Timing (part of context) can alter the effect. This is not spin but meta-spin. Right now the UK nuclear proposition is wrapped in the climate issue, sustained by ongoing media coverage of the international UN talks. Every time the NGOs and other climate campaigners draw attention to the need to reduce climate emissions, they inadvertently reinforce the framing that the UK Government wants to use to promote nuclear power. (See George Lakoff's various works including 'Don't Think Of An Elephant' and www.frameworksinstitute.org)

To see what difference context makes, consider what would happen if the UK Government had suddenly announced it was considering more nuclear power stations, in the wake of a major series of terrorist attacks, or while the ‘War On Terror’ involved military action against supposed nuclear threats. Climate would not feature, or if it did, it would soon be overwhelmed by other connections. If campaigners are now to succeed in convincing the UK public and media that more nuclear is a bad idea, they’ll probably need to use different frames. Arguing from inside the climate frame is almost certainly doomed to failure. Others in which nukes invariably fail as a proposition include security/terrorism and economics. Of these, the one that most threatens Tony Blair's case for nuclear is terror - because he himself has been the champion of the ‘war on terror’.
Triggering the alternative frames means starting the debate anew - signalling this for example with new events, actors or evidences - and doing so again and again.

**Resentments And Well Placed Fears**

A couple of years ago I was involved in some research into UK public perceptions of nuclear weapons. It hardly need be said that after the Cold War ended, the ‘issue’ dropped from the forefront of the ‘public mind’, and that post 9/11 world views of security had changed - but how? We looked at what routes might be used to bring the issue of nuclear proliferation alive. The findings are relevant to the current UK Government plan to build more nukes because, of course, more nuclear power stations and more piles of radioactive waste create more potential terror targets, while the plutonium it produces can make nuclear bombs, or the waste can make ‘dirty bombs’.

We found three clear groups, which we called the Abolitionists, the [Frightened] Sceptics and the Resigned

- The Abolitionists are convinced that nuclear weapons are and always were a live and critical threat – they are the people who support, have supported or would support existing anti nuclear groups (a small minority)
- The Sceptics are defined by their high level of concern at global insecurity, which they see as driven by a breakdown in trustworthiness of politicians, coupled with a policy of belligerence on the part of the US and UK. (A lot of people). They worry that this is increasing the risk of specific terrorism and a general breakdown of world norms and order. They are anxious for a return to a more honest, responsive, reasonable world but very sceptical of politicians and political processes. They were not Abolitionist in the past and are not necessarily disarmers (certainly not unilateral disarmers). They do not approach the security issue from a starting point of nuclear weapons but they do have relevant views about nuclear weapons. They are motivated by a very live and current sense of concern and want resolutions. Given the right cues or triggers they would engage with nuclear issues.
- The Resigned are defined by their belief that there is nothing they can do, nor do they need to do anything because it is not their place and more expert people are in charge. Although we do not know they are in this segment for sure, such reasoning is typical of the security driven values groups (see www.cultdyn.co.uk) who most of all want security and belonging; as is their willingness to resort to punitive measures against external threats (which they see everywhere all the time). Eg it makes sense to have nuclear capability in order to deter or punish anyone who transgresses against us. For them pre-emption of any sort is a relief from a weak world relying on moral norms. The nation state, like other ‘clubs’ easily provides a dividing line for us-and-them, hence most ‘global’ issues are immediately cast as tests of patriotism. While unimpressed by any idea of disarmament, these people are unlikely to actively engage in politics or discussion in the media (though the tabloid press often pitch to them).

This three-way picture is significantly different to the situation that prevailed in the Cold War. Then there was a bipolar map of public opinion. The threat – nuclear annihilation was largely undisputed and it was only a question of which camp you were in, pro-nuclear weapons (led by the Government) or anti. Now, in marked contrast, the threat is multifactor, and cause and effect are often interchanged (eg the role of aspects of globalisation). Nuclear weapons are one fish in this sea.
This tripolarity is not well reflected in the media which is more influenced/intimidated by the government than is the public. The news media largely shared the Bush-Blair framing of bipolarity – you are for or against us and the war on terror is bipolar. Hence large scale expressions of opposition to the Iraq war or war on terror or its conduct, or measures of opinion about that, were discounted as ‘wrong’ by invoking ‘experts’. This is important to the government because the ‘Sceptics’ are not abolitionists or others who they would have substantial reasons to discount.

A corollary of this is that the government response to any issue or campaign mobilising the sceptics will be to suggest they (the sceptics) are not bad but misguided and misinformed (as these are people the government feels should be natural allies). The best way to prevent this happening is to show that these people are becoming concerned as they get better informed. “The more I know – the less I like this...” In this tripolar world, the government’s only default supporters are the Resigned – but then they are resigned to being ignored as much as anything else. UK political leaders are in a position of labile disconnection: formally they are in power but with many of the ‘natural’ ligatures that connect them to ‘the people’ and confer legitimacy, severed by distrust.

The research identified a ‘cross over’ zone between War on Terror issues (the dominant cause of concern) and nuclear issues (many of which were extant in the Cold War). This included:

- WMD
- Non-first strike (especially against non nuclear states)
- Battlefield weapons development

As well as

- nuclear weapons information/ locations
- dirty bombs

Several of these are blurring-concerns: ie concern generated by a belief that politicians are trying to deceive, withhold information or blur lines and important distinctions; making things grey that should by rights be black and white. These people fear further application of the logic and reflexes (punitive action, pre-emption, revenge, weak analysis leading potentially to disaster) that led to a macho war on terror after 9/11, knowing however vaguely that this itself was somehow driven by hegemonic aspirations of the Neocons in the USA.

In the Cold War people feared what could happen if a lunatic got elected and pressed the button. Now they fear that the people who they have elected, are only too happy to press buttons, and so these people (messrs Blair, Bush and their class) need to be restrained.

It is also likely that many of the ‘sceptics’ will include esteem driven groups. These people eschew social risk (so don’t normally ‘campaign’ and are allergic to ‘lost causes’), like big brands, success and getting what they deserve. For these people, relationships are highly transactional so to be deceived by politicians they voted for, is a big deal. This is a major part of their discontent: Blair et al promised a better world and they have insecurity, and in part this comes about from ill-judged belligerence. Here’s an alternative frame to the we-need-nukes-because-of-climate change.

**What Sort Of Electricity Would Osama Like?**

If someone bent on terrorising Britain could write Tony Blair’s energy policy, what would it say? “Our country will in future rely on wind, wave, biomass and solar power”?
"We will reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear by over 50% through implementing best practice energy efficiency"?

"We will build a new generation of nuclear reactors spread around Britain"?

Would our hypothetical terrorist prefer us to depend on a few centralised nuclear power stations, or millions of micro-generation systems for individual homes or communities, when it comes to security of a network?

And which would the terrorists stipulate when it came to potential targets for explosions?
Nuclear waste stockpiles and nuclear power stations?

or

Factories making wind turbines and warehouses full of insulation materials?

Answers on a post-card please to Energy Review, c/o Tony Blair, 10 Downing Street, London, UK, SW1

If campaigners are to defeat the Blair bandwagon on bringing back nuclear power, they first need to kick the ball off the climate pitch, and then restart the debate on a new one. Economics would do but terrorism is the one built by Tony Blair.

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The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 21

In this issue –

- Strategy of the Month – new feature
- When to use celebrities
- Walmart
- Metaspin on nukes

Find this newsletter useful? Then please refer a friend. An index to previous issues can be found here: www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/backissues.doc
Strategy of the Month

In this feature I’ll report on a campaign or organisation with a strategy (or tactic) which seems particularly innovative or interesting. Worth copying perhaps. If you’ve got suggestions, please send them to me at chris@campaignstrategy.org

This month’s is www.participate.net. This is an example of that rare but sometimes game-changing phenomenon: a new organisational model.

US-based Participate.net campaigns on oil and cars (like Greenpeace and many others), on violence against women (like Amnesty and many others) and uses blogs, virtual marches and web-based organising (like many more). Nothing new there. It’s funded by a billionaire, Jeff Skoll, who made his money from starting eBay. Though unusual such philanthropy is not innovation in itself.

The difference about Participate.net is that Skoll uses his money to make Hollywood movies – such as Syriana - and then those are the public rallying point, ‘educational’ engine and vanguard of the campaigns that follow. The opposite, in other words, of media inspired by ‘real world’ public campaigning.

Is All Celebrity Good Celebrity?

Put like that the answer is obviously ‘no’ but I am often asked “should we involve celebs in our campaign?”

Earlier this month the Observer newspaper magazine (8 January) carried two photographs of model Naomi Campbell: one, a catwalk shot of her in furs, the other, a poster for PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) made three years before and captioned “we’d rather go naked than wear fur”.

For what it’s worth, I’d suggest two rules of thumb

1. Celebrities who have a real track record on your issue can be allowed to work as spokespeople or help front your campaign ie as if they were staff/organisers. You can let them be interviewed etc but first evaluate them just like they were staff or board members. Be professional about it: if they’re not going to be able to do the job, don’t use them. They, like you, need to have led by example and lived what they advocate.

2. You can use ‘run of the mill’ celebs (avoiding any obviously dodgy ones) to support popular initiatives but always make sure they don’t lead those. For example if lots of people are taking a particular action for your group, get the numbers up first, showing it is truly popular with ‘normal’ folk, and only then show that celebrities also support it. Don’t try to popularise it by leading with ‘celebs’.

For examples of how celebrity human interest can refresh a campaign see pages 129 and 143 of my book How To Win Campaigns.
Walmart

American enviros conducting a relentless war on Walmart have been debating what the ‘greening’ of Walmart means. More on this maybe later but two points are worth considering. One, it’s said that Hurricane Katrina (see edition 16 of this newsletter) influenced Walmart CEO Lee Scott in a change of heart. Two, if Walmart used its buying power it could change entire industries. For example it might put solar pv on its stores but it could make solar pv affordable to its customers if it did so by using the vast order this would create to gain economies of scale in production of pv panels. Perhaps Walmart should start its own pv factory?

Follow Walmart matters at the excellent Grist Magazine www.grist.org

Metaspin on Nukes

Here, for those of you who may have missed it, is a revised version of last December’s piece on the UK nuclear power and climate issue. My apologies to those who suffered several unintelligible screeds of html coding. This was a fault in the software at my web hosting company – we were told they’d fixed when they hadn’t. [not included here]

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The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 22

The ‘New Save The Whale’ ?

Regular readers will know that this Newsletter has irregularly reported on the air travel and climate 'issue', and noted the nascent 'no-fly' tendency. In the UK this subject continues to generate press debate, for example The Guardian 20 February 2006, front-paging on a proposed EU-US rule which would prevent countries taking unilateral action to restrict air travel for environmental reasons [1].

In January, its sister paper The Observer, carried a news feature [2] ’What is the real price of cheap air travel?’ featuring several tales of how ‘a small but growing band of conscientious objectors are making a stand by refusing to fly’. “Is this the beginning of the budget travel backlash?” asked writer Tom Robbins.
Perhaps the stories of Michael Gibson from Manchester, Melissa Henry the marketing director, and Sarah Ellingham the oncologist were not unusual - they had all decided to give up or curtail flying on climate grounds. Except for one thing. No significant public campaign is yet calling for anything like it. The large NGOs are really all equivocating - against more air travel but exerting no real effort to do anything much about it. As reported in No 18 of this Newsletter, the people featured in The Observer are the ‘Pioneer’ self-starters of trends and issues. Interestingly, The Observer also reported that Mark Ellingham founder of the iconic and very airborne ‘Rough Guides’ to travel, has taken a similar decision, even going so far as to commission A Rough Guide To Climate Change, out this year.

A prediction then. It will become fashionable, if it isn't already, not to fly. Real-travel, meeting real places and real people will become ‘the’ way to take your holiday. Like Slow Food only less Italian. If this takes off, so to speak, the repercussions for the politics of air travel and climate could be considerable. One of the great unspoken political certainties will become unglued - we can't act against air travel because "we" all do it so much. We may still be doing it but once it's an undesirable habit, then negotiating alternatives - in fuels or systems or taxation, will become a whole lot easier.

Holiday industry and travel groups such as ABTA (British Travel Agents) still use the 1970s as their political-aspirational reference point: people-demand-to-fly. Of course many, indeed most, still will but there will be a subtle and important change if those with the time and/or money to do so, chose other ways to get about. Air miles in reverse as it were.

Back in the 1970s, the Save The Whale campaigns acted as a powerful social definer. To be against whaling meant you signed up to a vague idea that the world needed saving, when most people thought it was perfectly ok. Save The Whale was for people who were, to most others, slightly nuts. People who put 'the planet' before 'people'. Nowadays environmental concern is normed and unremarkable. No-flying has the potential to emerge as just such a distinction. It's a whole lot more difficult to embrace than sustainable development.

Worth a look
How to pitch an idea [http://www.scottberkun.com/essays/essay38.htm]

Campaign of the Month (suggested by James Whelan):
OK not really a campaign, more a feast of ideas: [http://www.movementasnetwork.org/].

Some good stuff mostly about structures, if tending sometimes to navel gazing as in "I originally wrote that I disagreed a bit with point #8, but realized that was a typo, and that my main disagreement is with point #9".

Challenge
Can anyone out there think of a way to use Dee Hock’s ‘Chaordic’ organisation model (see VISA [http://www.chaord.com/learn/res_visa.html]) to create a global campaign?

Factoid
Between 1968 and 1996, American Presidential candidates’ news ‘sound bites’ shrunk from an average 43.1 seconds to 8.2 seconds [3]. Does anyone know what has happened since?

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At least for environmental campaigners conventional wisdom now has it that 'real power' rests with individuals: particularly with consumers. In the UK the imperative to 'change individual behaviour' to 'tackle' climate change has become something of a mantra. Partly this is because advocacy groups have swallowed government excuses for failing to lead or act - it's much more convenient to claim powerlessness - and partly because it's true that as society grows wealthier, more and more of the pollution generated flows from distinctly non-essential consumption susceptible to individual choice. WWF for example calculates that 'home and energy' and 'food and drink' create well over double the 'ecological footprint' attributable to the government sector or 'services'. [1] 31% of the global warming effect of European products is due to food production [2]. Then there's air travel, discussed in previous newsletters.

The next jump is usually to accept the media framing that "people" won't give up this or that, want more of everything, and therefore it's all hopeless. All too often NGO campaigners respond to this by trying to 'change minds'. Yet adults very rarely have a significant change of mind: it's almost always far easier to get them to do something different by applying an existing motivation in a new way. As we've noted before, many campaigns fail because they project 'inner directed' type 'arguments' about ethics or global concerns at an esteem-driven audiences seeking to acquire and display the symbols of success. Eg by buying stuff.
Value Modes expert Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics has demonstrated the rising proportion of Outer Directeds (esteem driven) people in a society like the UK (45%, more in the USA). For decades they have been the conspicuous consumers, and this has meant more material consumption and more associated pollution, resource use, etc.. But recently some interesting changes have emerged.

The Henley Centre for instance, reports that the number of people agreeing ‘I have got all the material things I need’ in the UK rose from 48% in 2001 to over 61% in 2004. ‘Desire for material things’ says Henley, ‘is being replaced by a desire for higher needs such as belonging, community and experiences’ [3]. This sounds like the ‘inner directeds’ (IDs) but the numbers are much too big for this (taken together the IDs are only 35% of the UK population).

What seems to be happening is that the esteem-driven Outer Directeds are starting - in large numbers - to do what the IDs did in the 1980s: purchasing experiences rather than stuff. Pat Dade comments [4]: This is a totally expected phenomenon (IDs do it, ODs follow). Note that the motivations however are very different....the ID's move to experience rather than things because they are aware of the “redundancy” of things, i.e. the third car doesn't give the same pleasure as the first car, the 20th pair of shoes doesn't give the same pleasure as the first (or 10th!) pair of shoes...in fact it can feel as if more “time is spent” maintaining the things they have rather than getting on with their lives...this is one of the key orientations that drives the ID version of “downshifting”.

The OD's on the other hand have grown into the “experiences rather than things” as a natural extension of their desire to ”acquire” symbols of value, i.e. the ID's have created a “symbol of value” of the “experience” and the OD's believe they can gain esteem by ”doing the experience”. This is in stark contrast to the ID motivation for experience. The ID’s motivation is in line with their different motivations; in this case the need for “being...something other” and thus leading to another way of seeing the world – the world they are trying to understand

So far as campaign constructors are concerned, this opens up a new type of experience-led campaign offer. It isn't rocket-science to point out that consuming experiences can easily be far less resource intensive than consuming material goods. If ‘real travel’ becomes fashionable for instance, and it includes walking across the Alps, then that's going to be less polluting than going by jet. If clubbers can be induced to chill out with the dawn chorus, it gives new opportunities to the RSPB. Every day that someone spends on an eco-experience package, rather than shopping, can lead to significant reductions in pollution or resource use. If quality is the new quantity, the implications can be huge.

Gaining recognition for the experience is crucial for the esteem-seeking ODs. Henley notes that “There's a big industry around outdoor leisure...in many instances its image is as an expensive pursuit” with a “Focus on kit, equipment and “the right gear””. In a recent attack on the worship of economic growth (in favour of happiness etc) published in the right-wing British weekly The Spectator, Aidan Rankin wrote:

In my Yorkshire Dales hiking club, there is a chap who talks continuously about rucksacks and seems to replace them every few months. This is not because they are leaking or torn, or unsatisfactory in any obvious way, but because they are already out of date. Many of my fellow-walkers spend hundreds of pounds updating items of clothing that have suddenly become ‘so last year’, a phrase symbolic of throw-away culture.
Undesirable to some maybe but for campaigners the question is if we can get people to go walking (or equivalents) this way, what impact could this buying-the-experience have in terms of 'changing' other behaviours, if packaged correctly? The only sure thing to avoid is insisting that people do things 'for the right reasons' (ie yours and not theirs). See this months posting at this website from How To Win Campaigns: Don't Assume We Need To Change Minds.

Also worth a look on similar lines: Downshifting Downunder -- http://www.downshifting.net.au/ an Australian cornucopia of downshiftery. Featuring links to personal stories and articles such as 'Millionaires can't get no satisfaction', 'Gross National happiness in Bhutan' and much more. Perhaps unsurprisingly the site authors promise more activity but only "if there is sufficient interest/energy". While http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/press/dpp/2003111901 a study from University of Cambridge shows 25 per cent of Britons have downshifted (predominantly living in the suburbs).

Campaign of the Month

‘Discover the secretive world of lobbying in Brussels’ say lobby watchdog Corporate Europe Observatory with their www.eulobbytours.org, a new website featuring a virtual tour (architectural walkthrough type software) of the EU Quarter of Brussels. Eye-opening but could be enlivened with some shots of lobbyists themselves and their watering holes. Corporate Europe Observatory also runs walking tours of the EU lobby zone. An ingenious way to make something invisible, more visible.

More on Value Modes

I often get asked where more is published on value modes. here are some links
http://www.campaigstratego.org/valuesvoters/index.html
http://www.campaigstratego.org/newsletters/campaigstratego_newsletter_17.doc
http://www.campaigstratego.org/newsletters/campaigstratego_newsletter_18.doc
http://www.campaigstratego.org/newsletters/campaigstratego_newsletter_12.doc
http://www.campaigstratego.org/newsletters/campaigstratego_newsletter_2.doc
http://www.campaigstratego.org/becalmind_in_the_mainstream.pdf
http://www.campaigstratego.org/maslow_campaign.pdf

see also www.cultdyn.co.uk

[4] Pat Dade - thegurupat@culdyn.co.uk - pers comm.
Strategy of the Month

An apology to all readers for the long gap since the last newsletter. One reason is that I've been busy trying to help the Fairyland Trust (www.fairylandtrust.org), a family conservation charity. I give it a mention here (and declare an interest as my partner runs it) because it is built around a marketing-inspired strategy of 'starting from where your audience is' (see 'remember the chickens' page 14 of How To Win Campaigns).

In this case, the starting point is children's interest in all things magical and mysterious - something that appeals to a lot of adults too, at least in Britain, Australia and the US. The Fairyland Trust runs events and workshops that are fun - building on Walt Disney's dictum of first entertain, before you try to educate. So when you make a magic wand or a fairy garden or a wizard shield, the 'conservation learning' is built into the dynamics of the activity, rather than being presented first or as a set of 'interesting facts'.

75% of the people attending the Trust's Fairy Fair (the one just completed attracted some 7,000 over two days) have never before been to any sort of 'nature event' or conservation site. Few are members of any sort of NGO. For them it's a magical day out but the great majority also can identify one, two or more things they discovered about nature that day. After five years of running such events, the growing attendance is now mainly driven by word of mouth. By comparison, much better funded comparable conventional conservation 'outreach' or 'fun day' programmes in the UK reach 100s rather than 1000s of people.

At a deeper level the 'brand' of the Trust is about national cultural identity and many other things - see for example the role of Anglo Saxon belief systems in modern England, explored in The Real Middle Earth (www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0330491709/026-2216671-2792456) by professor Brian Bates.

Lastly, if you feel there's a Fairy Queen in you - or someone you know - you can reign for a day and chose your title at www.fairylandtrust.org
Clash of the Titans or Punch and Judy?

The Fairyland Trust was described by one visitor as "an organic disney". A lot of 'progressive' attention in the US has recently focussed on another filmic experience, Al Gore's An Inconvenient Truth (http://www.climatecrisis.net/index.html)

In the words of Grist magazine [1]: "For the last several years, largely beneath the media spotlight, Al Gore has been schlepping all over the world with a computer slideshow on global warming, attempting to educate and raise alarm one person, one room, one city at a time. Thanks to the intervention of some Hollywood producers, Gore's message -- now packaged in a documentary, An Inconvenient Truth -- will soon be reaching much larger audiences."

A good example then, of avoiding use of the media, and the consequent resource-intensive effort required to go face-to-face. Often a good long game tactic if you need to build your 'movement' or campaign army before calling the division on an issue amongst a wider public (see p 103 'the Division Bell' in How To Win Campaigns). Now that Gore's well-packaged televisual is breaking out into the media along with celebrity endorsement, it has triggered a predictable counter-attack. This comes from the right-wing climate-deniers the CEI or Competitive Enterprise Institute.

One risk for Gore's campaign may be that he is drawn into a personalised gladiatorial style combat with extreme climate-change-deniers. The result would be punch and Judy rather than a titanic clash which actually changes anything. The way the news media works - polarising and personalising - means that unless his campaign speaks through third parties and uses events to frame meaning, rather than head-to-head debates (all too tempting for politicians), he will get trapped debating the change-phobics rather than shifting the challengers or converts (see the change-curve newly posted at this website).

The CEI, funded by Exxon Mobil and others, are running advertisements (streams.cei.org) extolling the virtues of CO2 as 'life giving'. These are reminiscent of the claims of the power industry in the 1970s and 1980s that acid rain was ok because crops need sulphur and nitrogen. If Gore has his plans sorted out he should be able to sideline CEI fairly easily. If he does so, it may be as much down to chosing his messengers, channels and contexts (see CAMPCAT in December 2005 newsletter) as much as anything to do with 'messages'.

With heavyweight Republican backers and involvement of 'non-green' unions and others, Gore's campaign [2] has plenty of potential to spend its millions effectively even though it is both a full frontal assault and apparently focussed not on changing a sequence of events that will bring about change but simply aiming to explain climate change to 'middle America' and thereby leading politicians. If it's big enough he may succeed, although starting with the idea that to get action that protects climate, you first need to explain climate change, has been a root failure of many attempts before.

Tipping Point Coming?

Even if it doesn't make them happen itself, the Gore climate campaign could greatly benefit by the political and commercial anticipation of tipping points. One such may be emerging in the shape of US sales of hybrid cars. For example Reuters reports that in one of many similar moves by US States, Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell wants to use part of a US$260 million windfall to double
rebates for hybrid cars to US$1,000[3]. Setting aside the plainly loopy and blatantly self interested promotion of ethanol made from corn oil converted with coal and G W Bush’s reasons for promoting alternative fuels, the tipping point here is the idea that oil is a problem and people (Americans) need freedom from oil. Once you this idea is embedded, politicians and industry are going down a slippery slope along which advantage increasingly lies in getting further ahead.

Don’t Say ‘People’, Think Which People, And The Message Is, Forget Messages

Still with climate, on this side of the pond there are as many fevered attempts to concoct effective ‘climate messages’ as there now are in the US. These increasingly involve mainstream political rather than NGO or environmental actors. For instance in May, Simon Retallack who heads up a climate communications project at IPPR in London (the left-leaning Institute of Public Policy Research), described [4] a get-together of leading thinkers on the subject at Ankelohe in Germany.

"It would be unfair to say" wrote Retallack, "that the higher profile climate and energy issues are receiving has had no impact. An opinion poll survey of thirty countries (including the United States) published in April 2006 found that a large majority of people believe that climate change is a serious problem. But any change in attitudes is having little impact on behaviour.

"In Britain, for example, the statistics are sobering: • less than 1% of the population has switched to an energy company supplying renewably-sourced electricity; under 0.3% has installed a form of renewable micro-generation such as solar PV or thermal panels • many people admit to not even trying to use their cars less • purchases of highly-efficient cars represent less than 0.2% of new cars sold • just 2% of people claim to offset their emissions from flying”.

Retallack devoted most of his article to a report of the United States Climate Message Project led by the FrameWorks Institute. This "discovered that some of the ways in which climate change is commonly being reported is actually having a counterproductive effect – by immobilizing people”.

FrameWorks found "that the more people are bombarded with words or images of devastating, quasi-Biblical effects of global warming, the more likely they are to tune out and switch instead into "adaptationist" mode, focusing on protecting themselves and their families, such as by buying large vehicles to secure their safety”. Invoking the weather “frame” (see for example the beautiful graphic at the front of Al Gore’s piece) "sets up a highly pernicious set of reactions, as weather is something we react to and is outside human control". Similarly, “focusing on the long timelines and scale of global warming further encourages people to adapt, encouraging people to think “it won’t happen in my lifetime” and “there’s nothing an individual can do”. And “stressing the large scale of global warming and then telling people they can solve it through small actions like changing a light-bulb evokes a disconnect that undermines credibility and encourages people to think that action is meaningless. The common practice of throwing solutions in at the end of a discussion fails to signal to people that this is a problem that could be solved at all”.

Simon points out that the significance of these findings was that "they applied to modes of communication that represented the norm in terms of US news coverage and environmental groups' own communications on the issue".
They "showed that a typical global warming news story – outlining the scientific proof, stressing the severe consequences of inaction and urging immediate steps – was causing people to think that preventive action was futile."

All good stuff (the rest of the article is worth reading too) but simply discovering this isn't in itself enough. In 2004 some colleagues and I pointed out exactly these sorts of problems to the UK government, then planning its own version of the Gore climate communications plan. For example exhorting personal or 'community' actions, while portraying climate change as a 'global negotiation' issue (frame requirement = action by global negotiators not Mrs Smith of 14 Acacia drive). Researchers working for Greenpeace described this as the 'Blue Peter trap': Blue Peter is a BBC children's tv programme famously showing 'things you can do at home'. Such actions did not 'fit' with problems like global warming, unless there was a clear mechanism through which they all visibly added together to tip a balance.

There is more. Simon Retallack talks about 'discussions'. This is the natural mode of thinking for politicians - from IPPR to Al Gore - discussion, argument and the consequent assumption that what we need to do is to 'get the message right' and find 'motivating messages'. Retallack, like others, for example the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Development in its lengthy study on 'consumer' action I Will If you Will [5] essentially focuses on dialogue. The difference between advocacy and campaigns though is that a good campaign changes things like context and interests through creating events. This is something which most politicians are not used to, indeed the lives they lead - how they spend their time - do not equip them to do so unless they get into government. It is unlikely therefore that their attempts to find 'golden bullet' messages, even with the help of frame analysis, will bring about much change unless the efforts feed into campaign construction. The question is not just getting right 'what we say' or even 'how we say it' but 'what we will do'.

Lastly, and I have been guilty of this too, many of these compendious studies draw together strands of evidence from all over the place, and then talk consistently about 'people', as if these are somehow all insights into 'human nature'. (I Will If You Will is a good example). But we know (see for example the previous newsletters and studies at this website dealing with Value Modes) that 'people' are radically different in their needs and motivations. 'Messages' or communications attempts which work for one lot will not 'work' for another. At its very crudest you won't need one but at least three golden bullets.

Here the traditional vanguard campaign has an advantage. It can better afford for most of its 'messages' to fall on stony ground. Campaigners may be able to afford to work with only a small fraction of the population, for example as activists and other allies, and by careful planning of a critical paths, to bring about a series of events which create the desired outcome. Very few significant campaigns have ever tried to progress by changing the populations ways with a broad brush, one person at a time. Many for example, will have been led and pivoted around the actions of a small part of the population such as the 'Concerned Ethicals' and a few other Value Modes (see www.cultdyn.co.uk)

But that's not what a lot of the would-be climate 'campaigns' are now all about. Instead they aim to get large numbers, sometimes all the 'people' or 'the public' to, in Retallack's words, to "choose to behave differently". For this Herculean task, not to segment your population psychologically (motivationally) is absolutely fatal. To then target them all at once is inadvisable. The majority US or UK 'Prospectors' for example follow the 'Pioneers' - curbing your air travel for instance is a behaviour they've only just started. Another way to target likely actors, not so good but practical, is to simply look at those already taking some sort of relevant action. So forget 'messages' for 'the public' or 'people' and find out which
people, and which events, signs, signals, messengers and other factors are motivational. ‘Frames’ are just one small part of that.

Quote used at the An Inconvenient Truth website: "It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon him not understanding it" - Upton Sinclair

**Worth a read**

The actual 2005 speech by Lee Scott, CEO of Walmart

http://walmartstores.com/Files/21st%20Century%20Leadership.pdf ‘Twenty First Century leadership’ - may yet turn out to be one of the most significant speeches for the environment in decades. Much-discussed and sending shock-waves around the Walmart global empire as practices are changed, with huge implications for many sectors it touches.

**Time For Open Source News?**

The Independent newspaper reports [6] that “Federal authorities are actively investigating dozens of American television stations for broadcasting items produced by the Bush administration and major corporations, and passing them off as normal news. Some of the fake news segments talked up success in the war in Iraq, or promoted the companies’ products”.

‘Real’ news in the report is taken to be news that has been created/ discovered by the news media. Here the issue is the re-presenting of VNRs (video news releases) by news channels, as if they had no source other than the news organisation itself. For example the report notes: "an Iraqi-American in Kansas City was seen saying “Thank you Bush. Thank you USA” in response to the 2003 fall of Baghdad. The footage was actually produced by the State Department”.

Sometimes campaigning NGOs have fallen foul of the same system, though often the boot is on the other foot, for example when tv stations use their material without crediting it (when the NGO would have quite liked a credit), and then disowned it afterwards.

One solution to all this would be for all news media outlets to be open about their sources. Of course they could still protect sensitive sources but there is nothing to stop them from naming NGOs, government officials and departments and the host of PR and public affairs companies who actually provide the great majority of material repackaged as ‘news’ in the press, on radio and on tv. Some web based news magazines get close to this but it's uncommon elsewhere. News operations ought to post links to the press releases and other raw material which their reports are based on - then readers or viewers could also make their own minds up. What have they got to lose apart from some status, and good relations with the PR industry ? Perhaps that's why it doesn't happen.

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The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 25

Strategy of the Month – Over Here!

The Hier Project www.hier.info is an unusual and clever campaign. Whether it works or not remains to be seen but it is at least designed to try and solve a real problem defined by observing why change has not come about. Here’s the problem template:

- In countries like the Netherlands ‘climate change’ is often seen as a problem ‘for tomorrow’, and / or, one that ‘people’ can do little or nothing about
- Climate change is also a classic ‘collaborative’ problem – tackling it patently requires the cooperation of many actors, not just governments, businesses or organisations but all of them (see the excellent account in The Wisdom of Crowds* by James Surowieki)
- Put these together and a lack of visible action reinforces the idea that nothing can be done, or is being done; in contrast, enough visible signs of action induce most others to follow suit – normative behaviour

The brainchild of campaigner Sible Schone of Klimaatbureau sible@klimaatbureau.nl, the Hier project sets out to signal action in a multiplicity of ways. ‘Hier’ means here – a basic concept for all human beings, which immediately translates into any language, and which Sible hopes will come to mean “climate action is here”. At present the campaign is running in the Netherlands and Belgium, while groups in several other European countries are considering it.

In Holland some 40 Dutch Nature Conservation, Environment, Development and Humanitarian NGOs have joined Hier under the simple green dot logo, to develop a Joint Climate Change Program. The coalition includes Oxfam, Red Cross Netherlands, Unicef, PLAN, and WWF. The project came about after the Dutch Postcode Lottery, one of the main financial supports of the Dutch NGO community, told groups that it thought their efforts were too fractured to have an effect and invited them to step up with a bigger more collaborative programme.

Hier therefore ‘labels’ activities ranging from disaster risk or poverty reduction, and sustainable development efforts to climate ‘witnesses’; emissions policy programmes and protests, and aims to convince at least one million consumers to take action and to influence government and business policies. Its well-researched Paris-based ‘top-ten’ consumer website http://www.topten.info showing...
which are the ‘best’ cars, washing machines, fridges etc on climate grounds, is a model other campaigns might emulate.

On various conditions adapted from Greenpeace policy, commercial companies, such as DeLonghi (air conditioner) or Peugeot (car), are allowed to use the Hier logo in conjunction with any product which features in the ‘top ten’.

A key question for Hier is whether it can spread into more countries without the financial incentive provided by funders like the Dutch Post Code Lottery. One strength it has is the opportunity it creates to engage organisations which would like to do something significant about climate change without getting entangled in the policy labyrinth of emissions politics, which has ensnared most NGOs ‘working on the issue’ and which all too often submerges their efforts in a sea of jargon and policy-literalism (www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/campaignstrategy_newsletter_2.doc), all too unattractive to ‘the public’.

Campaigns and Social Marketing

As environmental issues move further into the ‘mainstream’, many organisations, particular in the public sector, are trying to use the techniques of ‘social marketing’ to achieve ‘behaviour change’ by individuals. In countries like the UK, social marketing is already the default choice for communications in sectors such as health promotion but does it work?

The answer, as with campaigning, is sometimes. Well known British examples include publicly funded campaigns to discourage drunk driving, often executed over decades and with huge public expenditure.

“Social marketing’ has its roots in social policy and uses some marketing techniques. One consultancy www.socialmarketingpractice.co.uk defines it this way: “At its heart, social marketing applies systematic strategic policy, market innovation and marketing communications to achieve specific behaviour change and behavioural goals for social good.”

I’d be interested to hear what others think but to my mind, several features distinguish campaigns from social marketing exercises.

- Campaigns tend to flow from an analysis of power, and usually involve trying to change the balance of interests, and/or their exercise of power and influence (in this sense campaigns owe more to politics and war than to marketing or social theory)
- Campaigns, following from the above, are usually a struggle – there is a clear dialectic, and so they can create drama and a story (see pages 27-9, 123-4 and 21-4 of How To Win Campaigns http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1853839620/202-9402211-7215018 )
- Campaigns invite joint action to a common objective, usually at a higher level, eg a decision by others in a position of greater power, and are ‘come with me’ exercises

In contrast, social marketing exercises generally are more conservative, and often confine their ‘improvements’ to communication efforts to things such as choice of channel, or context for delivering ‘messages’ (see the CAMPAT http://www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/campaignstrategy_newsletter_20.doc communications factors).
For example a review of UK government-funded social marketing exercises notes how research on preferred communication channels used by farmers led a project on farm wastes to switch to phone and post rather than the internet – farmers had the internet but didn’t like getting information that way. Obviously any communications effort should make such checks.

However the same study found that large a number of multi-million pound communications efforts were unable to show any result. This study was unpublished and because of its findings is perhaps likely to remain so!

Having been involved with a number of government ‘social marketing’ exercises, it seems to me that common causes of failure include the following:

- they seek to change ‘consumer’ behaviour but fall foul of the ‘too-big too-small’ problem (see p 29 How To Win Campaigns), particularly when government itself is the messenger  
http://www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/campaignstrategy_newsletter_20.doc and government is not seen to be doing ‘its bit’. A classic example was the UK Environment Department climate campaign “Are You Doing Your Bit”, which exhorted individuals to bike rather than take a car ride, fronted by John Prescott well known for his two jaguar cars and followed by a massive government-funded expansion of road building.

- they seek to change consumer behaviour without understanding motivation. The work of the UK Energy Savings Trust and much of the ‘sustainable development’ community – government and NGO efforts – makes this mistake. Social policy theory and social-economic segmentation tells you little or nothing of any use about why people do or don’t behave in particular ways. Many studies on energy efficiency (for example the last UK House of Lords Inquiry) identify the need for behavioural research but then fail to commission psychological, behavioural research, instead falling back on socio-economics. Instead they should use qualitative psychological studies, the most quantifiable and widely applicable of which is Value Modes (www.cultdyn.co.uk) – see for example the values and voters study at this site. If for instance people are buying or using 4x4s for reasons of esteem, then the alternative has to be made more desirable – there needs be a ‘sustainable development advantage’ in adopting it, in their terms, not simply a ‘case’ for it in terms which appeal to economic rationalists or moralising environmentalists.

- They are one-to-many exercises, which is fine if all that matters to individuals is consuming a product or service themselves but not if the gain or benefit comes about through interaction. Collaborative and sometimes coordination problems – described by Surowiecki as noted above – can both fall into this category – they simply can’t be solved without interaction. Often it is government’s desire not to lose control by allowing individuals to interact and decide together how to go forward, that leads their ‘social marketing’ efforts never to achieve any head of steam or momentum. They are at best, as someone once put it, “hot air balloons kept aloft by spending public money”. As soon as the spend stops, so does the effect. In contrast, a campaign with ‘legs’, a conversation with society rather than advice to it, can develop its own momentum.

In the UK at least, government recognizes it has a problem. In 2004, the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit wrote in ‘Personal Responsibility and Changing Behaviour”: “Nearly all public policies rest on assumptions about human behaviour. However, these are rarely made explicit, or tested against available evidence”. The government would do well to consider the lessons of what works in campaign
design and in commerce (where psychological rather than economic analysis rules in sales and marketing), and combine that with what social marketing has to offer.

What is most worrying though is an increasing tendency, most obvious in the case of attempts to ‘change behaviour’ over things such as domestic energy use or car purchasing under the banner of ‘sustainable development’, is if NGOs begin to adopt the mistakes of the public sector.

One to watch

http://www.sonyclassics.com/whokilledtheelectriccar/electric.html

And Lastly

Regular readers will remember that this newsletter has boldly predicted that air travel – or rather not air travelling – could become an iconic campaign.

The Times of London recently reported: ‘JET TRAVEL is a sin, says the Bishop of London, and of course he is right’ – www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,1062-2285559,00.html While The Guardian had ‘Boom in green holidays as ethical travel takes off’ Gas-guzzling industry is belatedly catching up with growing market’ - http://travel.guardian.co.uk/news/story/0,,1822239,00.html

Justin Francis, managing director of the firm responsibletravel.com, said to The Guardian: "Our bookings are double what they were this time last year. We have had this consumer demand (for ethical products) in food and fair trade for 15 years, but not in travel." According to consumer research firm Mintel, by 2010 the outgoing "ethical" holiday market from the UK will have swollen to 2.5m trips a year.

More on the air travel and climate issue – see previous editions of this newsletter eg numbers 18, 24, 22 and 23

* The Wisdom Of Crowds: Why The Many Are Smarter Than the Few, James Surowiecki, pub Abacus 2005

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Campaigns For the Outer Directeds?

Regular readers of this newsletter will know about the work I've done with Pat Dade on using 'Value Modes' (vms) to look at matching communications to people's motivations [1]. Recently a number of groups have actually started primary research using 'VMs' and we plan to start a new national UK survey soon - if you're interested in buying into that with your own questions let us know [2]. But in any event campaigners working on 'issues' might take a look at a current example of a campaign which I would guess probably 'makes sense' to the crucial ODs (outer directed) or ED (esteem driven) 'Prospectors' [3].

'Prospectors' are critical in many campaigns because they are the motor of the economy, an increasingly large group, and the most vigorous consumers in society. Unfortunately many 'issue based' campaigns don't 'make sense' to them.

So it's worth having a look at 'Chemicals Safe Skincare' [4], described as a campaign group and reported in the politically significant mid-market Daily Mail as such, although it is in fact set up by a group of natural-product cosmetic manufacturers. The key thing about their pitch however is that it's about products, not issues, and is personalised, it's about people not society, choices not concepts - in other words it's in terms that make sense to the Prospectors not just the Pioneers (the inner directeds). Follow the links from that site and you will see plenty of allied campaigns that are well presented but in terms that make sense to the Pioneers.

The 'skin care' campaign starts from where the audience is (my skin - see p 14 of How To Win Campaigns [5]), not 'the issue' (of chemicals) and its visuals are all positive, commercial style cosmetic in tone. (Contrast that with the use of a 'go away' visual, the black and orange toxic label adopted in WWF's 'detox' campaign - mixing the positive idea of a body detox, with the hazard warning label taken from toxic product packaging: relevant but in terms of visual language, contradictory).

Campaigners could pull the same trick to create consumer friendly front ends to many other campaigns. For instance several campaigns about electronic waste and toxic content of technology products are projected as 'issues' rather than which is the best computer, phone or mp3 player to buy.

Campaign of the Month - "What does your car say about you?"

Many campaigns are trying to target the esteem driven for good strategic reasons but in many cases still doing it in 'inner directed' terms. (Part of the answer may be to ensure that the communications are developed by or at least with esteem driven communicators!)

For instance my old colleagues in Greenpeace have screened a highly professional video about a man in an office who is derided by his colleagues for owning a 4X4 (SUV) [6]. It's worth watching (sorry to pick on you folk). “Great video” was the verdict of some other campaigners who've seen it. But will it really work?
The ad hinges on the premise that owning a 4x4 makes you look stupid. The problem with this, is that the premise probably doesn't apply to many esteem-driven people, as 4x4s aren't yet unfashionable. (I'm not saying that only or all esteem driven people drive 4x4s although that is how most are sold right now but this question of identification applies even without thinking in 'VM' terms).

So the ad is unlikely to make anyone who doesn't already think that 4x4s are déclassé, feel uncomfortable. It seems to be classic ID (Pioneer) communications aimed at OD Prospectors, resonating with the Pioneers but not the Prospectors, who may see the office critics as themselves 'wankers' or 'too trendy for words'. In addition, few 4x4 owners are likely to work in an office surrounded by people who think 4x4s are stupid, so the social context may not ring very true. Even if they did, would they be swayed by it, after identifying with the 4x4 owner and then being vilified?

How could such an ad be done differently? If it sets out to identify someone as foolish, then it could be more persuasive if it created a character who people didn't want to be like but who was doing things they did. (In the Greenpeace ad the 4x4 owner is just a regular bloke, a 'nobody'). Then show that they are out of step. Preferably give people something genuinely funny to laugh at, rather than just sneering at a victim. That way everyone gets to laugh together but the 'message' is implicit.

For instance to get under the skin, one could use someone who is well known for being 'out of synch' and laughable and associate them with the problem. An 'Austin Powers' type figure for instance, and get him to speak the reasons why 4x4s are the thing to have. For example that real men need lots of petrol, big engines under the bonnet and so on. He could then decry electric cars for instance (see for example the Lotus-built 130mph electric sports car recently reported in The Guardian).

From the other end, one could show that an "Esteemed Person" is driving an electric car or a bike or whatever - the Prospectors need to identify with the person getting esteem, not to be told that they are doing something (for esteem) for the "wrong reason". So here's the second problem with the ad - not only does nobody care about the protagonist, that is they are likely to have no emotional commitment to the character, the others who interact with him are nobodies too. There's nobody in the film who is getting the esteem of others.

Non-UK readers probably know who Austin Powers is - a joke 1970s would be unreconstructed (and incompetent) James Bond figure who is out of kilter with the modern world he wakes up in. The popular hate-figure for anti SUV campaigners in Britain is someone else, baby-boomer tv motoring correspondent Jeremy Clarkson. He's too obvious a target. Attacks on Clarkson can backfire because too many people who are not overwhelmingly concerned about climate change, his antics are often seen as harmless and not to be taken too seriously (for example perhaps by the 'Flexible Individualist' Pioneers in VMs terms).

So if campaigners attack Clarkson, it can look as if they lack a sense of humour or, especially over global warming, a sense of proportion: Clarkson may be irresponsible but he's free to make his own decisions and he's just a tv pundit...... le it can drive some potential supporters away from campaigns, while providing natural Clarksons with more reason to sink their heads further into the sand in solidarity. Part of Clarkson's appeal is his devil-may-care chauvinism and Homer Simpson tendencies but if gas guzzlers became associated with someone as obviously out of step as Austin Powers, then the connection would get made because they are both of the same vintage, and could share the same views on cars. At least the sons of Clarksons mightn't want to follow their dads.
Smoke and Mirrors

There are horribly few accessible good case studies of campaigns because most campaigners are simply too busy, or to focused on the next step, to write up what they've done. One useful exception is the Ash (Anti Smoking for Health) write up of their London campaign to ban smoking in public places, reported in a newspaper article this summer [7]. This led to legislation in 2006.

There was nothing particularly innovative about the campaign but it proves that conventional well planned and executed lobbying efforts can work. Deborah Arnott and Ian Willmore explain how they set out to 're-frame' the issue as one of health and safety for workers in pubs, cafes and clubs rather than health in general and avoiding 'smokers rights' [8], and then set up a 'swarm' of campaigners each using their initiative to push towards the same target.

The next step was to split the opposition - identified by campaign analysis not as the tobacco industry but the hospitality trade (see 'issue mapping' [9]). They did this by using the spectre of local political action leading to a multiplicity of laws. The trade would rather have at least one rule to work with even if they'd rather have had none at all. The final moves were mainly a case of exploiting splits within the government - notably between Health Secretary John Reid and the Chief Medical Officer - and demonstrating that there were votes in the issue, or at least conveying that there would be some.

Pivotal in the process - which took several years - was the 'Big Smoke Debate' engineered by Ash and its allies in London. Initially Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, was not interested but became a campaign champion after public affairs firm Munro and Forster helped Ash show that public opinion was on side. There's a case study at Munro and Forster's website [10] (it won an award from PR Week).

The campaign used 'salami' tactics to chop the problem up into slices, such as smoking in cabs, cafes, pubs, rather than smoking in general. The results of surveys persuaded Livingstone that he should write to the national government supporting legislation. Thereby making Livingstone, a political heavyweight, into the campaign messenger. It then surmounted obstacles such as John Reid's advisers by showing the effect that similar policies had had in Scotland, Ireland and New York - not in terms of health but in terms of public opinion. So in the final stretches, the campaign benefited from what another 'PR', Simon Bryceson, has called the 'law of anticipated consequences', that is, politicians usually react to the threat of what might happen, rather than the impact of what has. This campaign also 'ticked the boxes' in much of Bryceson's 'Political Checklist' - see Campaign Strategy Newsletter 13, at this site.

And Finally - Can Fly, Won't Fly

After predicting in a previous newsletter (#22) that not flying (because of climate change) could become the new 'save the whale', I am, in the style of politicians, on the look out for evidence to shore up my proposition. Consequently my eye was caught by the August 27 Review section of the UK's Sunday Times, a publication centred on celebrity news. Under the headline "Green is the new black darlings", Rosie Millard wrote that celebrities have developed a mania for all things ecologically sound". 
Describing the norming process rather well, Millard wrote: “Being green is now accepted as being rather chic; a straightforwardly good idea worth signing up to, rather than something outwardly virtuous which requires a keen commitment to body hair and a vegan diet”. As if to emphasise the often overlooked truth that newspapers are primarily entertainment, she adds: “Of course there are people who take things to extremes, such as the environmentally conscious bridesmaid Barbara Haddrill, whose concern about carbon dioxide emissions is such that she is travelling overland to the wedding of her best friend, rather than by aeroplane. That the wedding is in Brisbane and Barbara is in Wales only adds, in Barbara’s view, to the excitement of the big day.”

Perhaps readers between Wales and Australia should look out for her?

The article continued “But for every person like Barbara (whose journey, if taken by air, would produce 5.2 tons of carbon dioxide, or the equivalent of heating five houses for a year), there are hundreds of others who now feel it is just not acceptable to jet off to Barcelona for a hen weekend, or fly to Paris when Eurostar is so much kinder to the environment. Indeed, a Channel 4 conference on global warming had to cope with some of the participants appearing by video phone because of their reluctance to travel by air in order to take part.”

Interesting, and NGOs of course will have noticed this trend. “To solve the huge environmental problems the world faces now, we need political change but we also need cultural change,” my friend Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth told the Sunday Times. “People need to see that things can change. And if it’s going to be made more fashionable thanks to interest from some high-profile people, that’s fine.”

"However", noted Millard “Juniper speaks to me from Stansted airport having just arrived off a plane from Amsterdam. What? “I’ve attended a meeting of FOE International,” he confesses. “And there was no alternative to flying. Like everyone else in the country, I face harsh realities. All right, then”.

This is the process of flying becoming unfashionable, even if ‘we’ are still ‘all doing it’.

Are there no alternatives? Nathaniel Ashford from Action Aid reports at ecampaigningforum.com on using Skype connections at a recent HIV & AIDS conference in Toronto to enable activists in India, Nepal, Nigeria and Honduras to “hear the concerns of the HIV activists and practitioners first hand even though they couldn’t afford/ weren’t invited to be at the conference”. He says “It is part of an ongoing experiment to create real dialogue between decision makers and poor/ marginalised people. I think it went fairly well as a pilot and you can see the highlights on our website” he says. See http://www.actionaid.org.uk/100528/advo_casting_gives_activists_a_voice_at_aids_conference.html

Perhaps this is a model other NGOs could use? Many of them are still set up for the world of ‘international organisation’ centred on meetings, attended through air travel.

(For travel in Europe the best timetables and bookings are at the German rail site www.bahn.de and numerous links are at http://www.chooseclimate.org/flying/alt.html. See also http://www.flyless.info/ along with accounts of journeys from all over the world and http://www.seat61.com/).

[1] see for example the Vales and Voters study, and numerous previous newsletters
[2] contact me at mail@tochrisroseidps.co.uk
More Signs Of Winning On Climate

Don't get me wrong: the reality is that we're crashing through the thresholds of dangerous climate change even faster than before but at least the alarms and responses are escalating rapidly. In February 2005 (Newsletter 14) this newsletter suggested 'we are winning on climate' and cited things like US isolation over Kyoto; growing action by US States; car companies rushing to produce hybrids; wide acceptance of wind power and the slide in Bush's ratings. At that time some environmentalists were still debating whether 'environmentalism' was 'dead'. Now we have bill AB32 to cap and reduce Californian greenhouse gases led by Arnie Schwarzenegger, the 'green conversions' of Rupert Murdoch's Sky and of Walmart, and the Gore Ripple rocking the boats of celebrity CEOs, most recently Richard Branson who has pledged his Virgin travel business profits to fight climate change.

Normative [1] pro-climate behaviour seems to be gripping the billionaires. Maybe Steve Jobs will be next? Last week a friend approached me with the news that a major UK company wanted to steal a march on its competitors not just by out-pacing them on climate performance but by doing something so radical that it would annoy all its competitors. These are changed times. And Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics tells me that the latest data he has for the 'value modes' of the UK shows a significant rise in the number of 'pioneers' or post-esteem-driven people. More on that another time.
Have You Given Up Flying?

On 22 September 2006 the BBC UK flagship news programme 'Newsnight' began an online survey of its viewers asking 'Have You Given Up Flying?' [2] - prompted by the journey of environmental discovery undertaken by its reporter Justin Rowlatt. Dubbed 'ethical man' he's spent a year trying to live 'ethically' but, say the Producers [3]:

"We've heard quite a bit of anecdotal evidence that other people are ditching the wings in favour of other kinds of holidays and travel. Are you one of them? Have you quit flying for good?"

On 24 September activists associated with Plane Stupid [4] blocked a taxiway at the UK's East Midlands Airport, which is particularly used for a lot of short-haul and night flights, some of the worst for climate impact. (See new post 'Plane Stupid Action' at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/resources.html#ex). Malcolm Carroll, a Baptist Minister whose former parish is in nearby Nottingham led a remembrance service on the taxiway, in memory of the victims of climate change, reminding his congregation of the Bishop of London's comments that "Flying is a symptom of sin".

It's the small new NGOs that are leading on this issue, which I am still foolhardy enough to maintain [5] will become the new 'Save The Whale' as a socially testing issue.

Strategy of the Month: Camp Bling

Not innovative in itself but a well-executed and communicated direct action and lobbying campaign in an unfashionable part of Essex, England: Southend on Sea. A camp established in the path of a proposed new road, the campaign takes its name from the press handle for a local 7th Century King (possibly Sigeberht or Sabert) buried with a lot of gold ... Indymedia wrote [6]:

"Possibly against all the odds, and the expectations of some, including the local council, Southend on Sea's very own road protest site marks its first anniversary this coming Saturday 23rd September"

The road would destroy trees, public open space and the burial site of the 'King of Bling'. At £25m for widening 870m of highway the road is alleged to be the most expensive ever proposed, and would of course create more road space thereby increasing traffic and climate change. As a 'how to do it', the Camp Bling website (run by Parklife) is a valuable model to many local campaigns [7].

Also well worth a look: Will Perrin's "ultra local environmental campaign using new media". Will says:

"I am not an 'environmentalist' I campaign to clean up the gritty urban environment in Kings Cross where I live. I have been doing this on my own as part of a loose network of other residents and concerned council officials for about four years. I have used email, digital cameras and cameraphones extensively throughout. I recently branched out into a website, using blog software but not calling it a blog. We have had a lot of success and the area is really on the mend".

Visit: http://northkingscross.typepad.co.uk/my_weblog/
He says:

"I have been astonished by the very rapid and favourable reaction I have had locally from just 'showing and telling' that something is going on".

Have a look, it is worth it. For Will's analysis see 'Ultra Local New Media Campaign' new post at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/resources.html#ex.

The Adrenalin of Secrecy

There are many funny (not ha-ha but odd) aspects of 9/11 and a host of American websites, movies, books and so forth about them. For a review and why these can all be discounted as conspiracy theories see the piece ‘Enough of the 9/11 Conspiracy Theories, Already’ by Matthew Rothschild [8] who ends with: “The 9/11 conspiracy theories are a cul-de-sac. They lead nowhere. And they aren't necessary to prove the venality of the Bush Administration. There's plenty of that proof lying around. We don't need to make it up”.

On the other hand there are very odd things to explain like the numerous explosions reported by first hand witnesses such as firemen, and the refusal of the authorities to release video footage of the plane hitting the Pentagon. See the film 'Loose Change' by Dylan Avery at www.loosechange911.com.

What this certainly illustrates is the campaign fuel which those in authority provide when they refuse to disclose what they know. To paraphrase Mrs Thatcher and her ‘oxygen of publicity’, it's the 'adrenalin of secrecy'. Have a look at my 'scandal equation' at this website [9] for the components of a news story led by scandal. But on top of that you can also multiply the result by secrecy - what's being withheld. So long as the authorities refuse to reveal what's in those missing tapes from the Sheraton opposite the Pentagon for instance, the idea that it was a missile and not a plane, can persist. As newspaper man Lord Northcliffe said: "News is what somebody, somewhere, wants to suppress. The rest is advertising".

(For more on how to use in scandal in campaigns see my book, How To Win Campaigns pp 136-7.)

Upcoming

I'm taking part in the Green Alliances' 'Greening the public: how do we secure a step change in public environmental action?' in the Council Room, The Royal College of Surgeons of England, 35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3PE at 18:30pm. Enquiries to Kathryn Cook at kcook@green-alliance.org or ring on 0207 233 7433, by Monday 2 October.

And I'm at 'Communicate 06' in Bristol on a 'dream campaign' Thursday 12th October 2006 at HP Labs, Filton Road, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8QZ, UK. May not be of any interest or use to you but what is perhaps helpful is the summary the organisers have made of the 12 steps at this website, now attached as a posting '12 basic guidelines'. See piece at http://www.wildfilmnews.org/displayNewsArticle.php?block_id=418 and booking at http://www.festivalofnature.org/conference.php
Lastly

Recently Al Gore gave a speech in New York and called for an immediate ‘immediate carbon freeze’ on emissions. One US networker wrote to people in Europe: “Disappointingly this did not get much attention over here or at least nothing close to the attention it deserves (surprise surprise) and I am wondering if it was talked about at all in the UK?”.

Well it got some but one reason for getting not much may be that the proposal lacked credibility. That is many might share the objective but the resources and activities needed to introduce it were patently lacking - to Al Gore or to those who heard the call. See a discussion of the ‘credibility triangle’ pp 27 - 30 in How To Win Campaigns. Gore’s idea falls into the ‘usual NGO failure’ bracket with the objective being simply too big. Objectives, activities and resources need, like a three-legged stool, to match: otherwise the credibility or feasibility of the proposition collapses and it’s not attractive to follow it. See more in the book.

[1] When in Rome ... do as the Romans do. Lots of people try to follow norms. Not all, all the time but in many cases it works.
[3] NEWSNIGHT - TALK ABOUT NEWSNIGHT newsletter 22 9 06
Camp Bling marks 1st anniversary at king's burial. 20.09.2006 17:33

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To offer contributions or comments contact the author chris.rose@campaignstrategy.org
HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS pub April 7 2005 Earthscan by Chris Rose see
www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1853839620/ref=ed_ra_of_dp/202-6151204-2796606 or at a discount from www.earthscan.co.uk
The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 28

This edition is slightly different from usual, with news of a survey and a competition. Given the increasing urgency of tackling climate change, I make no apology for linking both items to that subject.

**Air Travel and NGOs**

Governments are often pressed by campaign groups to do more (or something) about the rising contribution of air travel to climate pollution.

On 20 October UK Prime Minister, decried on 16 October in *The Independent* newspaper as the leading contributor to airmile pollution in his government, warned fellow EU leaders ahead of a summit that they faced a “catastrophic tipping point” on climate change[1].

Campaign groups themselves can have many roles - as 'pressure groups' for policy, as enablers for public action, as catalysts for change, and as exemplars, amongst others. Most international NGOs grew up in the era when flying was an elite activity of the 'jet set', and before electronic communications made it much more possible to organise, negotiate or network without face to face gatherings. Hence air travel is often deeply embedded in their 'reality' and way of working. As such they are in a good position to lead others in change. How are they getting along?

I've written to 25 'leading' NGOs (or allied organisations) asking the a number of questions about their own air travel policies, whether they have carbon accounting, if they publish the results, and what success they've had in finding alternatives. I've said I'll publish the results at this website. Although the choice is somewhat arbitrary, I picked them because they are all involved in some sort of campaigns or alliances on climate change.

So far I've had full or holding responses from: NRDC (US), National Trust (UK), Greenpeace (International), WWF (International), World Resources Institute (US), IUCN, UNEP, SNF (Sweden), the David Suzuki Foundation, National Federation of Womens Institutes (UK), and the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Thank you all.

I'm still waiting to hear from: Sierra Club, RSPB, EDF, BUND, NWF, RAN, Oxfam, Chistian Aid, WDM, Action Aid, Conservation International, UCS and Clean-Air, Cool-Planet.

If you know anyone who works with one of these latter groups, or maybe you do yourself, please encourage them to respond. Drop me a line if you need the questions.

(points for pointless contributions to climate change)

Do you know anyone who'd like a copy of my book 'How To Win Campaigns'? Or maybe you would? I'm going to give away a signed copy to those making the three best nominations received by 1st December,
in the competition for 'Most Pointless Contribution To Climate Change'. If we get enough entries I'll organise a panel of judges.

Here's one to get you started thinking: the self-stirring mug. Requires batteries. Energy buffs will know that batteries take more energy to make than we get out of them. Even with rechargeables the electricity has to come from somewhere, and they don't last forever. In my view splendidly useless in many respects.

***

Self Stirring Mug
Product ID 1115990
- Self-Stirring Mug
- No more sugar or soggy soup mix at the bottom of your mug. Now you can stir your drink at the touch of a button, without needing to hunt for a spoon.
- Just press the handle to activate the rotating paddle in the base.
- A fun gift for travel or office – perfect for instant milkshakes or frothy ‘cappuccino’ too.
- Insulated with anti-spill plastic sip-through travel lid. 1/2 pt capacity. 4 1/4”x3 1/2” dia. Uses 2 AAA batteries incl.

http://www.theoriginalgift.co.uk/ProductDetails.aspx?language=enGB&product=1115990&catName=BusinessGifts

***

I'm sure you can do better than that. Nominations, please, preferably with a website link, and a short description as to why you especially like it and think it ought to win mailto:mail@tochrisrose.idps.co.uk.

All entries not involving imminent legal action will be posted at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/pointless.html. You may wish to award points for volume of greenhouse gas emissions produced in proportion to the sheer pointlessness of the activity or product.

Thanks for your help

Normal service will be resumed in the next newsletter.

Chris Rose


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To offer contributions or comments contact the author chris.rose@campaignstrategy.org
HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS pub April 7 2005 Earthscan by Chris Rose see
The Campaign Strategy Newsletter #29

Brainstorming Tips

Any campaign tends to generate demands for 'brainstorms'. Done well, they can break stalemates or 'campaigners block' and generate great new ideas. Done badly they descend into a rehash of old debates, arguments and become simply 'another meeting'. My favourite tip for avoiding group-think and dullness came from a nice man I met at Ashridge Management College. I'm afraid I can't remember his name but I know he used to work at The Guardian.

He drew a line on a flip chart.

Too whacky ------------------------------------------------- Too dull

Somewhere along this line, lies the great idea. At point X. The right idea.

Too whacky ------X------------------------------------- Too dull

But here's the catch. In almost every organisation, discussion is pushed along by a current. This current flows towards the 'Too dull' end.

Too whacky ------X------------------------------------- Too dull

The current is driven by "being realistic". As in "that would be nice but - let's be realistic". Waves of "being realistic" ripple around every suggestion causing the whole raft of new ideas to drift imperceptibly towards too dull. Then, whether the ideas are simply discarded, or worse, acted on, whether by reaching consensus about the 'best', or by someone just picking the best, you end up with an idea that's too dull to work once it gets out in the real world.

If you start off on the dull side of X, you never bump into X.

And until we find X, we don't know where it lies. So the only way to find X, is to start as far up the whacky end as you can get.

So the first rule is to encourage all and any ideas, however "whacky" they may seem. Other tips might include:

* No debate of ideas - just generate them (cuts off the current of dullness) - no arguing with an idea

* Capture every idea, however weird or fragmentary

* Allow and encourage everyone to immediately write down their own idea and stick them all up on the wall (you can sift them later - this stops a dominant participant being, well, dominant)
* Start with a very narrow brief - the narrower and smaller the subject, the more creative the ideas will be

* Build on ideas - encourage people to build on what the previous person said or put up - that's how ideas develop because people have different ways of thinking

* Make sure everyone understands the brief before you start so there is absolutely no information-giving in the brainstorm

* Maximum of one hour, preferably 40 minutes or less

* Lubricate with drink and food

* Get well away from other work

Good luck.

**Counterproductive Factoid of the Month**

From the website [http://www.cheapflights.co.uk](http://www.cheapflights.co.uk) and its magnificent ten reasons to keep flying. "Fact eight: Airports use less land than other forms of transport eg Rail uses seven times more land per passenger mile travelled than aviation." I hadn't thought of that. I suppose the same applies to bicycles. Better stop using them and try to fly instead.

**Survey of NGO Air Travel**

Readers may remember that I've asked groups campaigning on 'climate' a number of questions about their carbon monitoring and air travel policies and practices. I've now had full or holding responses from: I've now got replies from NRDC, FoE (sorry I missed you last time), RSPB, National Trust (UK), Greenpeace (Intl), WWF (Intl), ACF, WRI, CI, IUCN, UNEP, RAN, BUND, SNF, David Suzuki, NFWI (UK), WDM, Clean Air Cool Planet, EDF and Sierra Club.

That leaves Oxfam, Action Aid, Christian Aid, Union of Concerned Scientists and the National Wildlife Federation. If any reader can help encourage them to respond, I'd be grateful. (I'm at chris@campaignstrategy.org)

Thanks to all those who've helped push this survey up busy agendas. The results will be published at this website and reported in a future Newsletter.

**Smile**

See [http://bodyandsoulcharity.org/smile/index.wmv.html](http://bodyandsoulcharity.org/smile/index.wmv.html) for a great online fundraiser for children with HIV. Well it made me smile. (Thanks to Jon Cracknell)
Useful

http://www.burson-marsteller.com/pages/insights/povs  - some interesting 'think-pieces' from the brainy folk at Burson-Marsteller, the 'public affairs' company that many campaigners love to hate.

http://www.compassnetwork.org 'a global exchange for knowledge and creativity in sustainability communications' run by Futerra for the UK government Environment Department. Some gems amongst the not so gemlike (join up). Links to the excellent (archived) Brighton Council project Nine Lives


Are You Effective?

Helen Kerridge at the UK NCVO - National Council for Voluntary Organisations - is researching campaign effectiveness. The 'Campaign effectiveness' programme aims to promote and share campaigning best practice between voluntary organisations through research, capacity, building and advocacy. Funded by the Big Lottery for a three year programme running until 2009. Contact: Helen.Kerridge@ncvo-vol.org.uk

From the States

In response to the news * Blair urges climate change action * Tony Blair warns the world is close to a "catastrophic tipping point" on climate change, ahead of a summit (http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/ /1/hi/uk_politics/6068226.stm) John Passacantando writes from Washington DC: "Saw a cartoon recently. Suburban schoolmarmish wife looking out the window saying to her husband, 'It's too bad those awful people were right about global warming.' That's us dude"

Pointless Contributions To Climate Change

Visit http://www.campaignstrategy.org/index.html for the latest nominations in the competition. Can anyone beat the Canadian candle warmer submitted by James Sullivan? Please try to be specific about where they come from or who is responsible for them. Ultra violet shoe dryer anyone? Jet Ski, leaf blower.... Win a copy of my book 'How To Win Campaigns'. (I'm at chris@campaignstrategy.org)

Creating Mass Movements?

I don't know about you but I'm getting increasingly asked to help with 'campaigns' where the main motivation is to increase the number of people "engaged". It is the season for mass movement creation. Not just here in the UK but elsewhere: while 20,000 marched for climate in London on November 4, 120,000 did so in Australia, and in the USA 'mobilisation' initiatives are multiplying.

Last month the cerebral Green Alliance gathered people in London to discuss the proposition:

"From household recycling to organic food, the profile and scale of individual action to reduce environmental impacts is growing fast. But we need a step change in the scale and impact of such
action... Government plays a critical role in shaping the framework within which behavioural choices are made. But how can the environmental movement and our supporters in the private sector maximise their contribution to accelerating positive trends in public behaviour?"

Some cynicism is justified about government-inspired claims that NGOs need to create political space before they can act but in a world of shifting values and professionalised politics which follows media currents, there is no doubt that NGOs need to incite, mould, catalyse and trigger cultural change as much as to articulate 'political demands' and expect politicians to pick them up.

Certainly 'climate change' enjoys a new feeling of imminence in this country. Speaking at the Green Alliance event, the Opinion Leader Research pollster Deborah Mattinson reported a "common sense of jeopardy", and spontaneous mentions of 'environment' as a concern, not seen in her weekly public focus groups since the late eighties and early nineties.

For my part I argued that to get a step change in the scale of action, 'environmental' interventions needed to intrude into new areas of everyday life, groups need to be more rigorous about strategy and deploy far better marketing for campaign action mechanisms as opposed to for getting supporters, and resource campaigns more seriously. Environmental groups also need to signal that they are serious - for example if they want others to treat climate change as if it's an emergency, and to take actions such as flying less, they need to lead by example. (See article at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/resources 'How do we secure a step change in public environmental action?')

Shared Planet, Breathing Places and iCount

More recently about 1000 students and attended 'Shared Planet', a weekend of training in issues and activism convened by student group People and Planet (http://www.peopleandplanet.org) in London. They took part in the iCount rally (see http://www.icount.org.uk/) which attracted 22,000 people to march about in London calling for action on climate change on 4 November [1]

Meanwhile the BBC's sedate 'Breathing Places' campaign aims to engage a million people in doing things about wildlife conservation, armed with £5m of public Lottery funds (http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces/) [2].

Despite its resourcing, 'Breathing Places' isn't identifiable as a 'campaign'. It's not very clear what it's for, or what difference anyone would make if they joined up. Rather it's for a lot of different things, and seeks to facilitate or catalyse a lot of local action (mainly on nature conservation). There's no unifying method, no common timing, and no common objective. So it's unlikely to create that sense of common action with a common purpose, which is essential to overcome the feeling that "alone I can't make a difference to big problems". This is a shame as it has the potential to make a real difference, not least because of the potential reach of the BBC.

The climate marches are of course very different: the purpose is abundantly clear. They are also something of a testament to the persistence of people like Phil Thornhill who started a one man vigil outside the London US Embassy when G W Bush rejected the Kyoto climate Protocol back in 2001. Last week he was joined by 19,999 others.
Green Wave 2?

So is this the ‘green wave’ back? Then, the discovery of the ozone hole (announced 1985) was followed within three years by the announcement of human-induced global warming (1988). ‘Green issues’ shot up the news agenda (following the conversion of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to become a self declared “Friend of the earth”) and NGO recruitment boomed. For the first time Cultural Dynamic's ‘Prospectors’ (esteem driven - see previous newsletters and [http://www.cultdyn.co.uk](http://www.cultdyn.co.uk)) were engaging with ‘environment’, and we got ‘green consumers’. Then after 1992’s 'Earth Summit' the news agenda flagged and politics with news in tow, returned to business more or less as usual. Not quite as usual because business in particular continued to change and now, with harbingers of catastrophe knocking more loudly on the door of public consciousness, there's another wave of sentiment that it's time something big is done.

This time round there are vastly more potential actions to take. ‘Green' products have multiplied and green services have joined them so whole greener ‘lifestyles’ are possible. Most of the offers are still obviously 'ethical' but green stuff is creeping across the fashion threshold [3], so Prospectors may stay more engaged.

All this helps feed the public conversation and keep it alive. Because the issue is ‘normed’ however, it's easy to generate what Pat Dade calls the ‘logjam of violent agreement’ - different psychological groups agreeing ’something must be done’ and strongly disputing who should lead and how it should be done. The only answer to this is to segment action offers and opportunities so that - in Dade's terms - Settlers get Settler-friendly action (led by authority, learning from the past and so on), Prospectors get 'must have' stuff to buy and do (bringing esteem), while inner directed Pioneers can experiment and get into 'issues'.

Which brings us back to building mass movements. I got asked to join a panel with Ashok Sinha from Stop Climate Chaos and Joss Garman from Plane Stupid debating 'how to build a mass movement' at the student 'Shared Planet' gathering at the LSE. Most of the proposed action (eg iCount) is clearly the sort of thing that only the Pioneers will be attracted to: challenging authority around a global political proposition (influence the international climate talks - this time in Nairobi).

This leaves around 60% of the UK population (or more in the USA) ‘out of the picture’. So if you really want broad mass participation, the brands, products services and local agendas need to be brought into play as well, but on a big scale. If NGOs are to play in this game, rather than just leaving it to entrepreneurs and corporates, they need very different strategies from the ones apparently being pursued by the large UK NGOs in the Stop Climate Chaos coalition. Campaigns to force product development or marketing of products not yet on markets for example, rather than only petitions for political action.

All is not lost however. For one thing, effective campaign strategies, where they exist, often don’t need ‘mass’ mobilisation, just sufficient mobilisation. For another, if something looks successful enough, and if the engagement mechanisms are friendly enough, the Prospectors will join in. Wearing the wrist band, or doing something hopefully with more impact, if it’s established as 'the right thing to be seen with'.

Students are in a particularly interesting position as they can easily influence other young people and trends for new behaviours. Will the media-savvy Joss Garman (he floated through an encounter with
the BBC’s Newsnight rottweiler Jeremy Paxman) and his friends in Plane Stupid simply be pigeon-holed as runway-occupying protestors, or will they succeed in making it fashionable to oppose domestic or short haul flights and other egregious air mile pollution?

Lessons

Plane Stupid says it draws inspiration from the 1990s ‘Roads Movement’. It could draw lessons too: that movement helped stop a massive roads programme under the Conservative government only to see it quietly reinstated in a more stealthy fashion by the current Blair government. But by then it was broken. It had relied almost completely on non-violent direct action, and changes in the law, and relentless policing, eventually forced its core activists into jail, into exhausted retirement or into jobs. The roads movement lacked any means for the aligned - sympathetic - public to join in, and so the ‘movement’ never acquired the strategic resilience that comes from a wider supporter base. It had no political supply line behind the front-line. For a ‘movement’ to persist it needs such an organised base.

In contrast, the bigger less adventurous NGOs behind Stop Climate Chaos have engagement mechanisms in plenty. The hole they need to avoid is weak strategy. Benedict Southworth of the World Development Movement has acknowledged [4] that the mass mobilisation of ‘Make Poverty History’ [5] didn’t yield the political results hoped for. While 225,000 white clad supporters ringed Edinburgh, the world’s media focused on 200,000 gathered in London’s Hyde Park to see Live8’s rock bands. In effect the event was hijacked by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown both to align themselves with a popular cause, and to provide a televisual background to support London’s Olympic bid, which was being decided at the time. Youth and internationalism were key elements of London’s bid against Paris, and the Hyde Park images showed both. A BBC documentary ‘Nine Days That Shook London’ [6] details this adroit political use of events to create a communications context (see CAMPCAT in ‘How To Win Campaigns’).

In effect politicians stole the MPH brand - white wrist band included - and could do so because the proposition of ‘ending poverty’ was an unqualified aspiration. All it said was “we’re against poverty”. Compare it with ‘no taxation without representation’, which is a conditional position, while ‘less taxation’ would have been easy to agree to and then not act on. Of course MPH had policy demands but because they were not part of the headline offer, politicians could share the platform and leave without adopting them.

The world certainly needs massive change. Whether that means that campaigners should pursue mass movements, is another question. The answer depends largely on what they are for, and that should depend on strategy. Once you know what they are for, then they can be designed to have the desired effect.

[1] organised by the Climate Change Campaign (www.campaignc.org) as part of Stop Climate Chaos. Some 120,000 gathered in protests in Australia, with more in Seoul and elsewhere (www.globalclimatecampaign.org).
[2] Its associated programmes such as Autumn Watch are getting audiences around 2m which nowadays is not bad in the UK - the biggest audience is just under 12m for the soap ‘Coronation Street’
[3] See for instance the green advice of The Sun mass market newspaper “what’s sexier than a wind turbine, the supermodel of machines? Tall and lithie, they are power stations without the harmful side-effects – the real green goddesses” and www.eco-boudoir.com .
[4] Speaking at the Communicate 06 Conference, Bristol October 2006
Shown late at night, the story of 'who manipulated who' was told in detail in the documentary Nine Days That Shook London (BBC Two 11.20pm on 7 July 2006). Although dominated by the dramatic tragedy of the terror attacks on the London tube that followed shortly after Live8, the programme nevertheless tells a remarkable story of how politicians harnessed the power of tv images to spin Live8 into a validation of the 'London Olympics' brand. “Across nine days last summer, the capital played host to an unforgettable series of events. Through powerful personal testimony from those who were there, this film tells the story of the unforgettable highs of Live 8 and the Olympic bid, through to the tragic low of the London bombings” - BBC. See also http://www.villagemagazine.ie/article.asp?sid=2&sud=54&aid=2119.

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HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS pub April 7 2005 Earthscan by Chris Rose see www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1853839620/ref=ed_ra_of_dp/202-6151204-2796606 or at a discount from www.earthscan.co.uk

The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 30

Climate and Air Travel: Who Turns The Tide?

If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

[paraphrasing Rabbi Hillel]

Those who study responses to emergency warnings have noticed a number of things. On hearing an alarm, people do not simply jump to take the ‘appropriate action’. There may be all sorts of reasons to discount, ignore or disbelieve it. Typically we look to see if the threat is imminent, then, does it apply to us? [1] Then we look to see what everyone else is doing. [2] At this point we’re likely to follow suit. From these basic human instincts flows the stuff of countless disasters and of successful escapes.

Right now there are plenty of warnings about the imminence and applicability of climate change. Many come from climate scientists, echoed by politicians: unfortunately while the climate science is sophisticated, the delivery of the warning is often naive. Some may forgive the scientists for this but environmental groups themselves have no such excuse. To their credit, many are making strenuous efforts to improve their communications but in one inescapable respect, their actions speak louder than their words.

From popping rivets on the wings of aircraft, to spaceship earths, deckchairs on the Titanic, canaries in the coalmine, and a wide choice of vehicles hurtling towards cliffs or the Niagara Falls, environmental groups have got used to inhabiting a rich universe of moral metaphors designed to sound an alarm that applies to us all. But as they so often point out to corporates or governments, it’s deeds that speak
louder than words. As social leaders of change, NGOs in particular need to show that change is possible. They are no longer the only ones shouting that the world have only a decade or so to ‘act on climate change’ but when the ‘public’ comes out to see who is responding to the emergency call, if the NGOs are not there, changing behaviour, then it seems highly unlikely that anyone else will be. All us frogs will go back indoors, and get back into our gradually warming ponds.

When it comes to climate change, aviation and our flying habits are at the leading-edge of the “Party’s over” issue. Until something significant and noticeable is done about flying, all the metaphorical alarums and exhortations in the world are as nothing compared to the overwhelming sense that it’s still really business as usual. So on this iconic topic, where are the environment groups?

Twenty leading environmental organisations have responded to the survey now posted at www.campaignstrategy.org. My thanks go to them – they could have ignored my request (a couple did, probably by accident). I asked:

1. Do they have a carbon accounting system (tracking their own greenhouse gas emissions)? If so do you publish the results?
2. What’s their policy on air travel (given the impact on climate) and do they have any targets in this respect?
3. Have they found ways to do business while reducing air travel, and if so with what results? (‘if you’d like to share any successes for others to maybe learn from, please do’)

All those who responded are doing something, some (NRDC is a good example), an impressive amount. Some have embarked on internal campaigns – such as Oxfam’s ‘Green Skies’ project – because of their own alarm over their own use of air travel. Only a very few claim to have actually reduced emissions arising from air travel – Greenpeace International reports that its wide use of webcams and videoconferencing has reduced business travel – and the majority are still in the arena of ‘guidelines’ and policies which emphasise the importance of avoiding air travel in favour of other travel or not travelling but without actually setting hard objectives, targets and timetables. Any campaigner knows that such admonishments tend to produce awareness but little real change.

Overall it’s hard to avoid the impression that the groups campaigning on climate change are going to have to do much better than this. The issue is not ‘is this difficult?’ – it obviously is – or even ‘are we doing something?’ – they are. It’s ‘are we leaders?’ and ‘are we showing others – governments, businesses, individuals, what needs to be done, and how to do it?”

Read through the summary and the full responses and you’ll see a lot of good work. At least ten groups already run a carbon accounting system of one type or another and some seem to make a lot of use of teleconferencing, video-conferencing or have (like WWF) even restructured in order to reduce the need for meetings. NRDC and WRI both use established externally validated protocols for their carbon accounting – the sort of thing environmentalists demand of others. There’s scope for sharing expertise: WWF’s ‘webinars’ system for example, while WRI has produced publications on how NGO and the service sectors can develop CO2 inventories and reduce emissions.

Some of the development and aid groups, relatively new to ‘environmental issues’, seem to be the most vigorous: Christian Aid aims for a 3% annual cut in emissions, and its ‘STEREO’ hierarchy is worth a look.
Friends of the Earth has a policy that staff must not use air travel if they can go by land based public transport within eight hours of their workplace. WWF and RSPB are using travel budgets as a way to reduce it travel. RSPB cunningly forces project budgets to cover air and car travel while paying for rail fares centrally. WWF has cut travel budgets 10% in FY 2007 and will do the same each year for five years. Some groups place a heavy emphasis on off-setting. On one hand this may be doing everything that can be done, on the other, it can be the ‘easy option’ and forest offsets in particular, may turn out to be unreliable. A few mainly national groups report that they have more or less eliminated flying (eg BUND from Germany and SNF from Sweden)

This survey is only a snapshot, and the fullness or paucity of the responses may not reflect what organisations are really doing. Encouragingly, a lot of organisations say they will be publishing their policies and results. Several groups intended to respond but didn’t get round to it. I’ll publish their responses if they send them in.

Taken as a whole though, the sector needs to adopt more targets and timetables, and to send a much stronger signal if it is to show that it really is necessary and possible to crack down on air travel. The David Suzuki Foundation says it now tries to ask for materials rather than attending conferences where flying is necessary. Perhaps the obvious place to make a start in sending the signal that this is no longer business as usual, would be to cut NGO flights (and that probably means physical attendance) to international conferences by, say, 80%. At the Climate Convention for example.

I don’t know what businesses are doing in this respect. Perhaps some are ahead? [3] There’s certainly a major business opportunity here, and some considerably improved technologies – eye contact video for instance, used by the Dutch military and various multi-nationals – see http://www.exovision.nl.

The groups responding to this survey are all large, well-established organisations. They have well known brands and a lot of supporters who look to them for a lead. Few of them are yet running significant campaigns about air travel. Some smaller groups are – see for instance:
http://www.greenskies.org
www.chooseclimate.org
www.flightpledge.org.uk
www.airportpledge.org.uk
www.planestupid.com
www.airportwatch.org.uk (umbrella group)
www.ryanairpollution.com (airport watch)
http://www.virginclimate.com (FoE)
and for reducers, the Rough Guide To Climate Change
http://travel.independent.co.uk/news_and_advice/article1737893.ece and www.climatecare.org (offsets)

So far though, the campaigns to cut air travel are miniscule.

For groups working on climate change this is more important than an issue of good housekeeping. If air travel still looks as if it’s part of business as usual for NGOs working on climate, they are vulnerable to the accusation that it’s a case of “do what we say, not do what we do”.

For the rest of us this is more important still. We need these groups to be leaders. If ‘modern industrial’ society is to rapidly wean itself off fossil fuels it has to end the party of living like there’s no worry about
tomorrow – which means tackling the hard targets - as well as going for the low-hanging fruit, the win-wins of energy efficiency and the like. If campaigners are to effectively oppose airport expansion or win effective taxes on flying in the name of curbing climate change, their efforts will likely fail if politicians see no evidence that businesses can make significant reductions in air travel. If groups campaigning to save climate cannot show they can reverse the tide despite cheap flights, then who can?

Lastly, if such organisations are not seen to lead, they may find that other leaders do emerge, which could affect their credibility and positioning. As has been noted in previous editions of this newsletter, there are growing anecdotal reports of classic ‘pioneer’ action by individuals who have taken it upon themselves to stop or limit flying because of climate change. As personal carbon accounting ideas spread, in whatever form, this can only increase. For such action to reach beyond the self-starting few, people will need partners, to see that ‘brands’ they know and trust are also acting. If this is to be done on the 10 – 15 year timescale that climate science shows is necessary, some dramatic change is needed in very short order.

http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/globalcitizenship/gcreport/operations/climate.html

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The Campaign Strategy Newsletter # 31

DCA: Campaign Wanted

This is a story of the power of ‘frames’, the influence of interests, and the formulation of a scandal – oh, and by the way, it also needs a campaign.

A couple of weeks ago New Scientist magazine devoted its main editorial [1] to the news that a Canadian researcher, Evangelos Michelakis of the University of Alberta, had shown that a cheap, simple proven drug used for other purposes, could dramatically shrink a range of cancer tumours.

The drug, DCA (dichloroacetate) has been used for years to treat unusual metabolic disorders and its mode of action in that respect is also the key to its anti-cancer properties. Indeed the reason it works
may go the heart of what makes a cancer cell both ‘immortal’ and able to spread. To read about DCA visit the New Scientist website [2] and read the article ‘Cheap, safe drug kills most cancers’.

New Scientist pointed out that:

‘DCA looks like a potential anti-cancer agent. It is cheap, does not appear to affect normal cells, we know its side effects, and it should work on all cancers. But there’s a hitch: it is an old drug and so cannot be patented. No pharmaceutical company is likely to fund costly clinical trials without some exclusive rights to make the drug.’

So here we have the influence of interests. Also the scandal. Have a look at the ‘scandal equation’ under ‘advanced tips’ at http://campaignstrategy.org/advanced_2.html and the example in my book How To Win Campaigns. The main components are awfulness: and cancer is awful; the difference between what is being done, and what could be done, and DCA promises at least to be something significant; and immoral profit. In other words, in this case, profit to be made by not using DCA.

New Scientist ended its piece with the thought:

‘... testing DCA will need a one-off effort ... It is a safe bet that drug companies will be falling over themselves to find patentable compounds with a similar action to DCA. Any of these reaching the market will be hugely expensive. It would be a scandal if a cheap alternative with such astonishing potential were not given a chance simply because it won’t turn a big enough profit.’

Thinking this was a classic example of the need for a public interest campaign, I waited a couple of weeks to see if it was being taken up and then visited Google to check it out. I may have missed it but I didn’t find a campaign. Visit the University of Alberta website [3] and you can make your own contribution to funding the research of Dr Michelakis. Visit New Scientist and you can read that it ‘has received an unprecedented amount of interest in this story from readers. If you would like up-to-date information on any plans for clinical trials of DCA in patients with cancer, or would like to donate towards a fund for such trials, please visit the site set up by the University of Alberta and the Alberta Cancer Board.’

The magazine promises to ‘follow events closely and ... report any progress as it happens’.

So given the priority accorded to cancer, why didn’t DCA receive much publicity in the mainstream press? Perhaps because it doesn’t fit the frame [4] of progress to cancer-cures?

Over and over again we’ve been told that effective treatments for cancer will come from ‘breakthroughs’, from new drugs which are ‘hugely costly’ to research and develop and that can only be handled by the biggest, best resourced pharmaceutical companies. Of course these same companies also run truly massive public affairs and PR budgets to promote their latest offerings once they are heading towards the market. DCA does not fit this frame. It has no big name attached, and no big team behind it. It is not a new drug. It already exists.

We saw a similar phenomenon in reverse when the ‘Stern Report’ [5] was published in October 2006 and hit international headlines. Economist Sir Nicholas Stern suggested that global warming ‘could shrink the global economy by 20% where as the cost of action would be ‘just 1% of global gross domestic product’.
Compare this with the study by US climate scientist Stephen Schneider and Swedish energy economist Christian Azar. They presented evidence that economic growth will make people five times as rich in a hundred years' time but postponing that prosperity by just two years, could ‘fix global warming’ [6]. A similar if less well presented argument to Stern's. That was back in 2002. They got almost no response.

Stern however ‘wrote’ a 700 page report, was a former chief economist of the World Bank and his study was promoted by the UK Government’s Treasury department. Whereas Schneider was a climate scientist (What do they know about money?) and Azar a relatively obscure economist, Stern was mainstream, wrapped in all the financial authority of the World Bank and the City of London. As such Stern’s report provided ripples which have variously been credited with helping change the minds – or providing the excuse for a change of position – in national capitals such as Canada and Australia.

[Readers note: DCA has been shown to shrink tumours in experimental animals and lab experiments - not yet in humans. Google for discussions, including side effects of DCA.]

Campaigns In Need Of A Scandal

At least in the UK, ‘climate change’ is everywhere. In the media, from tabloid downmarket newspapers through to the BBC which gives daily coverage and plans several major broadcast initiatives for the coming year. In politics, with a competition between prominent figures such as the Conservative Opposition Leader David Cameron, who has used ‘green issues’ to reposition his party's appeal away from its shrinking ‘Settler’ base (for where it was, see 2005 Values and Voters Study at www.campaignstrategy.org), and Chancellor Gordon Brown, likely to replace Tony Blair as Prime Minister and who used the Stern Report to create his own political platform on the issue. At a personal level, from burgeoning interest in energy saving gizmos for the home and escalating debate over the ethics of travelling by air; and in a major brand war between supermarket retailers such as Tesco (introducing carbon labelling on all products) to Marks and Spencers (effectively endorsed by Greenpeace for a raft of measures). In schools, where all UK children will now be taught about climate change.

Amidst all this talk and a plethora of initiatives, the limiting factor to real change is the conversion of information and concepts into do-able actions. Listen in on any discussion amongst the tide of people now becoming engaged in trying to live greener, and you hear the same thing. “I contacted the energy savings project to get Cavity Wall Insulation and they referred me from one number to another until I got sent a leaflet ...” Or “I want to run my car on biodiesel but it’s not available in my area”. Or “there are too many choices – you read about this in the press but when I go to the shops there’s nothing available – or the assistants don’t know anything about it”.

Partly this is a question of organisation and training. There are some exceptions – British Gas has a comprehensive service for putting in condensing gas boilers and taking away all the old materials. DIY giant B & Q have started selling ‘domestic’ wind turbines and solar panels with an installation and advice service. But in most cases ‘solutions’ still exist in the land of theory or have got little further than low-volume niche products [7] which are hard to find, often expensive, and not always easy to use.

Strategically many NGOs and agencies are still campaigning at the level of giving information, often of the “go and make informed choices” variety. What people need – especially the esteem-seeking
‘Prospectors’ – is products. One campaigning response to this problem is to advocate ‘choice editing’, drawing on the fact that most Brits believe that damaging options should not be available to consumers. Others might say that the dynamic of the market will deliver the necessary change. Yet, as with the case of DCA above, there is abundant evidence that this is a naive view: all sorts of obstacles or ‘imperfections’ exist which will stop the market enabling major shift away from a ‘carbon based’ lifestyle within the ten years (it must now be nine?) that climate scientists and politicians now agree on as the time to ‘save the climate’.

The best option to hasten large scale change is to fast-track product development and scaling up of production and marketing. This should be the focus of campaigns.

NGOs and agencies also need to drop their politically correct reluctance to name brands, and follow the example of the Dutch based Hier Project which promotes the European website www.topten.info. This does not tell you to learn about climate change or to ask shop-keepers for the best choice, or to carefully read the labels and figure out the often confusing ‘consumer information’ about which light bulb, car, fridge or DVD to buy. Instead it gives you a clear and understandable ranking of many consumer product categories, endorsing the best performers on a regularly updated basis: actual products you can buy.

Upstream, campaigners might focus on one or two strategic technologies which can change whole sectors. An obvious example is regenerable or ‘flow’ battery systems which could solve the intermittency problem for wind energy. These exist but only at a handful of plants around the world. If they were in widespread use then a major obstacle to converting to a renewables-based energy system would be overcome. These high-capital, simple-choice, wide-impact technologies are classically susceptible to conventional ‘pressure group’ type campaigns.

Once these choices are commonly available and understood, and now that the ‘awfulness’ of climate change is widely appreciated, then not to act becomes a scandal. While action remains difficult and complex, it’s tragic but not a scandal.

**What Works?**

Many campaigners and communicators are busy trying to divine what works on climate and other issues, in terms of campaigns designed to secure individual ‘behaviour change’. Here’s a list I recently compiled for a project in this area:

- Communications targeted by Maslowian segment (offers matching motivational segments, and for new behaviours, starting with the Pioneers, and finding esteem-bridges to the Prospectors, such as celebrity adoption, reward association, use of esteemed communications channels, big brand services or products)

- Scandal effect – by showing more could be done than is being done, plus awfulness of the problem

- Worth doing effect – ie the proposed action (eg if joined together) makes a worthwhile impact (scaling up actions eg regionally or at a City level where the political ceiling exists to stop the impression that we need to secure ‘global cooperation’ before anything can be done, and, avoiding the impression that my bit won’t be significant)
- Detail-push – by making people think more vividly about the problems/benefits, they want to or will do more

- Ecology of action effect – ie if they discuss the actions as a group/team they will do more than if they decide alone (eg the ‘eco-teams’ projects at a street/neighbour/friend level and making public commitments to act)

- Normative pull – see others doing it (and in reverse, the disabling effect of not seeing others doing it)

- Big actor reinforcement – see big players are also acting on same task

**Fault Line Thinking**

If you can provide consumers with a new way to make a choice, then potentially there's a new campaign, or campaign lever. Here's a creative discontinuity in the car fuels (gas/petrol) market - 'Terror Free Oil' ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/6325319.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/6325319.stm)) sourced by Americans from outside the Middle East. They're not the first to think of it - I've heard oil companies wonder about 'ethical petrol' - but the first to do it?

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**Need Web Or Strategy Help?**

For the past three years Rick Le Coyte has helped run the website [www.campaignstrategy.org](http://www.campaignstrategy.org) and this newsletter for me on a pro bono basis. Rick has extensive experience in new media work for the BBC, environmental campaigning and strategy. He's now available to do part time freelance work – you can contact him at [rick@lecoyte.co.uk](mailto:rick@lecoyte.co.uk). Obviously I'd recommend him! A resumé of his work is at: [http://www.lecoyte.co.uk/cv/cv_lecoyte_i07.pdf](http://www.lecoyte.co.uk/cv/cv_lecoyte_i07.pdf)

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**Next Issue**

How Greenpeace changed its campaign on the toxic content of computers

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[4] [www.frameworksinstitute.org](http://www.frameworksinstitute.org)
[5] [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm)
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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 32, 23 April 2007

Apple Computer Issue

Most of this issue is a long article about the Greenpeace campaign on computers and Apple in particular - see below. It has points relevant to many campaigns, especially those concerned with brands. First some other bits and pieces:

Webby Award

The Greenpeace Apple campaign has been nominated for a 'Webby' award. If you want to express support for it, add your vote at:
http://pv.webbyawards.com/account/login

Natural Injustice

Sometimes a campaign can be made noteworthy and arresting by personalising it. This may be because we identify emotionally with individuals whereas we tend to ignore mass suffering; or because it resonates with long-established 'frames' which have emotional profile. On March 19 for example the UK newspaper The Independent (www.independent.co.uk) carried a short article with the headline: 'Czech village votes to ban US missile defence site'. Here we have David and Goliath and the cat calling on the king.

By taking a vote amongst its 100 or so residents (71 against, one in favour), the village of Trokavec converted an issue of politics into something far more personal: We can imagine living in the village, and picture the impact of a huge military installation dropped in by a super-power. The stark polarity of a superpower and a village instantly says 'this is unjust'. The same piece mentions that two-thirds of Czechs oppose the plan but that national statistic has nothing like the emotional impact of the tiny village trying to speak out. The campaign lesson? Personalise and create events which cause the reader, viewer or listener to do an instant calculus of right and wrong.

(See also ‘Genocide: When compassion fails’, New Scientist 2598 - www.newscientist.com - 07 April 2007, Paul Slovic on the psychology of why we will
help one persona more readily than two, and one more readily than a thousand).

**Amazing Visual Resource**

People sometimes complain about my love of diagrams - but you haven't seen anything yet - try this resource for communications and other planning. A treat for the visually preferred. [http://www.visual-literacy.org/periodic_table/periodic_table.html](http://www.visual-literacy.org/periodic_table/periodic_table.html) (Give it time to load up - it's worth it). Thanks to Janet Bloomfield at Atomic Mirror.

**Stories**

Stories are much under-used in campaigns. They are however all the rage in business change programmes. A useful place to start is [http://www.storytellingcenter.net/resources/articles/simmons.htm](http://www.storytellingcenter.net/resources/articles/simmons.htm) with material from Annette Simmons. See also [http://business.library.emory.edu/info/storytelling/index.html](http://business.library.emory.edu/info/storytelling/index.html) for a table of seven different story types and their uses and Chapter 2 of How To Win Campaigns.

**Message for James Henty**

If you are reading this James, you won a prize in the 'pointless contributions to climate change' competition but I've lost your e-mail. Please e-mail me chris@campaignstrategy.org with your postal address. Thanks.

**The Greenpeace Apple Computer Campaign**

Campaigners may have noticed that Greenpeace has been running a campaign to persuade Apple to 'green' its computers. This has been much discussed in the IT business and amongst Apple customers. See labcUK: *“Reputation in a Digital Age”* [http://evaapp.typepad.com/labcuk/2006/11/index.html](http://evaapp.typepad.com/labcuk/2006/11/index.html) and [http://del.icio.us/TominAms](http://del.icio.us/TominAms) along with the website [http://www.greenpeace.org/apple](http://www.greenpeace.org/apple) , as well as videos and more at [www.technorati.com/tag/greenmyapple](http://www.technorati.com/tag/greenmyapple). This content is also reflected back to users at the site: [http://www.greenpeace.org/apple/buzz](http://www.greenpeace.org/apple/buzz)

This article gives some insight into the thinking behind the campaign.

Last year I was to give some advice on the communications strategy by the coordinator of the 'Toxic Tech' campaign at Greenpeace International Zeina Alhajj.

Like others, Greenpeace had been pursuing the ‘greening’ of the computer industry for some years, and had succeeded in starting something of a ‘race’ between manufacturers to comply with legal and voluntary standards and go further in removing toxic compounds such as heavy-metals, pvc and brominated flame retardants. The emphasis and framing of the campaign had been on ‘waste’ and responsibility for waste, nearly all of which ends up in unregulated or little regulated smelting and scrap operations in India, China and other developing countries. In other words, in communications terms it was pursued and primarily presented a waste, and waste-trade issue, with images and political measures focused on waste - children with waste mountains, the European
waste electronics directive, the Basel Convention and so on.

As of 2006 Greenpeace had succeeded in creating some environmental leaders on recycling and commitments to phase out some of the worst chemicals in the PC market: notably from Dell and Hewlett Packard, which are fiercely competitive, and between them dwarf other producers with over 30% of the market.

Much of this had been achieved with very little public engagement. For example a survey for Hewlett Packard found that 95 percent of American consumers did not know the meaning of the term "e-waste", and 58 percent are not aware of an e-waste recycling program in their community.

By summer 2006 Greenpeace wanted to push the sector further towards completely reengineering electronics to design-out toxic components at source. To do this it had identified Apple and Sony as the two companies which, while their market shares are tiny (Apple is less than 3%), are the technical innovators. If a step-change was to come, then these were the obvious players to influence.

Sony had already made a commitment to phase out chemicals listed under the OSPAR Convention (that guides international cooperation on the protection of the the North-East Atlantic from dumping waste at sea and land-based sources of marine pollution). Greenpeace particularly turned its attention to Apple - the campaign which is now in full swing.

Its initial ideas for upping the ante were to ‘to expose the contamination which is hidden behind the sleek design of electronics and advertising. We want consumers' to pressure industry leaders into creating durable products that are toxic free, last longer and are easy to recycle and dispose of.’

Greenpeace had identified its primary target as consumers: ‘Consumers - suppliers, techies, young people (who get a new mobile on average every 18 months) and 30-somethings with disposable incomes - ‘adaptors’, and secondarily ‘decision makers’ and regulators. It recognized that its campaign had to be as cool as the products: one campaigner wrote, “we need to give Greenpeace ‘bling’!”

For the campaign as a whole Greenpeace said ‘The main strategy will focus on enraging the public about the “true” and dirty image of the industry’. Now the sorts of traditional Greenpeace tools to do this include non violent direct actions - such as ‘return to sender’ and exposes with investigations and scientific analysis of waste water, ground and air contamination at plants and waste facilities. But was this the best approach to change Apple?

The obvious route to attack Apple was a direct assault on its image. Indeed various Apple-knocking images were already at large on the net - rotten Apples and so on. This is where I got involved, and although all of the subsequent campaign development was not down to me, below are a few strategy points which can be shared, and may be relevant to other campaigns. (There’s a lot more which can’t yet be shared - so this may be an interesting campaign to watch).
From my point of view, as a consultant, three factors helped considerably. First, in this case, the underlying Greenpeace campaign strategy analysis was almost faultless. It had used consultants and its own resources to examine in detail the business strategies, models, interests, culture and policies of all the significant players in the computing and associated sectors. It had studied the interaction between companies and the ways in which innovation came about, as well as being on top of developments in UN and other fora where regulation was in development.

In other words, the PEST - political, economic, scientific and technical - factors were pretty well known, and the power analysis had been done, before Greenpeace turned its attention to communications strategy. The organisation had done its homework looking at how the system worked that it is trying to influence [see extract from How To Win Campaigns posted at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/book_extracts/making_a_campaign_concept.pdf]

Second, it recognized the need to fundamentally review its communications effort and was prepared to discard existing plans. All too often a campaign group tries to refresh or improve a campaign while continuing with existing projects on established tracks - a recipe for muddle.

Third, it was prepared to commit sufficient resources to the communications to give them a chance of really working.

These points may sound like 'stating the obvious' but they are not always accounted for. I spent some time trying to understand the culture of Apple, its customer base and in particular, its famous and idiosyncratic boss Steve Jobs. I asked around amongst people who worked in, or consulted for the IT industry and who had done market research and product strategy for computing companies. Some of the thoughts that emerged from this process included:

The main conclusion of this thinking was that to engage consumers, as Greenpeace wanted, it needed to lift the focus of the campaign out of the 'waste' frame and relocate it in the retail and user environment: in the home, on the street (eg iPod), in the office, rather than 'a distant country' [the 'waste stream' of the campaign continues but this shift has largely happened].

For the consumer to engage with the 'issue' (of toxic tech content), it had to relate to their possessions - in this case mainly their Mac - and not just 'waste' or 'electronic waste', which was in the 'post-consumer' world.

I wrote to Greenpeace that:

'Currently the campaign is essentially focused on waste and waste policy, both company-policy and governmental. This is good as far as it goes but it is limiting the impact of the campaign because
- it's a 'their world' not 'our world' campaign for most potential campaign supporters
- it allows the industry to treat it as a policy issue (and the industry-wide working group proposed will tend to exacerbate this)
- it enables the retailers, and the retail setting, where both computer makers and retailers are
most exposed to public values, to largely avoid the campaign (ie it happens elsewhere)
- it is not personalised to the user or owner of a computer
- it limits politics and media coverage in most countries to ‘foreign pages.
Consequently it is proposed to develop a market campaign, in the arena of retail (both internet and real-world), as well as a waste track (the current campaign core) and a solutions track.’
I suggested:
_ Make the product the problem (rather than just the waste)_
_ Make this real through consumer, retailer, market engagement_
_ Personalise the campaign for the consumer-citizen_
_ Make this real through their own products_
_ And their buying decisions_

In terms of style and feel, a campaign about Apple posed a fascinating communications problem. It was easy to identify and easy to reach but it was also highly media-savvy, cool and self-contained with customer loyalty that is a legend in itself.

The whole culture of geeks and net-heads, while not representative of mainstream consumers (even Apple customers) was also highly influential in the innovative part of the IT business and amongst the most fanatical and therefore most easily engaged Apple customers. While they might be expected to see themselves as somehow "green", their culture is individualistic, resistant to admonishment, even revelling in not being told how to be but liking to fix life themselves. Any external knocking or 'trashing' campaign would be an attack on their stuff and on themselves, because they 'live the brand'.

So rather than a head-on attack on Apple I advised that Greenpeace perpetrate a campaign of seduction, putting themselves in the shoes of the Apple consumer, and invoking the culture of the innovators, the geeks. Rather than going for outrage we would be stimulating sorrow - these people love (and often also hate) Apple and the persona of Steve Jobs but above all they are deeply wedded to it. Any 'boycott' type campaign which asked consumers to sever their relationship with Apple would be likely to misfire, while a focus just on Apple's 'policies' would lead to an arid policy-wonk exchange - perhaps the optimal result for Apple resisters.

My advice noted:

*‘Despite the distinctiveness of the Apple brand (which is arguably diminishing, ie becoming sameier) and the prominence of Jobs (whose position and future is ultimately imponderable), the nature of the industry means that Apple is permeable to influences at large in the rest of the sector. This is especially true of the lateral geek- and engineer-worlds. These people - and Jobs identifies with them - are drawn by technical brilliance and challenges, and lured by facilities and teams (though they are really lone operators who use teams to get ideas and approbation). They are not so much interested in an institutional home (ie, as with other technically-led industries, it is permeable horizontally').*

*‘Therefore we can assume that although Apple is like a closed citadel in terms of news media control, PR and product and policy info’, it will rapidly absorb news of external events because this travels by the individual network. We should use this, and only reinforce it by direct overt approaches, which should be intended to echo, amplify or validate the conclusions that some*
inside Apple will be coming to'.

‘Direct attacks on the Apple brand will not easily work because Apple is equipped to deal with them. They will be like rain on the roof. Moreover, they may work against ‘The Project‘ by alienating some potential participants. They may also make Greenpeace look naive and therefore lead insiders to discount other things Greenpeace does or says’.

Thematically or qualitatively, I suggested the following principles in shaping a campaign on Apple:

- ‘Try seduction first.
- The appeal of the future, emerging from the problems of the present.
- The geek doorways - lateral penetration.
- Juxtaposition of the complexity of toxic products with simplicity of good design.
- The intuition that good products are naturally green.
- Personal, music, entertainment or other close to personal applications (emotional pitch)’.

Also, to use the exposure to public and its supporters granted by Apple through running (and expanding) its retail shops (threat to coolness), and:

‘Avoid a head on GP assault on the Apple brand, subvertising or other outsider sneering or complaints. Instead stimulate a play on:
- internal engineer/designer doubts that they are doing the right thing
- dilemmas for Mac/apple users about the beauty of their products and the horror of the contents/its effects
- dilemmas for Mac/apple users (the loyalists who follow developments in the Apple world) about their expectations of the company of its relative performance
- the self-myth of Apple that it can force through any innovation because of its people: “I get to come to work every day and work with the most talented people on the planet. It’s the best job in the world” [Jobs] and they hire “the best of the best”

Greenpeace’s communication strategy would eventually incorporate that advice. (There’s much more to the strategy and to Greenpeace’s campaign than this but rather than try to describe it here, it’s best to have a look online). Internally, the campaign decided:

"We won’t “attack“ the Apple brand in the conventional sense. We’ll use a bit of judo to “jam the brand“ and use the weight of their own brand values to get users to ask why they aren’t being more environmentally responsible. We’ll focus on positive messaging that doesn’t defame the brand, but which exposes the gap between image and practice. Our messaging will ask more questions and make fewer demands or declarations”.

"By focusing on Apple’s customers we will engage them to help us change Apple for the better and push Apple to be an environmental leader and positive example for the whole consumer electronics industry to follow. By subverting, rather than challenging, Apple’s own messaging, we applaud and encourage the values we share - achieving the seemingly impossible, challenging conventionality, doing things differently - and demonstrate how Apple’s own values mandate a better policy toward the environment".
For my own part, I particularly like the Steve Jobs presentation - in fact a spoof of his famously personal celebrity appearances at his own events. See “Steve at Macworld 2007” written and voiced by Brian Fitzgerald of Greenpeace International at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Uo_4krykDc

The leading imagery deployed by Greenpeace focuses on music (the iPod), close to the heart of Apple’s corporate ambitions, rather than the keyboard. The campaign enlists the creativity of Mac users in sending visual messages to Apple - a gallery of video letters from jilted Mac lovers. Here’s some of what blogger Eva had to say at the website of the International Association of Business Communicators http://evaapp.typepad.com/iabcuk/2006/11/reputation_in_a.html

“I have been paying a lot of attention to a recent Greenpeace campaign that urges Apple to create greener products and reduce its use of toxic chemicals, as an ongoing example of how digital media makes it easier to impact reputation”.

“Now, I am a big fan of Apple (the company - and fruit), which is probably why I really love the campaign. Its differentiator is that it uses the voice of an Apple fan to communicate its message, and targets that loyal and well defined community to pressure Apple to become greener (rather than the activist community or green lobby)”.

“The campaign uses the tagline: “I love my Mac/iPod/etc, I just wish it came in green”. So, while yes, it is critical of Apple, it is approaching the company from a positive position, and therefore enabling productive dialogue even amongst Apple enthusiasts”.

“The digital campaign centres around a website www.greenmyapple.com, which looks fantastically similar to www.apple.com.”

“The digital campaign, (which also includes a video on YouTube), urges people to blog about the campaign (these blogs are then listed on the campaign website), to recommend the site by social bookmarks such as Digg or Del.icio.us, to send video e-cards to friends - especially Apple users, and to create games or digital animations promoting the campaign. This is virtuoso activism - with the best usage of online and digital media I have ever seen. From a digital communications perspective, I think that Greenpeace have really upped the ante with this one.”

“So far, online coverage is plentiful. A quick search found 2,560 blogs linking to the campaign website (2,561 when I post this one), and 116,000 Google results. Apple consumers seem to be generally supportive of the campaign – for example there is an editorial on MacUser (an online magazine for Mac computer users), which states: We should applaud Greenpeace for picking up on Apple’s environmental record, as it means we could soon be enjoying its products with a clear conscience.”

“As communicators, IABC members should be very interested in how Apple has chosen to respond to this campaign. Such a sophisticated campaign deserves a clever response”.

“Well, so far, I can’t find anything anywhere. There is nothing on the Apple website, and a Google search came up empty as well. The only thing I found was that Greenpeace was ejected from the MacWorld Expo in London last week, (however that may have had more to do with the event
management, rather than Apple's official position)."

"So, again, as communicators, how do we think that Apple should respond? Well, personally, I think that the best response is to take the green suggestion seriously. Apple must know its demographic - chances are they're green. So, why shouldn't Apple try to make their products more environmentally sustainable. This could be what they are also thinking, which may explain why they have been keeping silent (the campaign launched in September). The company could be waiting until they can announce exactly what their green plans are."

"Rather than responding to Greenpeace, Apple should respond directly to their users and fans. The message could be about how they realise this issue is important to their stakeholders, which is why they are reacting. Apple can then clarify their green strategy and future plans to improvement."

"Given their overall culture and track record (the Red iPod for example), I can't see why they wouldn't want a Green iPod."

"The worst response would be to attack the campaign. Some critics of the campaign have noted that Apple does not have the worst environmental record in the industry, or that other industries are most polluting. Maybe, but as Greenpeace says: Apple [could] be at the forefront of green technology, and show other companies how to do it the right way. So, rather than go on the defensive, Apple should engage in discussions about what "green technology" means - with environmental groups, with users, with fans, with critics, with bloggers, with employees, even with competitors. A really innovative approach would be to incorporate the Greenpeace campaign (or something similar) into their own website, and open up an inclusive and boundless dialogue - both internally and externally - which investigates how the company could improve its products."

"Interestingly, one of the most common reactions I have heard from communicators is: "Doesn't that website infringe Apple's copyright?" I am certain it does, but I doubt that is a conversation that Apple will want to have... (then again, I am an Apple fan, so maybe I overestimate them)?"

Apart from a storm of online Apple mimicry, nominations for awards and debate amongst Apple consumers, what else has the campaign achieved? Word has it that behind the scenes Jobs has angrily denounced the campaign and refused to discuss it with visitors. He's also received tens of thousands of personal emails.

A Greenpeace person told me "We know that the rest of the industry is sitting and watching the show, as they try to beat Apple's environmental policies. Will Jobs turn the table around and surprise us all and deliver beyond the challenge?"

So has Greenpeace done enough to win? Maybe not yet, and I'm not privy to their future plans. Sometimes in campaigns you reach what I call the "point of inevitable consequence", that is the point where something happens which makes a big change inevitable. With a formal political process of very public reversal that's obvious but often this isn't, and sometimes it's not even obvious to those inside 'the target' of the campaign at the time. In a case like this everything rests on relationships: Apple's strength has been in being both 'different' and closer to the next aspirations of their customers than their competitors are. The biggest risk for Apple must be if the market demands innovation in an area Steve Jobs has chosen to ignore.
Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 33, 08 June 2007: Motivation & Climate Change
Motivation and Climate Change – New Reports

This month there’s a new 34 page report at www.campaignstrategy.org - Research Into Motivating Prospectors, Settlers and Pioneers To Change Behaviours That Affect Climate Emissions (www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/behaviourchange_climate.pdf).

There’s also a paper Using Values Modes (http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/usingvaluemodes.pdf) which explains the psychographic mapping system that divides the population into 12 ‘Value Modes’ distributed among the three main Maslowian motivational segments of Pioneers, Prospectors and Settlers. The latter also gives seven basic ‘Value Modes Strategies’, the latest UK ‘values map’ and the proportions in each segment and group.

Because they are politically, commercially and socially important, and because they are rarely engaged by either public sector communications efforts or NGO campaigns, there is wide interest in communicating with ‘Prospectors’, the esteem-driven slice of the population (40% in the UK, more in the USA). The piece of research reported at www.campaignstrategy.org was conducted for a consortium of Local Authorities and the Centre for Sustainable Energy in Bristol, England, and drew on the Value Modes model run by CDSM (Cultural Dynamics www.cultdyn.co.uk). It is qualitative research, focused on two Prospector Value Modes, involving ten eight person groups moderated and interpreted by KSBR (www.ksbr.co.uk): six Prospector, one Pioneer and one Settler.

The project which the research was designed to inform, targets people visiting shopping malls and is not yet completed [1] but we’re sharing some of the research results now, because the findings may be helpful with many other communications efforts. While it uses small groups, this approach is much more penetrating than polling (asking direct questions), or even lifestyle-based segmentation (eg ACORN or MOSAIC).

These findings are especially significant to anyone seeking to achieve “behaviour change”. Whereas classic campaigns can be conducted by engaging a small silver of society which then causes strategic changes to take place, once any group embarks on population-wide ‘behaviour change’, you need a population-wide model to work with. It
is popularly assumed that no such model exists at the level of values or motivations and these are generally guessed-at by looking at opinions, attitudes, lifestyles or behaviours. As is argued in the report, this is simply naïve and even obtuse because it ignores well-established findings, especially from the commercial world, that it is psychological values which drive behaviour, and stated beliefs and opinions tend to fit behaviour, not the other way around. By using Value Modes we can start with people, and their motivations, rather than starting with the problem (in this case climate change).

The study revealed some striking differences between the groups, and between the type of ‘offers’ that might ‘work’ for Prospectors, and the normal approach taken in most public sector or NGO campaigns. For example: for the flagship Prospector group of ‘Now People’ here are some do’s and don’ts around talking about climate change:

Don’t:
- Talk about the implications of climate change: too remote; they are not very bothered
- Use messengers (voices) which lack authority or could be challenged
- Criticise behaviours (eg wrong type of car, ‘wasting’ energy in your home)
- Ask them to give things up
- Ask them to be the first to change (amongst their peers)
- Invoke critical judgement by others

Do:
- Refer to local, visible, negative changes involving loss or damage
- Show the significance of UK emissions and those of normal people (ie like them)
- Use interest in homes and gardens
- Deploy the nag factor of their children
- Create offers which are above all easy, cost-effective, instant and painless

Think for a moment about the common use of ‘pledges’, mostly to give things up, in climate campaigns, and the drivers which are deployed – often evidence of implications – and it is clear how different the offer needs to be for these people from the ‘normal’ climate campaign.

The report details how to talk to Prospectors as a whole, and to Settlers and Pioneers. The latter for example, do like ‘implications’ and are very ready to accept that they are personally part of the problem but perhaps too ready – the researchers characterised their stance as ‘accepting responsibility in principle’: Pioneers have a tendency to acknowledge the issue intellectually and not necessarily act on it. They are also quite likely to have already considered something like your proposed action and taken whatever action on it that they will, unless it looks very new. Unlike Prospectors, the Settlers we spoke to were ready to embrace the idea of austerity in the name of climate, although mainly for others!

While the general picture is most useful, the research also threw up some interesting anecdotal insights.

For example there was the Settler lady who had undertaken the typically Pioneer
behaviour of fitting her home out with solar power – much to the interest of her Settler peers. But her motivation was straight from the handbook – she wanted energy independence, safety, security, very local security. It had little or nothing to do with climate as a globally conceived ‘issue’.

Then there was the reaction to the notion of ‘carbon footprints’, much beloved of many UK NGOs and some in the current government sector. A group of Prospectors reacted first with some puzzlement and then shied away from the idea – a footprint, especially a sooty carbon one, was not something you wanted on your carpet, it had no place in their home. So while our clients were spot-on in choosing to meet up with Prospectors on their home turf of a shopping mall, any approach that centred on a policy idea of ‘carbon footprints’ would most likely be vigorously avoided.

Have a look at the report and the guide if you’re planning any climate communications, and see if there’s anything in it which helps. One final thought which it prompted in me was that because of the way most businesses operate (market-led), once products and services are available that ‘work’ for Prospectors (the Prius and the Wattson are perhaps examples), it’s commerce which is most likely to get it right for them. That much may be rather obvious but it also implies that unless NGOs and public sector communicators break away from their Pioneer assumptions, and even worse their Concerned Ethical thinking, they are likely to be more and more marginalised as the social bandwagon for climate action rolls on.

Such research also shows why the ‘social marketing’ approach, much in vogue for the UK government, is ultimately limited. It will help with identifying audiences, channels and contexts but it provides little or no useful insight into motivation. Nor is it strategic, analysing power and changing the context, actors, allies or obstacles in the way that good campaigns do.

In the next edition of this newsletter I aim to have more about social marketing and climate change efforts. I’ll also ask whether commercial companies are anyway overwhelming government ‘public service’ communications (not only on climate) with advertising and PR which simply has the opposite effect, and if so, why government doesn’t do something about it?

**Dell Goes Green?**

Anyone interested in following up the Greenpeace Apple campaign reported in the last edition, should have a look at Dell’s greening initiative, detailed at [http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20070605005323&newsLang=en](http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20070605005323&newsLang=en)

Dell claims it’s launched a “global effort to partner with its customers to become the greenest technology company on Earth for the long-term. The new Zero Carbon Initiative will continue to maximize the energy efficiency of Dell products and over time offset their carbon impact”.

It is “committed to reduce the carbon intensity of its global operations by 15 percent by
2012” and “is asking customers for their ideas in building the “greenest PC on the planet.” Dell’s call for ideas and more information is on its IdeaStorm site (www.ideastorm.com)“

A smart move which places Dell well ahead of Apple for any aspirant green computer designer, and will cause a good deal of clucking in the hen coops of its primary suppliers from whom it is demanding reports on their greenhouse gas emissions data. It says “Suppliers risk having their overall scores reduced during Dell quarterly business reviews for not identifying and publicly reporting GHG emissions. A supplier’s volume of Dell business can be affected by the scores earned on reviews. Dell will work with suppliers on emissions reduction strategies once data is collected”.

Innovators

If you’re looking for interesting new campaign ideas try the mainly student activists inventing their campaigns at Ben and Jerry” Climate College’, an online climate friendly initiative which has already spawned projects such as unpluggit, the campaign to curb phone-charger standby.

Described as ‘A 6 month programme that offers the chance for 18-30 year olds to educate themselves about the causes, politics and potential solutions of climate change’, it’s at www.climatechangecollege.org

Interesting Consultants

Have a look at www.provokateur.com (London) and www.spitfirestrategies.com (Washington) and in case, says Jon Cracknell, “you’re ever feeling complacent”, try www.worldometers.info

Still Flying?

A survey by AA Personal Loans found that a fifth of holidaymakers are planning to take holidays in Britain to reduce their carbon footprint. 11% said they wanted a driving holiday in Europe because of the environmental impact of flying. 3% of people have cancelled their holidays altogether because of climate change concerns. Fewer than half of the respondents said they were sticking to plans to take short-haul flights to Europe. www.mailonsunday.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=455481&in_page_id=1770

[1] for follow up on the project contact Ian Preston – ian.preston@cse.org.uk. To contact the researchers – Value Modes – Pat Dade: pat.date@cultdyn.co.uk and qualitative: John.Scott@ksbr.co.uk

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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 34, 20 August: Climate Scepticism – What Should Campaigners Do?

One of the 'great debates' of our age – how to respond to climate change – is often framed by the media in terms of belief or disbelief. An article I have published at my website – 'Sustaining Disbelief: Media Pollism and Climate Change' (http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/sustaining_disbelief.pdf) - analyses the different forms of 'scepticism' that are embedded in the 'climate change' debate and the way that the media sometimes 'samples' these to magnify, extend and exaggerate climate scepticism.

It shows for example that much quoted articles such as the 'Climate Change: Why we don't believe it' in the UK political journal the New Statesman, mis-apply evidence of one form of scepticism (in this case about feasibility of taking action) to create a false picture of scepticism about 'climate change' as a whole.

It identifies seven stages in the main 'climate change' frame used by most of the media, each a source of belief/disbelief:

- **Existence** – could the models be right? Could large scale human induced climate change exist?
- **Consequence** – if it did exist, would that really matter?
- **Detection** – can we find signs that the forecast climate change is really happening – a 'signal'?
- **Attribution** – if it's happening, can we find a 'fingerprint' of human influence?
- **Response** – should we respond politically, eg by international government action, and socially and individually, by changing the technologies we use and the lives we lead?
- **Feasibility** – are the proposed solutions actually doable, technologically, economically, organisationally, politically?
- **Efficacy** – if we are trying them, are they really working?

Taking poll results from one basis of 'belief' or 'disbelief' and implying that it reads across to the whole, or to the most fundamental doubts, allows journalists to create more dramatic stories because they make campaigns or pro-climate government policies look out of step with 'the public'. This sleight of hand or sloppiness is important because while numerous polls show that 'the public' overwhelmingly believes human-induced climate change to be real, the reiteration of doubt in the media discourages action.

The study also presents data from two surveys in 2001 and 2007 by CDSM Cultural
Dynamics Strategy and Marketing, which asked several relevant questions, and breaks down the results across the three main Maslowian motivational segments of Security-Driven 'Settlers', esteem-driven 'Prospectors' and inner-directed Pioneers.

On the questions it poses about the 'state of the natural environment', overall only a very small part of the population is in any way 'sceptical'. It also shows that for that small minority (1.8 – 8.8% of the population) on questions about whether it is 'too late' to do anything about climate change, or 'it's not as dangerous as it's made out to be', and 'I'm not concerned', the Security-Driven part of the population is increasingly heavily overrepresented. This conservative, traditional, local-oriented, fatalistic and acquiescent part of the population is small to start with (20% in the UK) and shrinking. Socially it exerts no trend-setting effect on other parts of the population. "Left to social processes the skepticism revealed by these questions would be expected to gradually die out" says the study.

However that's without the influence of the media. Press, tv and radio can use the sceptical 'average joe' or 'untutored man on the street' represented by this group to stand up stories that try to paint the population as a whole as 'disbelieving', for example by using them as 'vox pop' voices and connecting that to the larger doubt that exists not about whether climate change exists but, for instance, about whether effective action is being taken to combat it.

The paper warns that the very small 'contrarian' minority element amongst the Pioneers – who are media savvy, interested in 'interesting questions' and tend to be life's 'natural' iconoclasts – will exert a disproportionate influence on the national debate by organising media debates and both seeding and feeding doubt amongst the rest of the population. While their motivation is intellectual and almost playful, it helps sustain a conversation of doubt and that discourages politicians from across-the-board mandatory action on climate, which itself defers action amongst both the Settlers and Prospectors – the first because there is no authority leadership, and the second because of unresolved controversy and the risk of 'getting it wrong' socially.

Because politicians use polls to assess public opinion, which they seek to 'stay in step with', and because the media depiction of climate change scepticism often uses polling in a naive or wantonly naive way, a negative feedback is created in which media exaggeration of scepticism discourages political action which in turn encourages climate lethargy.

The paper also argues that the inner-directed Pioneers are also the source of two other small but problematic groups for anyone trying to advance climate action. Some early actors will have tried personal action but now despair at persuading enough people to do likewise – hence they become 'despairers', despairing of effective action. If they are climate scientists or disenchanted campaigners then their views may carry in the media and have a wider impact. For them the paper advocates 'remedial' action – showing them that social and technological change is feasible.

The other problematic Pioneers are the ethical-arguers, the 'Concerned Ethicals' who campaign by trying to show the bigger picture, the need for personal change on ethical grounds, as has been discussed in previous editions of this newsletter. Their approach
particularly annoys Prospectors.

Regarding the 40% esteem (success) seeking Prospectors, the paper suggests they are "are caught in a dilemma between wanting to keep up with the fashion of being green, and avoiding making a social mistake by getting it wrong on the controversies". It suggests that communications should disengage "climate change" from offers or asks around behaviours which will help combat climate change. Make 'going green' aspirational and a choice of products or services endorsed by high status channels or messengers, and Prospectors can take it up as the 'right thing' to be doing. Only don't connect it to 'the climate change debate'.

It concludes that climate scepticism is marginal and not in itself a significant phenomenon in the UK but that the media magnification of scepticism, especially in relation to polling, is significant. Communicators need to pay more attention to it and to adopt a differentiated strategy for dealing with it.

**Occupying Story Space**

Many campaigns involve trying to 'occupy' space in the media conversation. As countless media analyses show, there are a number of elements to any 'story'. Sometimes campaigners are satisfied simply to appear in a story, or to cause it to be covered at all. To gain maximum effect however campaigns should seek to occupy as much of the story as possible without denying the media their essential role — ie one that the media finds professionally acceptable.

For example a 'story' might include elements or roles such as:

- An event which is reported
- A fact which is 'important' — typically cited as a reinforcing 'proof'
- An analysis (often a process in which an 'expert' pronounces)
- A synthesis (in a long piece eg with several experts involved — bringing it together)
- The meaning — the explanation of what it means in 'our terms' where the report or reporter identifies with the viewer, listener or audience

The more of these positions which the campaign group occupies, the bigger its impact is likely to be.

In a story where a group causes only the event to take place, it is often at the mercy of many other voices as to what it means. This is the classic vanguardist campaign problem – those involved 'understand' it to mean one thing but the audiences understand something else and the effect is therefore not what the campaigners hope for.

Slightly cleverer campaigning will involve preparatory work to ensure that a 'meaning' is already widespread as a latent idea so that the media will uncover that once the event triggers the creation of 'the story'.

Use of visual language (ie in pictures of the event) in which there is little need to provide
interpretation but where the visual communication is so compelling that it gets carried in the media with minimal comment, is perhaps the best way around this.

Opportunistic campaigners who do not create events but seek to exploit them to give their opinions are often disappointed by trying to become influential interpreters of meaning. More likely they become one 'voice' which is used to triangulate an issue (ie a discounted extreme) with the media ultimately providing their own spin of meaning on it either through their own voice or a proxy.

Creating events in which it is self-evident that your campaign has enormous resonance with the public has the effect of largely removing the role of assigning 'meaning'. In this case 'the people' have decided what it means and reporters are reduced to reporting. In this instance the campaigners are really 'in control' although without having to engage in much argument at all. An interesting example is where the forces of law and order ostensibly deployed against protestors take their side, as in some human rights, civil rights or 'revolutionary' events, and in a small way in the recent demonstrations against the expansion of Heathrow Airport in London.

Resources

The Environmental Funders Network is ostensibly aimed at educating and helping foundations to give grants to campaign groups and others but it has a lot of useful resources listed at the site under headings such as 'challenges within environmentalism' and 'communications strategy, campaign planning and social values'. A recent report tracks where the money went from all major environmental grant givers. http://www.greenfunders.org

Mind The Gap

The antithesis of boring statistics. Or more fun stats anyway. Gapminder is at http://www.gapminder.org/

For example: “In this first GapCast, Professor Hans Rosling shows how economic growth, public health and sexual rights have changed in Sweden during 300 years. In only 6 minutes he shows life expectancy and GDP per capita of Sweden from 1709 to 2004. 300 years of Swedish progress covers today’s disparity from Sierra Leone to Japan. Whereas education of midwives started in 1709 it was only in the 1970s that family planning was included in their training. Sexual rights came late in Sweden compared to progress in health and wealth”. So there you are. And ‘Gapminder World 2006: Choose between a number of indicators, select which countries you want to show and then see the development over time’— actually well worth looking at. Honestly.
Outcomes

Many campaigns find it hard to identify real-world outcomes, or even to track relevant changes. Here’s an interesting indicator – although it can’t be attributed to any specific campaign that I know of. The UK Daily Mail reported on 13 June 2007 (Clothes peg sales soar as people turn their backs on tumble dryers, Sean Poulter):

"Families are turning back the clock and pegging out their washing to save money - and the planet. A leading supermarket has seen a 1,400 per cent increase in the sale of pegs in the first four months of 2007, compared with a year ago. Sales of washing lines and rotary dryers are up by 147 per cent. The move appears to reflect a desire to reduce reliance on tumble dryers, which use huge amounts of energy, so contributing to the release of carbon and climate change."

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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 35, 14 October:

Spin by Construction – or should the BBC tell the truth?

A politician who complains about the media, said the British MP Enoch Powell, is like a captain who complains about the sea. So should campaigners complain about the media? Generally not – in my view – but there are limits. In my opinion there is now a case for those in a position to do so, to press the BBC to change the way it is reporting climate change.

The day before US former Vice President Al Gore received his Nobel Peace Prize for his awareness raising on climate change, UK media led with the story that a High Court judge had backed a complaint that Mr Gore’s campaigning video The Inconvenient Truth contained ‘nine errors’. As a result, the Judge ruled that the UK Government which (perhaps foolishly) had backed distribution of the film to schools, ought to issue new guidance putting, as the BBC put it [1], ‘the other side of the argument’.

That night it fell to the BBC’s Environmental Analyst Roger Harrabin to front a report about the ruling, including an extract of a previous report in which he too questioned Gore about one assertion in the film (the meaning of CO2-temperature graphs). Harrabin’s own view on this is posted in a subsequent story that’s well worth reading, on the BBC website [2]. Harrabin says he felt a ‘flutter of unease’ when he first saw the Gore film because its inclusion of contentious material left it open to just such an attack.

In short, The Inconvenient Truth does have some errors or arguable assertions but its
core argument is right. A UK MP put it to me the day afterwards that the detail of the Judge's ruling will “do more than anything else” to confirm that on four central points Gore was right about global warming. The problem is that very few people will read the ruling, or see the detail, whereas the reports of Gore's film being found wanting by a judge will be read as Gore being found “wrong”.

**BBC reporting not truthful**

An aside in the BBC story about the case mentioned that the case had been triggered by Mr. Stewart Dimmock, a school governor who was a member of the ‘New Party’. When I looked up the New Party on Google I quickly found what presumably many politicians know but very few teachers or viewers of the BBC will know, that the ‘New Party’ is a fringe political party funded by a very rich businessman who has been campaigning against environmentalists (as well as drunk-driving laws and various other social restriction), and climate change campaigns in particular, since the 1990s.

So in terms of what viewers will understand – what they will see as truth – there are two problems here.

First, they may see it as evidence that Gore was wrong and possibly that climate change is not a threat. By kicking its criticism into a court of law, with a formulaic framing of a decision on ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, the New Party campaigners succeeded in marking Gore as “wrong” overall.

Second, viewers may see it as ‘a school governor’ – i.e. representing ‘education’ – opposing Gore's influence in schools. Whereas in fact it was a political campaign tactic. So in both these respects, the BBC's reporting of the High Court hearing was not truthful, in that it told less than the truth, and arguably, (as could be measured by what people “took from it”), may have reversed the truth.

No doubt every word the BBC used was accurate and truthful – the problem is that the construction of the story, the meaning of the players, the actors, even the role of the BBC itself, created a different meaning. It failed to tell a truthful tale, to give a true picture.

Campaigners will recognize this, after all, much campaigning consists of introducing messengers or propositions or change contexts. But campaigning organisations are recognized and treated as such in the media – in this case Mr. Dimmock was not – he was effectively portrayed as an ‘innocent’ member of the public, thereby inviting viewers to identify with him.

Of course it not only NGO campaigners who try to get across meaning, influence people, outcomes and events by construction – spin by construction is the stuff of much PR and the techniques of modern politics. The techniques perfected by dog-whistle kennelmeister Frank Luntz and wedgemeister Karl Rove are far more manipulative than anything that campaigners generally get up to. When Luntz talks of ‘words that work’ he describes a process which often involves reformatting political propositions to mesh with gut prejudices.
BBC not telling the truth about the scientific consensus

On the climate issue, many observers have criticised the media for mis-constructing stories by pitching one advocate of change against one opponent of change: ie misleading ‘balance’.

Because the issue is generally framed by reference to ‘science’, this ‘balance’ implies that the ‘argument is unresolved’, the debate continues, climate change may not be happening, and so on. Roger Harrabin himself points out that a recent UK poll found high concern about climate change coupled with a wrong belief that climate scientists were still ‘split’, whereas in truth there is an overwhelming consensus that it is real. In the case of climate, this consensus is laboriously codified and institutionalised via the workings of the IPCC, the co-recipient of the Gore Nobel Prize. On TV news Harrabin pointed this out but his comment was framed in a construction which said something else. As George Lakoff has repeatedly demonstrated [3], this means that Harrabin’s explanatory words will be simply discarded as they don’t fit the frame.

So here’s a charge against the BBC which I think sticks: they are not telling the truth about the scientific consensus on climate change, because they are not constructing their news stories in a way which shows this consensus.

Of course the BBC has many times reported the strength of the consensus but then it goes on to run stories which are framed and constructed in ways which deny the consensus, and, as I tried to detail in the report Sustaining Disbelief discussed in the last issue of this newsletter, that in turn can have a real effect in stymieing action on climate change.

The BBC-Gore case is one where there are stories within stories as complex as any Shakespearean plot. Roger Harrabin himself has probably done more than anyone else to educate the BBC, its executives, journalists and managers, about the realities of climate change and the science. So far as I know, little of that has ever featured in the media but he deserves some sort of prize for it himself. Yet now he finds himself as one of the organisation’s key interpreters of the issue, at a time when the BBC has made a high profile retreat from being an advocate of action on climate change.

BBC lacks clear editorial line

Unlike the privately owned Sky which has adopted an editorial line in favour of action against climate change, the BBC first became the best informed broadcaster handling the issue, then planned to run ‘planet relief’, a climate advocacy telethon, and has now retreated [4] to a position where it treats climate change as a contentious issue to be reported on from a distance. The problem for anyone who cares about trying to change how we live and run our economy so that we stand a real chance of curbing climate change, is that the BBC is now, perhaps inadvertently, providing a subsidised theatre for climate sceptic campaigning. This might not matter so much if the BBC had a clear editorial line on climate change itself but unlike newspapers, or even Murdoch’s Sky, it does not.
Its editors certainly have views, and these must influence their decisions. For example as reported by John Plunkett in *The Guardian*:

‘Asked whether the BBC should campaign on issues such as climate change, Mr. Horrocks [BBC TV News editor] told a session at the [Edinburgh] TV festival: “I absolutely don’t think we should do that because it’s not impartial. It’s not our job to lead people and proselytize about it.”

[Peter] Barron [editor of the flagship news programme Newsnight] added: “It is absolutely not the BBC’s job to save the planet. I think there are a lot of people who think that, but it must be stopped.”

Planet Relief would have given implicit if not explicit BBC endorsement to action on climate change. This is the position adopted by Sky, and all the many corporations who in their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes align themselves with action to cut their ‘carbon footprint’ or even overtly support political action to limit emissions by statute. They all agree it is part of ‘their job to save the planet’. The BBC however denies this responsibility. If like Al Gore you see climate change as not even a political but a moral issue, then the BBC’s position is more than strange.

As a ‘public interest broadcaster’ the BBC should at least explain its editorial view. By choosing which stories to run, how to frame them, and deciding who appears and does not appear, the BBC has a massive influence on the meaning, ‘message’ and ‘truth’ of a story even before a reporter speaks any words or an editor does any ‘editing’. It cannot credibly pretend that its broadcasts are simply an objective window on the world and that any meaning they contain is assigned in the mind of the viewer.

On his blog for example [5], BBC TV News Editor Peter Horrocks wrote after Edinburgh that “there is an increasingly strong (although not overwhelming) weight of scientific opinion in favour of the proposition that climate change is happening and is being largely caused by man.”

This ‘not overwhelming’ caveat is presumably what the BBC relies upon to give prominence, and often equal voice, to ‘climate sceptics’ as to those representing the ‘orthodoxy’ that climate change is real and we ought to take action to cut emissions.

Having read this I wrote to Peter Horrocks pointing out that the IPCC says [6] in its Fourth Assessment Report that it has ‘very high confidence that the global average net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming’.

I asked him “Could you let me know if you still feel the same way ? ie that the weight of scientific opinion is not overwhelming ?” I have not yet had a reply.

**Failure to explain politics**

The BBC could adopt a clear editorial position that conclusive evidence was not in, and therefore the public interest was best served by continuing a debate on this basis. That would explain the prominence it gives to climate sceptics. Then we would know where
we stand. It would of course find itself in a bit of a debate with the thousands of climate scientists who contribute to the IPCC but that would be the BBC’s problem.

Or, it could organise its coverage to show the reality of the position which the climate sceptics occupy in relation to the science. Where would such programming fit? It could be in fringe politics — similar to the coverage given by the BBC to parties such as the British National Party for example. Or it could be in a science strand, perhaps with a similar treatment to scepticism over tobacco causing cancer? Or in programming about campaigns and social movements such as fringe religions. This is how the UK Government should now be pressed to treat the attack on the Gore movie — as an example to school children of how the media becomes involved in campaigns for attention and contested truths, not simply about ‘science’.

The BBC’s current position effectively creates an equal weight platform for the climate sceptics every time there is any news about climate change. This does not reflect the reality of the science, the consensus over the science, or the conclusions which politicians, NGOs and others have come to after informing themselves about the science. But it invites the viewers to see ‘the truth of the issue’ as ‘equally balanced’.

Tom Burke, an advisor to major corporations and a former director of Friends of the Earth commented recently:

“There is a bizarre notion of balance that is applied asymmetrically by broadcasters to this issue. Imagine a world in which the BBC or other broadcasters insisted that any explanation of how the global economy works should have a Marxist viewpoint as well as a capitalist perspective in order to preserve balance. There are about as many Marxist economists left as there are climate science sceptics so why are we not hearing from them when Evan Davies [BBC economics editor] speaks from a straight down the line, mixed-economy, OECD approved orthodoxy. Or, indeed, why do we not hear more from the Ayn Rand school of Objectivist economic theory — this view may have even more adherents than the climate sceptics but no-one thinks we should present it as part of a balanced view of the economy.”

“The fact is that we have an infotainment industry where we used to have a free press. Ayn Rand and Karl Marx aren’t news any more. Climate change is.”

It’s up to broadcasters what position they adopt. They can take the CSR view like Sky. That can mean you advocate action while reporting on those against it. Right now the BBC effectively lies further towards the ‘sceptics’ than the likes of BP, Marks and Spencer, Wal-Mart or Shell.

Or they can take the interpreter-of-reality position, the ‘mission to explain’, once adopted by various broadcasters, emphasising understanding, not just reporters reporting what they ‘find’, or find put in front of them. In my view the present BBC position which makes ‘impartiality’ the cornerstone of its mission is causing it problems over climate change because it is failing to explain — not failing to explain the physics or chemistry of climate change but failing to explain its politics, including the politics which it is part of. It is allowing people to play politics with the science and becoming party to that itself by the prominence that it gives to fringe climate politicians, elected or unelected.
Another position would be to say we are at war – and that in conditions of war, the public interest changes. There are many who believe we should be at war with climate change, and that until we are better organised, we will lose. The BBC of course has, like other sections of the media, adjusted its procedures in times of war. Strangely enough the BBC is now somewhat to the sceptical side of the UK Government, which has at least declared a phoney war on climate change, even if it’s not doing much about it.

The magazine *New Scientist* can afford to take a more intellectually rarefied position – given its readership. A recent *New Scientist* editorial deplored the campaigning interventions of climate sceptic organisations disguised as contributions to science but concluded that we need climate scepticism: ‘No one wants to silence sceptics: we need scepticism. We just wish they were better at it’ [7]. Given its position, the BBC cannot afford to take such a sanguine view and still serve the public interest.

Nor is there any longer, if there ever was, any clear distinction between the roles of media and politics. As Tom Burke comments: “We used to live in a world in which politicians made the news and journalists reported it, now we live a world in which journalists make the policies and politicians repeat them.”

So what should climate campaigners do about the BBC? Generally it is a very bad idea to pick an argument with the media: a pissing match with a skunk. It’s also not as if these issues aren’t debated by journalists, so there’s no shortage of ‘ideas’ but in my view at least, given the seriousness of climate change, the power of the media, and the urgency of doing something effective about it, the BBC should not be allowed to behave as if its own actions have so little impact.

At the very least, the BBC should have its own explicit editorial line on climate change – broadcast on air, where it might register with viewers. That might be a reasonable demand for campaigners to make.

**Postscript:** as of 14 October it is reported that the campaigners who helped fund the High Court challenge over the Gore movie are now proposing to circulate an ‘alternative view’ video to every school in the UK. Jonathan Leake reports in *The Sunday Times* [8]:

‘The distribution of *The Great Global Warming Swindle* is being funded by Viscount Monckton, who is part of a counter-campaign to undermine the scientific consensus on climate change. Monckton was one of the backers of Stewart Dimmock, the Kent lorry driver and school governor who took the government to court for sending copies of Gore’s film to schools. The two are connected through the New party, a right-wing group whose manifesto was written by Monckton and of which Dimmock is a member. … Monckton has obtained funding from a right-wing Washington think tank, the Science and Public Policy Institute (SPPI), to create a second film that will also be sent to schools. Entitled *Apocalypse No*, it parodies Gore, showing Monckton presenting a slide show in a vitriolic attack on climate change science.’

sometimes the most basic lessons of campaign design are the most important. Working with Elaine Lawrence I recently completed a review of a major Friends of the Earth campaign - 'The Big Ask' - to help Friends of the Earth Ltd (England and Wales) 'learn the lessons' about effectiveness, political impact, value for money and so on. As usual we did a lot of internal and external interviews and I'm sure he won't mind me saying, that one of the most pertinent comments came from journalist Mike McCarthy, Environment Editor of UK newspaper The Independent.

"Being interesting is very effective. Don't be boring. Many environment groups in trying to win media interest, focus on the important rather than the interesting. There is a massive difference for the media. This campaign made something important interesting. What was ‘The Big Ask’ actually about? It took a frankly rather dull and complex public policy process about mandatory targets and made the legislative process interesting. It would have been very easy to make it boring."

The Big Ask was certainly effective. It mobilised tens of thousands of individuals and hundreds of Friends of the Earth groups in England and Wales to lobby almost every MP, to support moves for a Climate Change Bill requiring the government to set targets for progressive reductions in CO2 emissions. By a combination of energetic execution, good fortune in political circumstance and other factors, which I hope Friends of the
Earth will agree I can write more about in another newsletter, it resulted in the government reversing its opposition and adopting the idea in the recent Queens Speech. It will become law. (See http://www.thebigask.com/). BBC correspondent Nick Robinson said:

“People often say ‘does anything change politics? Well it has here. Friends of the Earth did a rising campaign for a Climate Change Bill. Ministers pooh-poohed the idea. What is the point of a Bill they said? It wouldn't be worth the paper it is written on. Then David Cameron adopted it as his key theme. Menzies Campbell's first big policy announcement was on green taxes and Ministers have gradually said ‘Oh lets have a Bill.'”

But what was the interesting bit? It was the ask itself. What was The Big Ask? As Mike McCarthy points out, the ask was politics and policy - inherently dull stuff. But by creating a brand for the campaign that did not even appear to be Friends of the Earth unless you looked closely, using rock music figureheads such as Thom Yorke of Radiohead and giving it personality and style which was younger, cheekier and more expressive than the Friends of the Earth brand, the campaign took the organisation into new social and psychological territory, reaching new types of supporter and energizing old ones.

The advertising agency CHI helped create the idea of The Big Ask - which in communications terms was effectively a ‘dangle’, a tease which dangled in front of the viewer, reader or listener inviting you in to find out what it was about.

Media trainers teach interviewees to use ABC bridging - I've posted a new extract from my book How To Win Campaigns at my website which gives you the basics (www.campaignstrategy.org/book_extracts/7_bridging.pdf). ABC bridging enables you to get across your ‘C’ communication points without getting diverted onto a journalists agenda of something more interesting, an ever present risk which is of course greater, the less interesting you are. Advanced training also covers "D" - the dangle. Expert interviewees can start an entire new conversation by judiciously inserting a ‘dangle’ that the interviewer can’t resist, something which sounds so good that the listeners or viewers would be ‘robbed’ if they didn’t give it time. Here CHI and Friends of the Earth had created a D right up front in their campaign title.

I frequently get asked to give advice on ‘communications strategies’. Very often the organisation has already been debating the need for ‘avoiding mixed messages’ and getting ‘key messages across’. Frequently they have a long list, or a huge matrix of ‘messages’, audiences and channels. Equally often this is unrealistic and unmanageable - simply too much stuff to ever hope to communicate with the resources available. My advice is almost always the same: forget about trying to communicate all that, or at least planning to do so. Instead work out the one or two things that would make a real difference, and add value to your work, and do those really well, with research, planning and adequate resourcing. Let the rest take care of itself - the real risk is not confusing anyone or getting details wrong but being ignored. Think about how much communication effort there is, and how little of it has any affect on you. It’s the fate of 99% of communications efforts that they are simply ignored.
So being interesting is vital, if not enough in itself.

Speeding

Here’s two approaches to road-safety campaigns to reduce speeding. One is by the Danish Road Safety Council and features people reinforcing the ‘message’ by taking the signs to the cars http://www.speedbandits.dk/ and the other (see right) from my local patch in North Norfolk UK, where the Norfolk Police are recruiting volunteers to assist in setting up trial speed traps (they are trained to use radar guns). The Danish example has appeared on thousands of websites around the world and received wide media coverage - at least it’s interesting and, as the film shows, got driver’s attention.

Cheating

Following the long tradition of spoofs, the website based campaign Cheat Neutral www.cheatneutral.com cleverly transposes the morality of carbon-offsetting, to personal relationships: ie you pay for others to remain faithful so you can cheat on a partner and still keep the total amount of infidelity in the world constant. The campaign’s amusing Youtube video [4] shows its success in raising the issue in political and media circles but also the limitations if one actually tried to use this ‘argument’ to stop people carbonoffsetting on a 1:1 basis or in a wide ‘behaviour change’ campaign.

Psychologically, in Value Modes terms [5], the double-take probably works to stimulate a ‘rethink’ amongst Pioneers but the Prospectors who want an instant pain-free positive result might be switched off, not just from offsetting but from carbon-reduction per se, unless immediately offered something better. Watch the BBC interview with Gavin Essler who gives a perfect ‘Now Person’ summary of assumed public motivation. In strategy terms of course you could try to get the Pioneers to stop offsetting and start doing something else better but that better thing would need to be instant, easy, preferably fun and signifying success (not giving things up), for it to spread beyond the Pioneers. As discussed in previous newsletters this could be a product, eg “don’t offset, get a Wattson”.

Some of the US talk-radio stations who took Cheat Neutral seriously were Brave New World type strident moralists, out to condemn them, which illustrates another pitfall of cross-psychological communications. So Cheat Neutral works brilliantly for challenging the politics of carbon-offsetting but probably only for Pioneers, and is unlikely to work if applied to ‘behaviour change’ campaigns aimed at the 60% of the ‘public’ who are Settlers or Prospectors.

The campaign’s strapline is “helping you because you can’t help yourself” but the problem for behaviour-changers is that while Pioneers think they can help themselves, many of the rest of the population think they can’t.
Proprotest? A New Word Needed?

A few days ago London finally got its long awaited new connection to high speed rail in Europe, the Eurostar link to St Pancras Railway Station. Eurostar, a supporter of the Friends of the Earth Big Ask campaign (them again), rather cleverly invited a shedload of green bloggers out on the wi-fi'd carbon-neutral first trip, resulting in wide outreach to one segment of its most likely customers (see Bonnie Alter's report in Treehugger[1]), even if the old 'mainstream' media focused mainly on the formal opening by the Queen and so forth.

Meanwhile outside Greenpeace hung a banner on St Pancras reading simply “YES”. Or rather it would have been better if it just read ‘YES’ (see photo at [2]) but Greenpeace felt it had to add "PS Gordon, No Need For That Third Runway". Gordon Brown is of course the UK Prime Minister and the government is backing a climate-busting expansion of airports, including another runway for Heathrow. The government encourages rail use to cut climate emissions and more air travel, claiming there is no contradiction. I'd be surprised if anyone in the country believes them. So why did Greenpeace feel the need to lose the elegance of "YES" (possibly itself a momentary 'dangle') and state the plodding obvious?

There's a cost to stating the obvious - it tells you what to think. Drawing your own conclusion, that the government ought to be doing more of this and not runways, is more likely to make someone angry. The banner just says what Greenpeace thinks.

Having been involved in too many banner discussions myself I can imagine why they did it. It's the fear of misrepresentation. Just saying 'yes' could be taken as agreeing with the government's line - by anyone, interviewer or Minister for example, who found it a convenient point to score or muddy the water with. Underlying this is the way a banner hanging is reported or seen, as a 'protest'. A 'protest' is usually taken as a manifestation of dissent: it has to be against something. So Greenpeace complied by putting in the giant footnote of what it was against.

By hanging a banner Greenpeace could both gain media attention and was trapped in the protest frame. There isn't a word for a positive protest - could it be a ‘Proprotest’? We need one because without it, almost any form of public manifestation by campaigners gets put down as a protest even if it's for something. In the public mind, and especially once filtered by media or political comment, this keeps NGOs defined as being "against everything". Talk to 'insiders' around UK politics at the moment and they'll tell you this is "the problem with the NGOs" on climate: "they're not for anything". This matters because however disingenuous or misplaced such statements may be, they serve as justifiers for then not doing what the campaigners want.

Academics are some of those who help sustain this frame of campaigns or environmental campaigns being 'just protest'. For example "Environmental Protest in Western Europe" by Christopher Rootes [3] charts the history of environmentalism in the eighties and nineties almost entirely by tracking 'protest' stories in the press (in the case of the UK, just in The Guardian). Although many of those campaigns were for things not
just against them, it all goes down as 'protest'. We do need a new word, because categories define the story.

Campaign of the Month

The US-based Oil Change group http://priceofoil.org/ has a clever strategy in focusing on the separation of oil and state – clever in that it plays an accepted frame (politicians are supposed to act in the interest of voters) against a climate reality (oil influence) at a point (run up to elections) where this counts.

Small Doom Film Wins Award

A nuclear war doom campaign movie made on a shoestring budget has won an award - see www.comeclean.org.uk for the film Anthropology 101 which recently received the 'Best Short Environmental Protection Documentary' award at the Artivist Festival in Hollywood. Made for the Beyond Trident Group. Will be showing in the Artivist Festival - www.artivists.org - coming to London 7th - 9th December. An example of how a very small group can use film making to gain wider interest in a subject that mostly "too awful to think about". Takes 'Inconvenient Truth' a few steps on.


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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 37, 28 December 2007

Feedback on Reaching Prospectors

Readers may remember the write-up of the West of England Climate Change project designed to reach the esteem-driven psychological group 'Prospectors'. At 40% of the population, this is 'not a hard-to-reach' group as the UK PC parlance has it, rather an impossible-to-reach group if you use issues, arguments and ethical baggage. They are after bigger, better, best, fabulous - and that means stuff or esteemed experiences. To their credit, four local authorities and the energy boffin group CSE, Centre for Sustainable Energy, decided to have a go at reaching these folk about domestic actions
that impact on climate change. The R+D for the project conducted by CDSM, KSBR and myself is detailed in newsletter 33 and a fuller report is posted at the Campaign Strategy website – see http://www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/campaignstrategy_newsletter_33.pdf

Now Ian Preston from CSE has written a note detailing the project experiences. This too is posted at the website: http://campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/consumer_movement.pdf. It's an interesting account of how to do it - and how it could be done better. See the website http://www.100ideashouse.com/ for the final execution.

Ian's report shows clearly that the project got very different responses from the Sustenance, Inner and Outer Directed Groups. I thought the execution - a glossy looking micro show home located in a shopping mall with 100 gadget ideas for saving energy - looked great. The main quibble that we had as researchers was that the exhibit was staffed not by people-like-us Prospectors but by energy experts from CSE, mainly IDs. In that sense it can't be taken as a direct test of the design but as Ian's boss Simon Roberts says, "point taken but ... we really wanted to see what we could do ourselves and really to learn from this exercise. There have been significant and I think lasting benefits to our broader understanding and thinking about communications and project design that have come from a reasonable number of our staff having been immersed in the project and 'out-there' trying to engage ODs. While, as you say, this probably limited this project a bit, I think we've gained a lot which may not have happened if we'd outsourced the direct engagement. But that doesn't need to be gained again so 'next time'... "

My favourite story from Ian is the lady from Estee Lauder who rushed off the buy a Brabantia washing line after seeing one in the exhibit - apparently it was the 'hit of the show'. An object lesson for all climate campaigners - it's the stuff, not Bali or Kyoto that counts for ODs (and next time guys, hire those Estee Lauder ladies to front the ask).

In case you think this is just spin have a look at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=461732&in_page_id=1770 where the UK's Daily Mail reported in June 2007: "Families are turning back the clock and pegging out their washing to save money - and the planet. A leading supermarket has seen a 1,400 per cent increase in the sale of pegs in the first four months of 2007, compared with a year ago. Sales of washing lines and rotary dryers are up by 147 per cent. The move appears to reflect a desire to reduce reliance on tumble dryers, which use huge amounts of energy, so contributing to the release of carbon and climate change."

Perhaps this also has something to do with the profile of the product - see http://www.brabantia.com/ - for Prospectors credit on the issue is welcome but the stuff is essential.

Lastly, as in Ian's write-up, we've also found in other recent research that the children play a big role in a lot of 'environmental' decision making in the UK. Settlers (security drive, SD) tend to do thing as-a-family - which may well include grannie, aunts etc as well as the 'nuclear family', and will embrace environmental issues if they come as a discrete soluble problem but they don't welcome being asked to think about problems
with no immediate tangible, executable solution. The ID inner directed Pioneers on the other hand, almost revel in thinking about insolubility - so long as it's interesting they will talk about problems and possible solutions almost indefinitely. They also like to get out and do things with their children - thinking of or discovering new stuff to do, often making it up as they go. In contrast the Prospectors or ODs tend to ignore environmental issues (and probably any tricky social issues) but are quickest to suggest that "you should get to the kids - then they nag us into action". But they tend to segment the family, each person with "their own interest" (activity), and do things 'for' their children rather than for them, for example taking them to an event or dropping them off and picking them up rather than taking part alongside, or buying a package for them.

So to reach all these people, you need to offer very different experiences. (See http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/usingvaluemodes.pdf at the Campaign Strategy website).

The 100 Ideas House is now looking for a home

CSE can't afford to use or store it indefinitely. So if you know of a suitable use or high footfall venue please contact Ian Preston at ian.preston@cse.org.uk before those ideas get out of date.

Apology For Late Arrival

I'd like to apologise for the very late arrival of the November newsletter. This was due to a mysterious technical problem with our website host's newsletter mailer. Thank you for your patience.

Chris
The Danger of Old Ideas

The economist John Maynard Keynes once said “The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones”, and as it is with economics, so it is with campaigns. One of the most powerful guiding assumptions for many campaigners in a good cause is that the way to achieve change, is through leadership and by example, for this will have a ‘mobilising’ or perhaps ‘educational’ effect. Unfortunately this is rarely true – otherwise many of the world’s more pressing problems would have been solved by others emulating the actions of the far-sighted or virtuous few.

On 29 January the BBC fielded a report [1] which is a sad but neat case study of exactly this, and which is relevant to any ‘good cause’. Here it is in full (visit the http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7270218.stm for some good graphics and for links):

No impact from Energy Saving Day

By Richard Black, Environment correspondent, BBC News website

The UK’s first Energy Saving Day has ended with no noticeable reduction in the country’s electricity usage. E-Day asked people to switch off electrical devices they did not need over a period of 24 hours, with the National Grid monitoring consumption.

It found that electricity usage was almost exactly what would have been expected without E-Day. Colder weather than forecast in some regions may have led to higher use of heating, masking any small savings.

The event also received very little publicity, despite having backing from campaign groups such as Greenpeace, Christian Aid and the RSPB, and from major energy companies such as EDF, E.On and Scottish Power.

"I am afraid that E-Day did not achieve the scale of public awareness or participation needed to have a measurable effect," said E-Day’s organiser Dr Matt Prescott in a message on his website. The Grid’s final figures showed national electricity consumption for the 24 hours (from 1800 Wednesday to 1800 Thursday) was 0.1% above the "business-as-usual" projection.

Lofty aims

The E-Day concept started life as Planet Relief, an awareness-raising BBC TV programme with a significant comedy element. But in September the BBC decided to pull the project, saying viewers preferred factual or documentary programmes about climate change. The decision came after poor audiences for Live Earth, and public debate over whether it was the corporation’s role to "save the planet".

Dr Prescott then decided to see whether he could mount E-Day as an independent operation, and secured the backing of important partners such as the National Grid and the UK’s major energy companies. They are obliged by the government to offer customers ways of improving energy efficiency, and some used E-Day to contact people interested in loft and wall insulation.
The event was launched on the steps of St Paul’s Cathedral in central London by Dr Richard Chartres, the Bishop of London, who described climate change as a “moral issue”.

“Let us remember people in the Ganges delta who are already feeling the effects of sea level rise and climate change,” he said.

“The science changes year by year - though rarely in the right direction - but the moral imperative remains the same.”

Lessons learned

Dr Prescott had hoped E-Day might bring a small but measurable reduction in electricity use, perhaps in the order of 2-3%, equivalent to the output of one or two fossil fuel fired power stations.

The idea was to demonstrate that numerous small personal actions could make a dent in greenhouse gas emissions.

But, he acknowledged on his website: “E-Day did not succeed in cutting the UK’s electricity demand.

“The drop in temperature between Wednesday 27 February and Thursday 28 February probably caused this, as a result of more lights and heating being left on than were originally predicted.”

“I will do my best to learn the relevant lessons for next time.”

Poor Matt Prescott: a nice man but not perhaps a campaigner. Greenpeace et al maybe should have known better?

The story of the BBC’s about-face on climate change has been discussed in earlier newsletters (see no. 33) but there are some aspects of this sorry example which are a warning to any campaign designer.

First, it’s often a bad idea to try and use an idea or a mechanism designed for one strategy, in another. I’m sure I’ve made this mistake myself but one that comes to mind is the SmilE car created by Greenpeace in the 1990s. Originally part of a brilliantly conceived campaign created by the ‘father of actions’ German Harald Zindler, it was a proof of energy efficiency potential – a re-made commercial model which achieved a far higher mileage than the manufacturers claimed was possible. In Zindler’s original plan that was merely a step to demonstrate Greenpeace’s technical competence, designed to give the organisation psychological standing in a subsequent ask to the public about raising large sums for a serious challenge to the car industry, utilising a special petrolbuying credit card. Sadly the card end had to be dropped, leaving Greenpeace with the car, which had already been developed. Not wanting to waste this ‘asset’, SmilE was then used in various climate campaigns but it didn’t ‘fit’ with the frames of those campaigns, and had a somewhat controversial and inglorious history. In this case Matt Prescott and co pressed on with the ‘big switch-off’ idea without the leverage of the BBC, and it failed.
Second, any campaign which sets out to generate numbers or some measurable result, sends a message of success or failure, in those terms. It invites such judgement. This is the age-old problem of ‘demonstrations’. They are a demonstration or as the French say, a ‘manifestation’ of support or feeling. Naturally this is relative: to turn out 10,000 people in almost any city in the world to ‘protest’ about an ‘issue’ that few people have heard of may have an impact on ‘awareness’. It’s new, different, unexpected. 10,000 concerned about an established issue like climate change would not be impressive. 10,000 if you clearly attempt to ‘mobilise’ a population of say 10 million, looks like a failure.

Just as the Stock Market discounts the share value of a stock based on expectations prior to results being announced, a ‘numbers game’ demonstration is judged against expectations. On way to avoid this is not to make it a simple numbers game. 10,000 families for example is a different idea. In which case gathering them together outside, say, a national Parliament, is probably a dim idea. 10,000 families inviting neighbours into their homes for a ‘party’ or to offer them tea (if British) and a chat about the issue of concern, would, on the other hand, be unusual and interesting. This might then generate the impression, which could be true, that there is a ‘national groundswell’ of some kind.

In the Switch-Off case this could perhaps have been achieved if instead of trying to show a reduction in electricity use as the measure of success, the organisers had focussed on participation: how many ‘communities’ were taking part, and even better, if they had found a way to measure their electricity usage locally. Then it could have generated a proof of feasibility, rather than a measure of ‘interest’.

Third, this is a classic example of enthusiasm for a ‘level two’ type campaign idea running away with itself. Wouldn’t it be great if ... in this case, enough people switched things off to make a measurable reduction in electricity usage nationally. Yes it could be great. But can it be done? This is important because it is relatively easy to generate interest in the test, and very hard to assemble the means to succeed. Hence it’s easy to ensure any failure gets reported, and failure can be read in many unhelpful ways.

Unhelpful because it can easily reinforce a host of types of scepticism (see Newsletter 34) about taking action in other ways or at all. It’s a short brain-step from ‘BBC says “No impact from Energy Saving Day”’ to “energy saving has no impact”.

Fourth, the way that the campaign appears to have been framed, is pure ‘Concerned Ethical’ [2]. The notion that ‘to make the world a better place we need to be better people’. To think globally and act locally, as we were reminded here by the Bishop of London. To give up bad things. To be serious and not fun or frivolous. The point is that Concerned Ethicals can have fun giving things up for ethical reasons but most other value groups can’t. The Prospectors for example, discussed in so many previous newsletters, want to be positive, to take things up, to buy, do or achieve things with a guaranteed result. They do not want to join noble but quite likely doomed efforts, they avoid anything that smacks of a futile gesture. They are quick to spot potential problems like free-rider effects, which in this case, were present in spades.
The Concerned Ethicals represent less than 10% of the population so a pitch which really only works for them, and a few others (who are less easy to mobilise), is a weak one to use if you set yourself a task of ‘national mobilisation’.

Contrast this with that other BBC-supported ethical exercise ‘Red Nose Day’, which raises money for development causes in Africa. Every person who wears a Red Nose visually reinforces the message. Even if there is doubt about more money being raised each year the organisers can spread their bets by emphasising the diversity of people or groups taking part, or their inventiveness. The participants can be photographed and that can then be promoted. Putting on The Nose involves giving up nothing (even your own money) except a little dignity and once well-enough established, appeals to all the main psychological groups. It’s a positive act. Even installing energy efficient light bulbs, while fantastically dull, would have left an unarguable legacy and impact, whereas the Switch Off wouldn’t.

Fifth, and then this is enough arm-chair criticism from me, even success might have turned out at least equivocal. If electricity demand had dropped a percentage point or two, would it have been due to warmer than normal weather? What meaning would have been assigned to the result by the media? Would it have been seen as a one-off? Would it have labelled reducing electricity demand as an entertainment or once-a-year thing to do? The whole idea was vulnerable to both attribution and framing problems. Activities like these are classic NGO campaign activities, classic in the sense that they are typical of those not in a position of power or influence trying to draw attention to an issue they care about. As President Roosevelt said: “do what you can, with what you have, where you are”. As such they often say something clear about you, about what you think but may have no impact on others.

Contrast this with the dynamic of the Brabantia shopping line discussed in the last Newsletter. There action on climate is made desirable to Now People (Uber-Prospectors) by doing it through a fashion-icon. See more at http://www.treehugger.com – apparently in the US there are municipalities than ban clothes lines. That’s another element missing from the ‘Switch-Off’: it lacked any form of social censure or controversy, there was really no dilemma, no talking point.

Perhaps the last question which remains about Switch Off is why were large organisations like Scottish Power, E.On and EDF taking part? As the BBC report mentions the UK Government imposes some obligations on them to try show efforts to increase energy efficiency so this offered a channel to reach people. However it also enabled them to ‘play down’ by adopting a NGO-like, or childlike role, innocents in the field, rather than major corporations whose main business is still selling fossil fuelled power. Anyone organising such an event needs to think hard about the costs and benefits of providing such an opportunity.

On this subject in the UK, the lesson for NGOs ought perhaps to be, that these old campaign ideas are not any longer the ones to be using.
Awesome

So says our Innovations Correspondent Jon Cracknell and he is right – see http://www.chrisjordan.com/current_set2.php?id=7 for a truly extraordinary set of visualisations. Mr Cracknell also points us to the excellent ‘New Organizing Encyclopedia’ at http://www.neworganizing.com/wiki/index.php/Main_Page. This Wiki based website is the sort of thing that will put steam powered efforts like this Newsletter out of business. There are a host of resources here – have a browse. I was interested to see for example, that the supporters of Defenders of Wildlife seem to identify more with wolves than they do with the idea that an anonymous donor will match any donation they make.

More Lessons from The Big Ask

In newsletter 36 last year we looked at the successful Friends of the Earth campaign The Big Ask, which led to the current UK Government’s commitment to introduce a law mandating annual or at any rate regular time-limited cuts in CO2. The campaign has an impressive ‘video wall’ of personal messages and a brief account of what it’s about at http://www.thebigask.com. Last time we focused on the use of a sub-brand and the ‘dangle’ in the proposition – the mysterious ‘ask’. There are though, a few other aspects to the campaign that may be of interest. To cut a long story short here’s a sample.

Why It Worked

Friends of the Earth (FoE) got lucky. FoE started with a Parliamentary Private Members Bill, which in the Uk is similar in effect to a referendum of ‘popular initiative’. It can lead to legislation but hardly ever does: it’s a way of drawing attention to a need, a case or an idea. The FoE Climate Bill encapsulated the main ideas which have now become government policy but it was put forward by a group of Parliamentary ‘usual suspects’.

As such it was unlikely to be seen as anything except a NGO exercise. Then fate intervened and David Cameron, the recently anointed leader of the Conservative opposition, picked it up and ran with it. The Tories (who have been tracking values and know that there’s a benefit to be had by being ‘green’) produced their own version. As it happened there was an electoral competition in play within the ruling Labour Party as Gordon Brown was about to take over from Tony Blair and faced a possible challenge by young, glamorous and intelligent David Milliband. Mr Milliband was Environment Secretary. Brown didn’t want to be out-flanked by Cameron, and had to listen to Milliband. In the end Milliband did not challenge Brown and published his own Bill, to outflank the Tories. So within a year or so the whole process that FoE had expected to take several years, was complete, thanks to political necessity and opportunism.

... It came at the right moment. Climate change was emerging from the general mush of ‘environmental’ issues as the no 1 concern and the Tories wanted to put clear green water between themselves and Labour on it. The clear, simple nature of the FoE proposition – budgets and a series of time-related targets to cut CO2 by law – was a lightning rod and a neat divider in an otherwise complex subject.
More good fortune – whereas his predecessor Margaret Beckett was a cautious partymachine politician who listened to her officials, Milliband was impetuous as well as intelligent and cared little for previous government policies. For Milliband picking up a NGO ‘punt’ was not a problem. For the Civil Service it would be tantamount to sacrilege.

None of this would have delivered the result if FoE had not been superbly well organised at making the details of the operation tick. This they did Swiss-style, like well oiled clockwork. It all hinged on local lobbying of MPs, by FoE local groups and others they enlisted. Almost every MP was reached, and a huge number signed the FoE ‘EDM’ (Early Day Motion) calling for the Bill. FoE groups took care to get the MP photographed being helpful for the local press. This is ‘simple’ organisation and application of effort – FoE had to cut a lot of other work and ignore other opportunities to do it – but it’s often the reason why elegantly designed campaigns fail: simple lack of application.

The reason why FoE could do this is in no small measure because local political work is right in the centre of FoE’s core competences. Unlike for example forays against multinationals or direct action or anything realted to ‘fun’. It was, by accident or design, a case of Sun Tzu’s ‘Strategy of Tactical Positioning’: local political lobbying is FoE’s best tactic and in this campaign design it was pivotal.

Why It Almost Failed

As well as the direct and narrow lobbying of MPs about the need for a Bill, FoE also tried to link all sorts of climate-related campaigns to The Big Ask. For example work on roads and road widening, transport policy, coal fired power station decisions, airports and air travel, even food. In communication terms the reach was too great – the link was not really made because causally, it was not there. The problem which The Big Ask so elegantly addressed was not climate change but the lack of political action on climate change. So long as they stuck to that, they were in fruitful territory. If on the other hand they had succeeded in convincing large numbers of people, or small numbers of influential people, that a Climate Bill would require stopping particular roads, airports, holiday plans, farm systems (etc) then it’s quite likely, I’d say very probable, that the opposition to the Bill would have been organised and considerable, certainly enough to put of Messrs Milliband and Cameron. So because that bit failed, the campaign succeeded.

There are other lessons that can be drawn from The Big Ask. For example despite the success of the free-standing brand in the proposition, it lacked a visual totem or leitmotif to simply signify support. It had no ribbon or red nose. It also struggled with the UK NGOs complicated relationships around ‘Stop Climate Chaos’, the organisation modelled on Jubilee 2000 which started out in life trying to be popular and has now sensibly decided it really is an activist vanguard. Nevertheless The Big Ask was a considerable success and I hope that FoE will sometime post is own more detailed account of what happened, so that other campaign groups can learn from their model.
Mike Childs of Friends of the Earth comments on the above:

“I think you’ve slightly overdone chance (Milliband, Cameron) and underrated hard slog. I think we would have still got there with the Bill without so much chance but through much more hard grind at constituency level. Also the Government didn’t have any great climate ideas of their own but the external agenda on climate was very big (IPCC reports, loads on BBC) so they had to find a good idea”.

Pro Protest

A while back I suggested that we needed a new word to describe ‘positive protests’. Someone wrote to me with a much better one but sadly my PC died and took that email to its grave. If you are out there, let me know again and I’ll put it in a subsequent issue.

Two Research Pitfalls To Watch Out For

These days more campaigns are ‘researched’, that is they use some form of audience research or segmentation – tailoring approaches to groups rather than just ‘the public’. That’s a good thing but quite often the results are contaminated by unintended or unrecognized influences.

One set could be called horizontal contaminants: this happens when for example, people invited to attend a focus group or other qualitative research session know in advance what the subject is, or who it’s for. That means they come pre-armed, as it were, with a set of views. The research session then becomes a set of performances rather than an exploration of what they might perceive, feel, say or do in ‘real life’. Another form of horizontal contamination occurs if you mix people who affect each other: for example where the presence of one ‘type’ of person affects how another type responds. This may not matter if you intend to reach them in the same mixed groups but if you are thinking of reaching them through channels which can segment them, then it does matter as it skews or edits or changes the ‘responses’ when you don’t need to do that.

The other set I call ‘vertical contamination’ (I’ve no idea if this is the ‘right’ term). This happens when the assumptions of the user, conductor or commissioner or the research introduce layers of meaning or assumption onto the ‘results’. An example is the segmentation quite recently released [3] by the UK Government department DEFRA, which has spent large sums trying to model the UK population to influence ‘sustainability’ of behaviours.

The DEFRA segmentation [4] divides up the UK public by twelve ‘headline behaviours’ which policy makers are interested in, such as install insulation or waste less food. So far so good but it then casts upon these behaviours, explanations about ‘ability to act’ and ‘willingness to act’. Ability to act is not clearly explained but is apparently assumed to be a mixture of opportunity and affordability (income). Willingness is deduced from various factors including whether people say they’d like to ‘do more’

Using these two axes of ‘willing-unwilling’ and ‘able-unable’ DEFRA then divides the population into seven segments according to their ‘green-ness’. This forms the lynchpin
of their strategy, and they go on from here to infer such things as which groups might be
targeted to do what and in which ways, even which may influence others.

However it seems that there is little evidence that the axes are real, ie that they exist
independently of the behaviours and that they are not just a restatement of the
behaviours (which are also self-reported not observed). It is anyway odd that DEFRA's
segmentation rests on things such as income when its own preceding surveys of
attitudes and behaviours reported [5] in 2006:

"Which groups are most positive in their attitudes? There were no really marked
differences in attitudes towards the environment between different sex, age, and social
groups."

and

"Which groups are most environmentally friendly in their behaviour? The groups most
likely to say they had already made certain changes to their behaviour (recycling more,
wasting less food, cutting down on gas, electricity and water usage) were those aged
65+ and, to a lesser extent, those living in rural areas, or in higher social grades."

Which is hardly much of a segmentation. Returning to the 2008 document, the main
report never defines ‘willingness’ but refers to a separate Annexe C. Annexe C
tabulates segments by ‘willingness’ and explains in a footnote:

“Willing to act is interpreted to include all who are currently acting, thinking about acting,
and just not thought about it; those who actively disagree with the behaviour, state they
will not carry it out or have tried but failed, or say they think they will give up are
categorised as unwilling."

To then map behaviourally defined groups against an axis which itself comes from
behaviour seems bizarre, and is clearly auto-correlated. As to ability to act it says:

“Ability to act is interpreted to include the responses for all who are currently acting,
thinking about acting, just not thought about it and don’t want to. Where possible it also
accounts for external and physical barriers including affordability, building constraints, lifestyle demands,
geographical constraints. This is based on a combination of
quantitative and qualitative research and is intended to be indicative only.”

How this is done, is not explained.

So underlying the weakness of the DEFRA segmentation, which has been widely
circulated to NGOs and others, is the absence of any independent motivational model
which segments people by type of motivation in order to match that against observed or
claims rates of behaviour. For example DEFRA makes much play of ‘norms’ but it has
no way of splitting out why different people undertake a behaviour which is so common
that it is a norm, ie ‘normal’. Recycling for instance.

To fall back on assumptions about access or opportunity or wealth is simply to fall victim
to the old embedded ideas: this is a social-marketing approach and embedded within that are the assumptions of many sociologists that wealth and economic opportunity drives society, and this will in the end explain everything.

DEFRA seems to have no other data to explain this with. It does not for example, even present behavioural-consumer segmentations such as MOSAIC, against behaviours such as recycling. This is a shame as a great deal of hard work has gone into these studies, and much useful data is found in the voluminous reports but most of it is contaminated by the tangled segmentation. This is made all the worse by laying on findings from a wide range of other research into behaviours which are all referred to as applying to ‘people’, ie everyone.

A more useful approach might have been to take the headline behaviours, chose a segmentation independent of those behaviours, and unpick existing rates of target behaviour, and then use qualitative research to investigate how to create propositions to increase it. Then one could conduct actual experiments to validate or disprove the hypotheses. Similarly, with this level of resources one could actually test willingness and ability by experiment and observation.

Apology

Sorry for the long silence this year – I’ve been busy on projects that I can’t write about yet but hope to in future.


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The Chinese Silver Lining Issue

The Rule Of FUD

America, Britain and much of the rest of the developed world is gripped by a wave of FUD: Fear Uncertainty and Doubt about the economy, about a possible global recession, even a depression.

FUD or Fear-Uncertainty-and-Doubt is normally the enemy of those trying to drive society towards ethical goals, altruistic options, long-termism or the common good as opposed to short-term self-interest. FUD, allegedly a marketing invention of IBM trying to frighten customers away from the products of a rival, usually drives people towards the parent, towards the known, to authority, the familiar, to warm reassurances. Hence it is the enemy of change, innovation and risk-taking. The people it drives most easily are the psychological Settlers [1] but in times of crisis, we can all behave like Settlers, driven to meet needs of survival, to be safe, to safeguard identity, to reassure ourselves that we belong.

FUD-as-normal is a major inhibitor of moves towards paradigm shifts such as a leap away from fossil fuels to an economy run on renewable energy. FUD is the sales pitch of the nuclear industry: the fear of the dark, visceral, primal, survival against the cold: who else ‘will keep the lights on’? Peddling Doubt about climate change has been a powerful driver to keeping us all dependent on our familiar cocktail of fossil fuels.

In Issue No 20 of this newsletter (see http://www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/campaignstrategy_newsletter_20.doc) we discussed the power of context, one of the seven CAMPCAT factors. Today all campaigners in countries affected by the banking crisis triggered by US mortgage lending (and that is most) are operating in a new context: one in which merchant banks are immobilised, and politicians and business leaders are crossing their fingers, hoping for the best, and painfully aware that governments and even the misleadingly reassuring-sounding “central banks” can do relatively little to moderate what may be a breaking wave of more bad news. They do not know how much bad debt is in the system nor what the global markets will do as it surfaces. FUD rules in places used to feeling quite the opposite.

The Silver Lining

You do not need to be a rocket-scientist to spot the potential silver lining. On 18 March the USonline green journal Tree Hugger published its guidance on becoming “recession ready”. It boiled down to buy local, buy good books, get a bike (sell the SUV) and invest in efficiency.

The point for campaign strategists though is that this reflex – to reduce exposure to risks – could be converted into a ‘big idea’ for politicians who in the new context have few places to run. Britain’s Gordon Brown is a good example. Stretched in Iraq and
Afghanistan – former World bank economist Joseph Stiglitz postulates that those wars will cost the US $5 - $7 trillion and cost others $6 trillion [2] – with a slowing economy, high levels of debt amongst the voting public and public spending pushing his own limits to the brink, his government has just published its first ‘national security strategy’ [3] highlighting global instability due to climate change amongst pandemics, espionage, a potential resurgence of nuclear weapons and terrorism to name but a few fears and threats. It’s not a happy atmosphere.

Politicians must be hoping that by not talking up a recession they can hope to help avoid one. Even bankers and brokers are unwilling to speculate in media interviews lest they appear to be exploiting fears, like those who deliberately started a run on bank stocks. The media dialogue is an almost open field for anyone with a credible idea. And credible means in no small part, something with popular traction. This is where campaigning NGOs have an unusual opportunity.

The opportunity is simply to take the entirely rational public concern about our futures, and demand that public expenditure, fiscal policies and regulation – tools available to government – are used to help insulate individuals against future threats. Government cannot easily underwrite market risks, such as the value of homes but it could do a lot to protect people against rising energy costs for example. If homes were retrofitted to become highly efficient and converted to renewable energy, they would be significantly cheaper for future pensioners. ‘Resilience’ would be much improved if homes became more autonomous – less dependent on or independent of the grid, for water or electricity, less vulnerable to terrorism or climate shocks or insecure gas or oil imports.

Once too mundane to merit serious political attention, in an era of FUD such ideas could gain acute political traction.

Renewable energy also offers windfall opportunities to governments, rather like the sale of airwaves. When governments appropriated the electromagnetic spectrum and sold it off to broadcasters they simply made money from thin air. Like an untapped oil field, wind, wave and solar are resources that could be turned into major income flows for governments. Whether you approve of this or not, it has some political attractions, and any large scale programme to convert communities into energy independence would involve spending that stimulates the markets.

This way FUD could fuel investments with long term public benefits by alleviating short term individual fears. This will not happen without a political catalyst, and that’s a campaign opportunity because NGOs can speak out on these matters when political leaders fear to do so. Normally FUD drives people away from investments such a switch to renewables because the costs are immediate and the climate threat looks long term and diffuse. Now the threats are more personal and immediate, and renewable energy, water conservation, local food and alternative transport can all be sold on grounds of safety, security, reliance, independence and reducing risk.

China Boycott?

It’s boycott speculation time for China. In February Stephen Spielberg announced [4] his conscience over the humanitarian disasters of Darfur would no longer allow him to play a
part in promoting the China Olympics because of China’s support for the government of Sudan. Numerous campaigns urge a boycott of Chinese goods (eg www.boycottmadeinchina.org) over human rights and the treatment of Tibet, while others have done the same over the inhumane treatment of cats and dogs for the fur trade [5]. Most of the news coverage however reflects calls to boycott the Olympics, or the opening ceremony.

Calling for sportspeople or politicians to boycott the Olympics itself is a bit of a nonstarter. Any government which withdrew its team would incur the wrath of its tv-viewing ‘sporting’ public and lose its hoped for moments of glory. Individual celebrities such as Spielberg are in a different position, with relatively little to lose and a good deal to gain at least in ‘mindspace’ for them to make a point. If you want to support Tibet in its struggles, this is a good way to do it, if your celebrity is all your capital.

For campaigning NGOs though it offers other opportunities. Whether over human rights or issues such as climate change (and the embedded/ exported CO2 involved in displacing most manufacturing from North America and Europe to China and then importing the goods), China is a vast and largely untouched target.

A simple call to boycott Chinese goods even on those grounds would be futile. Chinese political culpability on climate for example is nowhere near as clear as that of G W Bush in his rejection of Kyoto back in 2001. The capacity of NGOs to gather support for a general boycott is so limited that it immediately would be seen as utopian and so gather very little support outside the Concern Ethical minority [6] for whom boycotting is a regular occupation.

One thing is certain though, and that is as more and more public (ie media) attention focuses on China as the Olympics approach, the actions of China become of more and more media interest and the threshold for campaign action progressively lowers. In these circumstances the scope for directed boycotts, focused not on generalities or composites of ills but on specifics, where it serves to gear up an existing agenda with a credible political or commercial route to resolution, and where politicians, media and other leaders (such as businesses and brands) have already taken a position consistent with the logic of a boycott, becomes far greater. All the more so if it also answers a call or aligns with progressive forces from within China itself.

Finally, if such a boycott is not directed against “China” but against, for example, elements of Chinese business, or even more so, against specific Chinese-Western business practices that cause environmental or social damage and are not a straight assault on the Chinese nation or government itself, then a boycott may actually ‘work’.

The campaign literature is heavily papered with debates for an against “boycotts” but much of the argument is specious. Few boycotts can be judged purely on reduced sales or purchases, and although there are examples where a social screw has turned off an offending economic tap, this is increasingly difficult in a globalised multi-dimensional economic world. Instead what counts is if a boycott gets a result, and that maybe simply advancing the development of an ‘agenda’, creating the conditions, another new context, for delivery of future change. What, for example, do the US Presidential hopefuls have
to say about the problem of exporting CO2 pollution to China and importing the results? Perhaps too late to find out now? I don't know but there is plenty of time between now and the opening ceremony for these and other connections to be made.

This is a time for NGOs to use their soft-power (their media capital) by getting together to make common demands, and providing the supporters, hard and soft, with simple action propositions that can be magnified in the blogosphere.

**New Campaign resource**


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**Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 40, 16 April 2008:**

**The Chinese Year of the Tracksuit: Creating Visual Language**

Any campaign needs to be communicated in two basic ways: in words and in images. The words need to be in the form of a story, not just a claim or ‘facts’ and the best visuals use ‘visual language’ by which I mean that the pictures speak for themselves because they contain symbols of meaning.

Prize for creating the strongest visual language of 2008 [1] so far goes to the Chinese Government, and in particular whichever officials, politicians or committee decided to send a detail of blue-track-suited ‘flame attendants’ to surround the Olympic Torch on its international journey to Beijing.
As we noted in the last edition of this newsletter, China and the Olympics were always bound to be the focus for `issues` politics, especially around Tibet but the Chinese Government has managed the remarkable trick of creating an entirely new visual icon of the `Tibet Issue` by putting its paramilitary police in characteristic, easily recognizable tracksuits and ensuring that they will be in every photo or the video of the torch as it heads to China. By so doing they remind us all of the `Tibet Issue` even when there are no protests or protestors in sight.

As self-inflicted communications wounds go, this takes some beating, and from statements about `dealing severely` with any protests when the flame passes through Tibet itself, and condemning protests as `vile behaviour` it doesn`t seem that China is having any second thoughts.

If China had opted for lower profile and less visible measures, the mainly individual or token attempts to stop the torch`s progress would have attracted far less attention. Each would have looked different, as the protestors seem to favour a `jumble sale` type mixture of home made placards, ordinary day clothes and a variable assortment of Tibetan colours which don`t stand out in a photo of a crowd. Knowing that these are set-piece incidents that will, if at all, be picked up in news photos or TV news, the Tibet campaigners could have worked back from a hypothetical photo, to plan what their element should look like (and thought about what headline it would prompt, for example by picking a particular setting).

However the Chinese Government has done a big part of the campaigners job for them. The Chinese Government is the direct target which the campaigners are trying to reach. By sticking their men-in-blue-tracksuits in between the Torch and everyone else, the Chinese Government has put itself squarely in the frame, and kept itself there: another communications mistake.

`Kidnapped` Athletes

Imagine it without the Chinese track-suited heavies - any protest would be a protestor versus an athlete, or a protestor versus local police, trying to reach an athlete. All of the positive emotional capital that attends the Olympic tradition, sport, personal endeavour, national pride in winning and so on, would be personified in that Torch-carrying athlete. Even people very sympathetic to the Tibet campaigners might feel two ways about it. Now though, the Chinese `thugs` as British Olympian Seb Coe called them, have removed that dilemma by visually `kidnapping` the athlete inside a military cordon. Only by wearing paramilitary uniform itself could their role have been made more clear but as it was, the bizarre spectacle very quickly led to the discovery of who these people really were and that further increased the power of the story and `installed` the imagine in the minds of TV watchers as China-versus-Tibet, the very thing that China did not want to be talked about.

By putting its cordon around the flame in such a public way, the Chinese Government has also made itself the story, or rather a story starting with the `Olympic Games Sacred Flame Protection Unit` formed from members of the `People`s Armed Police (PAP)`. Whereas the passage of the flame to Beijing might in a better outcome for China have been accompanied by background pieces on `life in China`, media space is now being taken up with investigative pieces into who the men-in-blue are [2]. It seems they have played a significant role in suppressing protest in Tibet – the worst possible choice for a flame guard if you didn`t want to talk about Tibet ...
Track-Suited Tyrants?

A UK Daily Mail piece reported of imprisoned nuns in Tibet:

The PAP were called in and beat the prisoners so severely that in the words of one survivor: “It looked like an abattoir. They beat us with their belts, until their belts broke. Then they used electric batons.” After several days of beating, and further tortures involving sand-filled hoses, stripping, electric shocks and sexual humiliation, the five nuns were dead, possibly after committing suicide by suffocating themselves with prayer scarves.

The track suits themselves are another strange element in this official Chinese communications cock-up. I'm no expert but they seem to be official Olympic tracksuits. I'm not sure who makes them but they are not very subtly redefining the meaning of that manufacturer brand, as well as the whole Beijing Olympic Brand. Manufacturers are already jumpy about problems such as 'ambush marketing' at the Olympics but this is an issue on a different scale. Nevertheless any spats with a manufacturer or designer could be the least of the Chinese Government’s self imposed communications problems.

What for example if the blue tracksuits became so notorious as a piece of clothing that they came to symbolise all of the repression which campaigners report from Tibet? There are plenty of examples of shirts and other clothing with strong political connotations. What then, if Olympic competitors decided not to wear them (I'm not sure if they are supposed to but the possibilities are endless). This is what happens when you create visual language. What if an enterprising campaign group managed to connect the track-suits with torture for example, putting the reported role of the PAP in Tibet into the tracksuits before our eyes, through theatre or posters or online? Once a symbol exists it can be appropriated, like a word, and used by anyone, in more visual language.

Choosing the official tracksuits for the security detail no doubt made sense to someone in the Chinese Government but it now has two massive drawbacks. First, it can't be changed without becoming an issue. If they'd been in plain grey in London they could have been in anonymous white in Paris and so on, and the whole visual impact would be lost or greatly reduced. Second, it raises questions about who the Olympics belong to. The flame symbolises the Olympics – the spirit, the event, the organisation, the heritage – but the Chinese Government is, through the men-in-blue, treating it as if it is its own property. Just in case some might have missed this hitherto esoteric concern, nation states and citizens along the route [3] are reminded of it because their own police are clearly not in control of an event on their own soil. Chinese paramilitaries have been allowed to ‘be their own law and order’ on French, British and American soil – though they will not be, apparently, in Australia.

In values and political terms this manages the astonishing trick of annoying security driven authoritarian Settlers concerned about national identity and security, at the same time as ethically minded Pioneers, and even probably success-seeking oriented Prospectors (because 'Visible Ability' is a prospector value and this makes the national authorities look incapable). Concern and anger then, across the political spectrum, right-left, liberal-authoritarian. (For an explanation of Value Modes see http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/usingvaluemodes.pdf)
Meaning Through Pictures, Not Words-In-Pictures

The Chinese Government has created new visual language by giving a particular meaning to those tracksuits. Like a Chinese Character this can be used alongside other symbols to say things without words, and to support or create a context for words. That’s visual language. Where campaigners often get this wrong or maybe miss a trick by not using it, is in trying to use pictures to ‘show’ something verbal. Typically this involves a play on words that “sounds good”, and then a group tries to visualise it. This frequently results in a strained visual explanation that has to be explained with words (text on screen, captions, voice overs and so on).

That is not powerful visual communication which elicits an emotional response before you are conscious of meaning. Instead it requires a rational, conscious, exposed thought process which is not only slow but gives us plenty of opportunity to opt out, to disagree and not buy the links. An example is a quite nice little video by the UK climate campaign group i-count that just arrived in my inbox via the useful Compass Network [4]. It’s on You Tube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEaYbAzQfQE. Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics pointed out to me the other day that double-meanings are a classic Pioneer way to communicate: double or better triple meanings they find intriguing and interesting. In this case it’s a play on the meaning of “balls” (= in the UK, courage and/or testicles), and Bill (= proposed legislation and Bill, short for William).

The idea of the video is that the proposed Climate Bill (see Newsletters 36 and 38 on The Big Ask) lacks “balls” but the video is laboured and indirect compared to the thought that inspired it and the visuals do not say what the problem or solution is, nor raise the emotional temperature beyond a titter. Nor does it show the action (call your MP) or the target (MP) or sell the benefits. Maybe the makers decided none of that was necessary. As an intended viral it relies on people already being ‘aligned’ and/or finding it too funny not to pass on. Like a lot of campaign videos it’s probably only going to appeal to the converted. At any event it is an example of trying to visualise a text-idea.

There is one presumably unintended example of visual language in the video: the Jack Russell dog which bites Bill in the area where his balls should be. That type of dog has been made famous amongst British TV-watchers in recent years by appearing in award winning advertisements for John Smith’s bitter [beer]. Symbolically that doesn’t really help in this case. Another double-entendre example of trying to visualise a verbal idea is “Every Tree Counts”. Now a logo (see [5]) and originally a London tree covered in large numbers hung in the branches for a press launch, the excellent group Common Ground wanted to say trees were important, and to reinvigorate the ancient tradition of tree dressing (which they have succeeded in). As a visual though it is equally laboured, hence the logo has to have the strap line underneath it because the picture does not tell the story: we love trees, or we should love trees. I’ve put a http://campaignstrategy.org/images/everytreecounts_sm.JPG which says an element of this.

Are The Protests ‘Effective’?

Just a word or two about the efficacy of the campaign of protest. Not surprisingly there has been discussion in the media about ‘whether the protests are doing more harm than good ?’.
To answer this you'd need to know what could ‘work’, how it could work, what ‘work’ means (i.e. the objective), and what stage you were at in being able to make something work. (Of course many of those asking this question are disingenuous – they'd rather have no protests but not because they have a better way to reach the same ends, many just don't want to ‘upset China’). In other words you'd need to have done issue mapping and power analysis, selected a point of intervention, developed and tested a critical path and all the other factors involved in campaign strategy. (See http://www.campaignstrategy.org/cr12_intro.html) Then you'd have had to weigh up the pros and cons and taken a calculated risk before launching the torch-impeding protests. In the UK at least the media have given more airtime to China pundits and journalists theorizing about whether or not the protests may have any affect on the Chinese Government, and if so, what type, than to the protestors and critics of China in Tibet. So it’s hard to know what the strategy is beyond just registering protest, if there is one.

I have little idea what ‘could work’ in terms of changing Chinese government policy towards Tibet and suspect that many of those involved in the protests at any rate do not have a strategy of this kind. Such strategies are the preserve of those who can deploy an organisation as an ‘organisational weapon’, albeit for NGOs, ones whose weapons are non violence and communication.

Instead it seems likely that many of the individuals and quite possibly some of the organisations involved are operating on that other way of deciding what to do – principle, acting on what is right and wrong. If strategy is like a map and making a route by using the tools of navigation, reconnaissance and so on, principle is like a compass. It doesn't tell you how far off your target is, what obstacles lie in the way, or how likely you are to get there but it gives you a heading and sometimes it is the only tool you have.

* Jumble Sale in American English might be Rummage Sale or Yard Sale

[2] for example Undercover in Tibet - and terrorised by the Chinese thugs in blue tracksuits, Patrick French, Daily Mail, 13 April 2008 at www.dailymail.co.uk

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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 41, 03 May 2008:

Values-Dynamic Tipping Point

A short new report published at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/newsletters/values_dynamic_tippingpoint.pdf describes how the UK - and possibly other countries - is experiencing a 'tipping point' in culture because of a dynamic between the three main 'values groups' of Pioneers, Prospectors and Settlers. This dynamic, which hinges on the tendency of Prospectors to emulate the behaviours (not adopt the values) of the dominant group in society, has been triggered by the emergence of Pioneers as the single largest group. It promises rapid change but also threatens to leave campaigners stranded 'behind the curve'. Read it now to enjoy the link to an illuminating BBC programme which helps illustrate the point, while that is still available online: http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/page/item/b00b5bn6.shtml?src=ip_potpw

China and Tibet

Readers interested in the Tibet protests discussed in previous editions may also like to read an interesting article by China scholar James Millward: http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/governments/how_china_should_rebrand_0

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Campaign Strategy Newsletter No 42, 23 June 2008:

Time For Strategy

Rather than a long newsletter, this month there's a new essay 'A Time For Strategy' posted at http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/time_for_strategy.pdf. This piece asks 'have environmental NGOs forgotten how to campaign? Strategy seems to be slipping out of many campaigns. Is this due to the focus on 'behaviour change' through social marketing, which is as this newsletter has noted before, is inherently non-strategic?

'A Time For Strategy' gives examples of NGOs who are still doing good campaigns which are both instrumental and strategic - ie they change what is possible and, provides some examples of possible strategic campaign targets on climate change. It also notes that the individual-by-individual approach to change has recently been criticised by WWF for being 'piecemeal' but takes issue with WWF's recipe for a crusade of values as doomed to fail because it falls into the 'Concerned Ethical Trap'.

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Lastly it describes how efforts to increase ‘public engagement’ can trip over themselves by inadvertently asking people to change values which are needs they have to meet. Oh and it reports a bizarre radio interview between BBC’s Jeremy Vine and ‘climate denier’ Phillip Stott, with a guest appearance by Mrs Stott, petrochemicals consumer extraordinaire.

**Prospector-Settler Brand Takes Up Solar**

UK Values afficianados who followed the story of the 100 Ideas House may be interested that the mass market double-glazing retailer Everest ([http://www.everest.co.uk](http://www.everest.co.uk)) has started selling solar thermal panels. This sends a big signal of availability and normality, which in turn will have cultural and political effects. The 100 Ideas project now also appears in Consumer Policy Review Vol 18, No 3, May/June 2008 – part of *Which?* magazine.

**Undersea Landscapes? “I’d Rather Not Go There, Thanks”**

In the words of the song, it may be wetter but to many people it’s not better, under the sea. In the next issue I hope to be able to give you a fuller account of a large piece of qualitative and quantitative work we’ve done for the Marine Campaign of Natural England (NE - a government conservation agency), looking at how English people perceive the bottom of the sea, and how they might be persuaded to take undersea landscapes into their hearts. The big stumbling block (for Prospects in particular) is to overcome profound feelings of fear, disgust, shame and guilt about what lies on the seabed. No surprise then that simply telling them how important it is, doesn’t do the trick.

**If You Have Nothing Better To Do**

Try Googling for the American ‘prayer at the pump’ campaign petitioning God for a reduction in gasoline prices. Several places reported a price reduction after prayers were said.

**New in Resources**

[http://www.strategiccomm.com/resources.html](http://www.strategiccomm.com/resources.html) - A useful compendium of how-to advice on presentations and other communications, face-to-face and otherwise

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