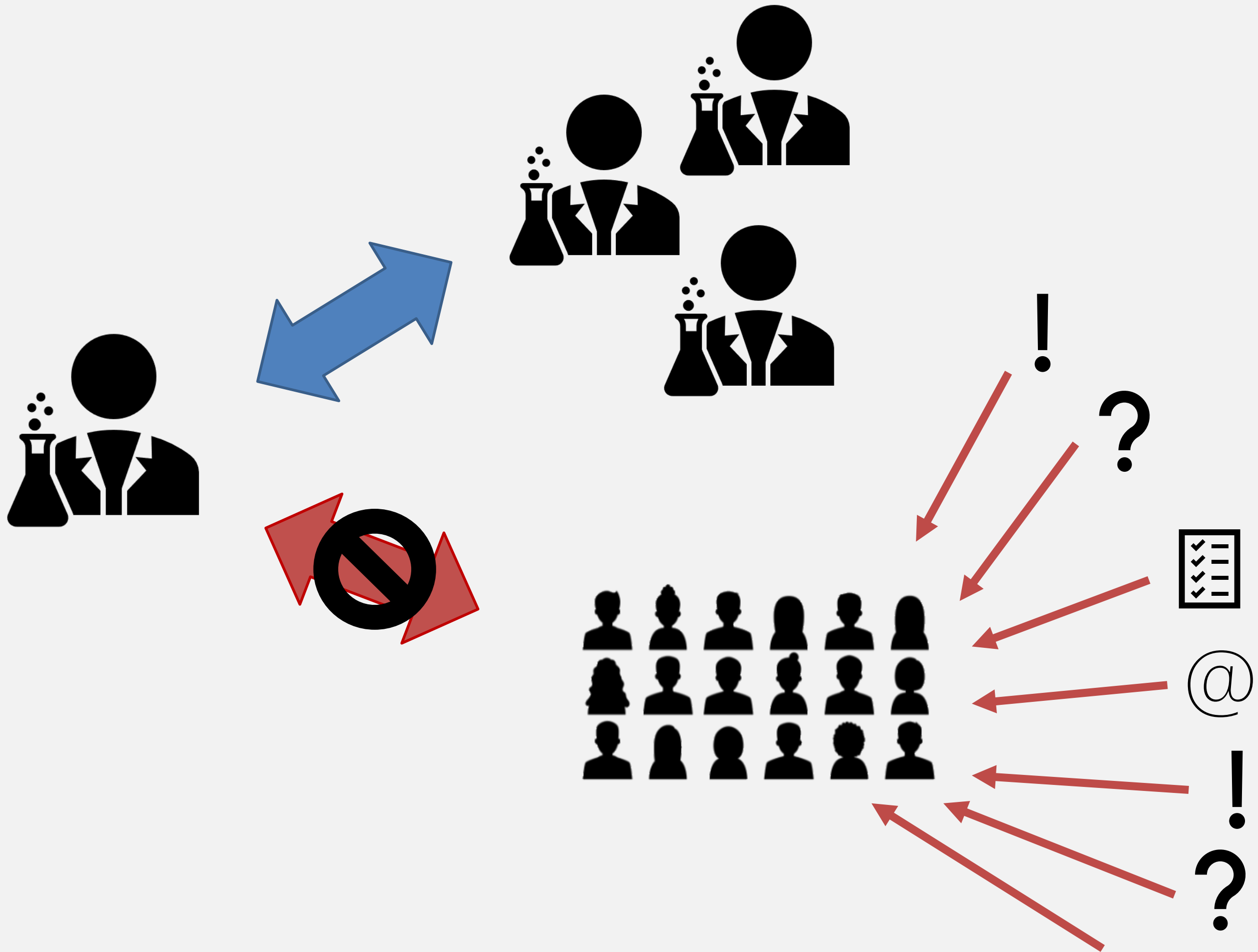
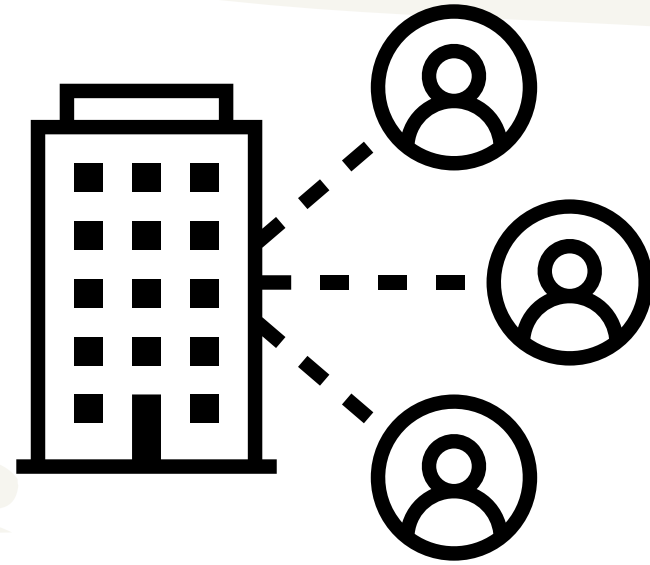


Weathering the Storm:  
Lessons from the hands-on  
deck response to the infodemic

KATELYN JETELINA, MPH PHD | September 2023

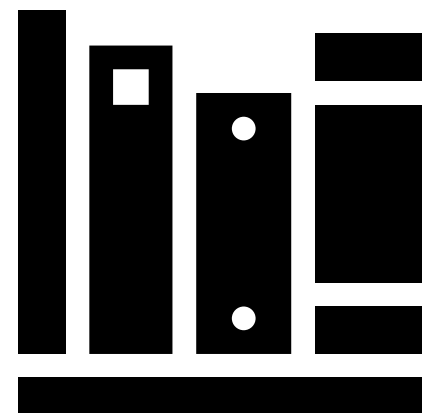






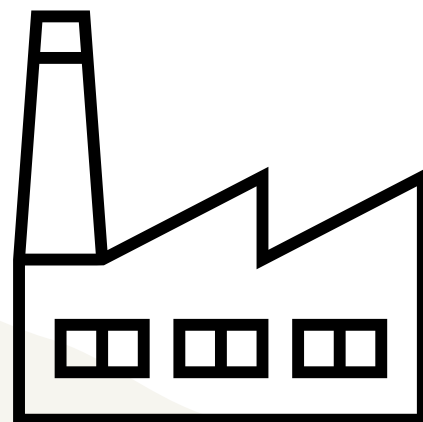
Federal Government

Politics. Funding.



Academia

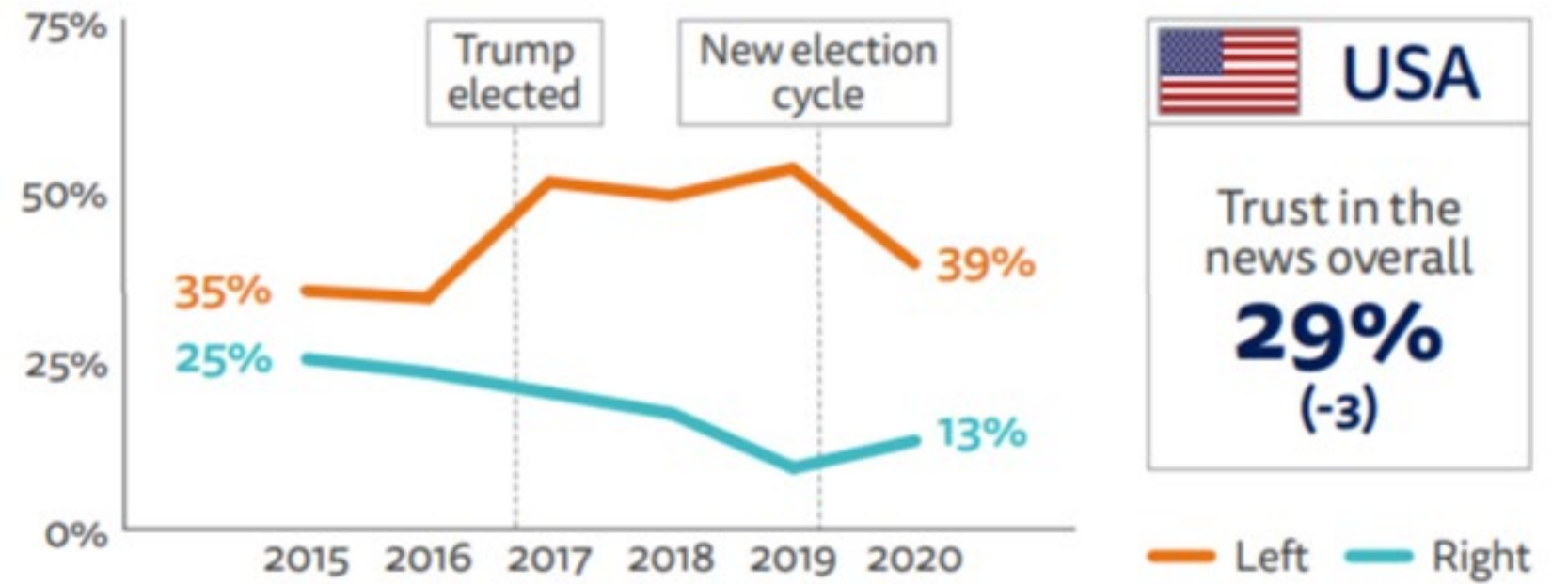
Difficult to understand.  
Slow.



For profit

Lost objectivity.  
Partisan. Conflicts of  
interest.

Information ecosystem  
is **changing**



PROPORTION THAT USED EACH AS A SOURCE OF NEWS  
IN THE LAST WEEK (APRIL 2020) – SELECTED COUNTRIES

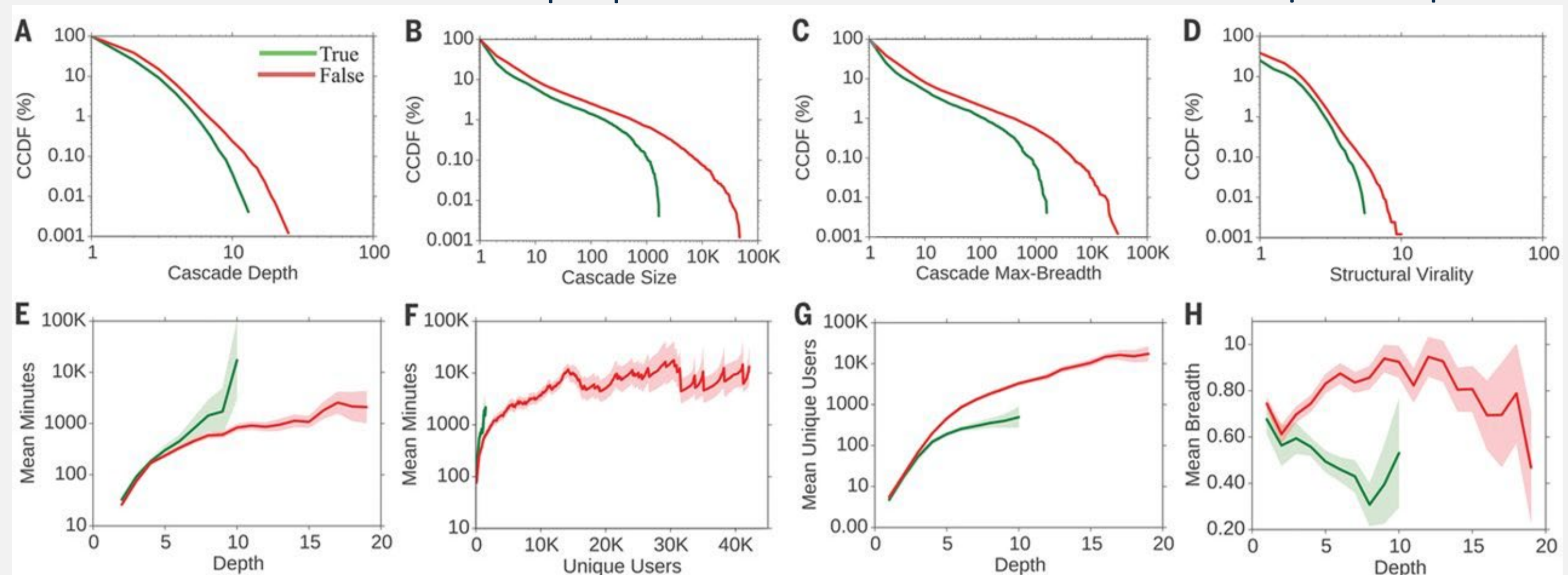
|                                | Online<br>(incl. social<br>media) | TV  | Social<br>media | Radio | Print<br>(incl. mags) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------|-------|-----------------------|
| UK                             | 79%                               | 71% | 47%             | 35%   | 18%                   |
| USA                            | 73%                               | 60% | 47%             | 21%   | 16%                   |
| Germany                        | 69%                               | 72% | 39%             | 41%   | 26%                   |
| Spain                          | 83%                               | 71% | 63%             | 24%   | 28%                   |
| South Korea                    | 85%                               | 65% | 51%             | 14%   | 19%                   |
| Argentina                      | 90%                               | 77% | 78%             | 24%   | 30%                   |
| Average change<br>from January | +2                                | +5  | +5              | +2    | -2                    |

# Misinformation goes farther, faster, deeper, and more broadly than the truth

reached far more people

more people retweeted

spread through peer-to-peer



six times faster at spreading

retweeted by more unique users

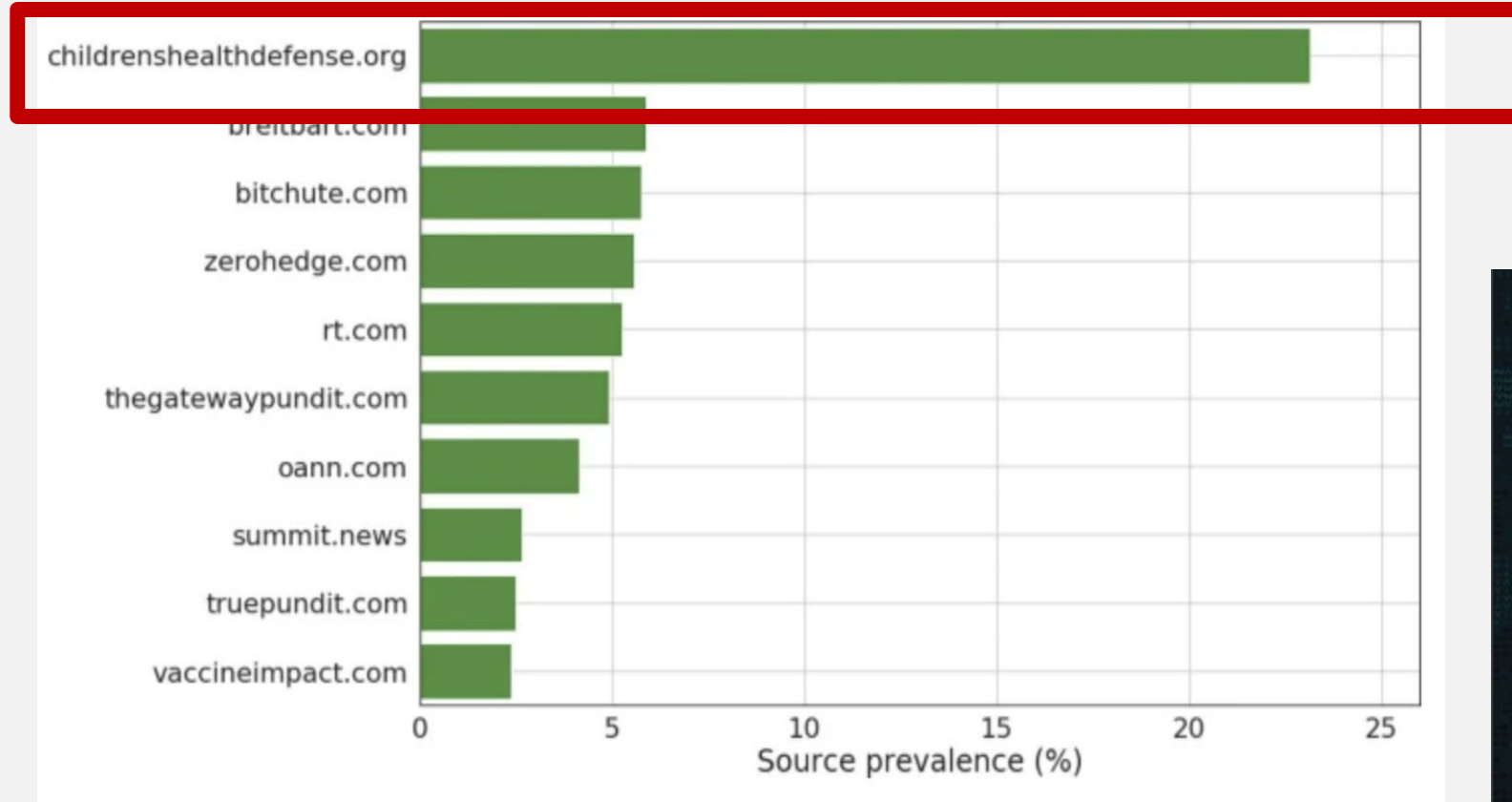
diffused more broadly

Christian Elliot  · Apr 5 · 17 min read

# 18 Reasons I Won't Be Getting a Covid Vaccine

Updated: Apr 19

Tweets shared by users geolocated in the U.S. that link to a low-credibility source



Investigations

## A major funder of the anti-vaccine movement has made millions selling natural health products



## Loss of trust

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and  
5 minutes to ruin it”

-WARREN BUFFET

**What do we do?**

**Reimagine public health  
communication.**

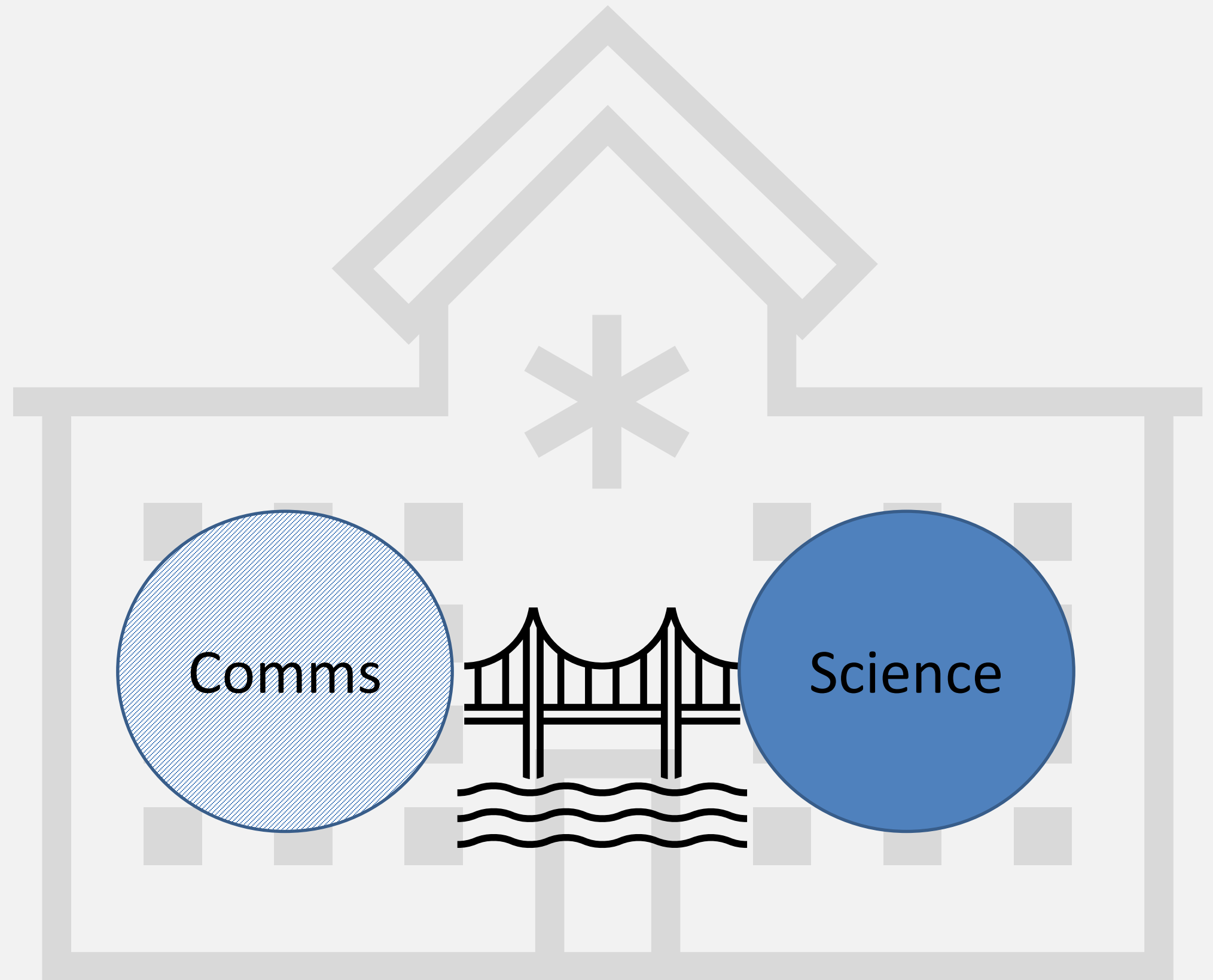


Better **top-down**  
communication

- ☑ Actual person. A face. A warm body
- ☑ Consistent voice
- ☑ Credible voice



**Bridge** needed (or  
strengthened)



Equip **trusted**  
messenger

Evidence-based  
decisions



Trusted messengers  
spread info



Translate science to  
trusted messengers



Science



# Open a *two-way* street

1. Listen.
2. Recognize legitimate concerns exist.
3. Look for questions.
4. Anticipate concerns.

Evidence-based  
decisions



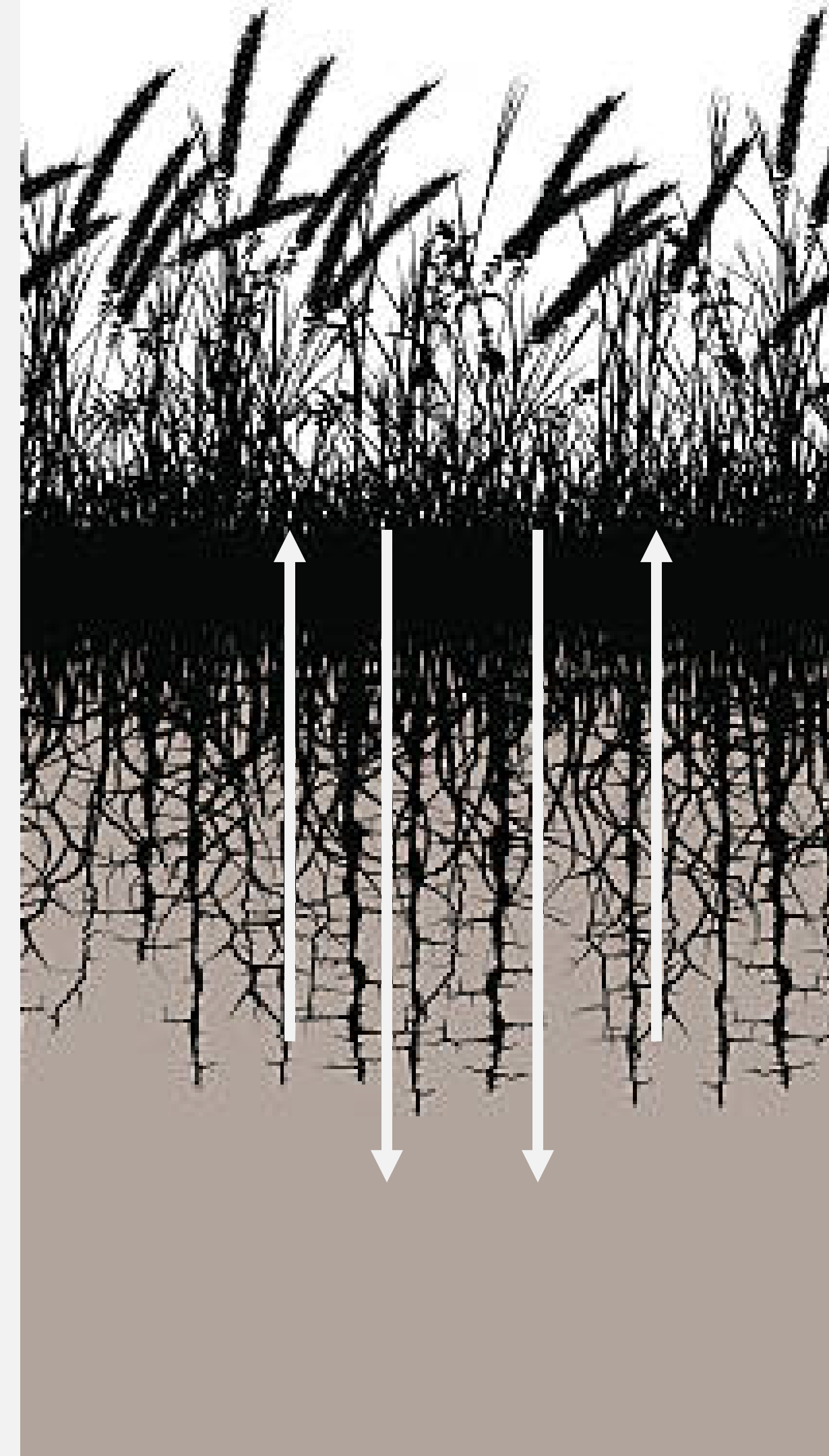
Trusted messengers  
spread info



Translate science to  
trusted messengers



Science





Show up during non-emergency times

Treat misinformation like the **public health problem** it is.

“Misinformation is not like a plumbing problem you fix. It is a **social condition**, like crime, that you must constantly monitor and adjust to.”

-TOM ROSENSTIEL

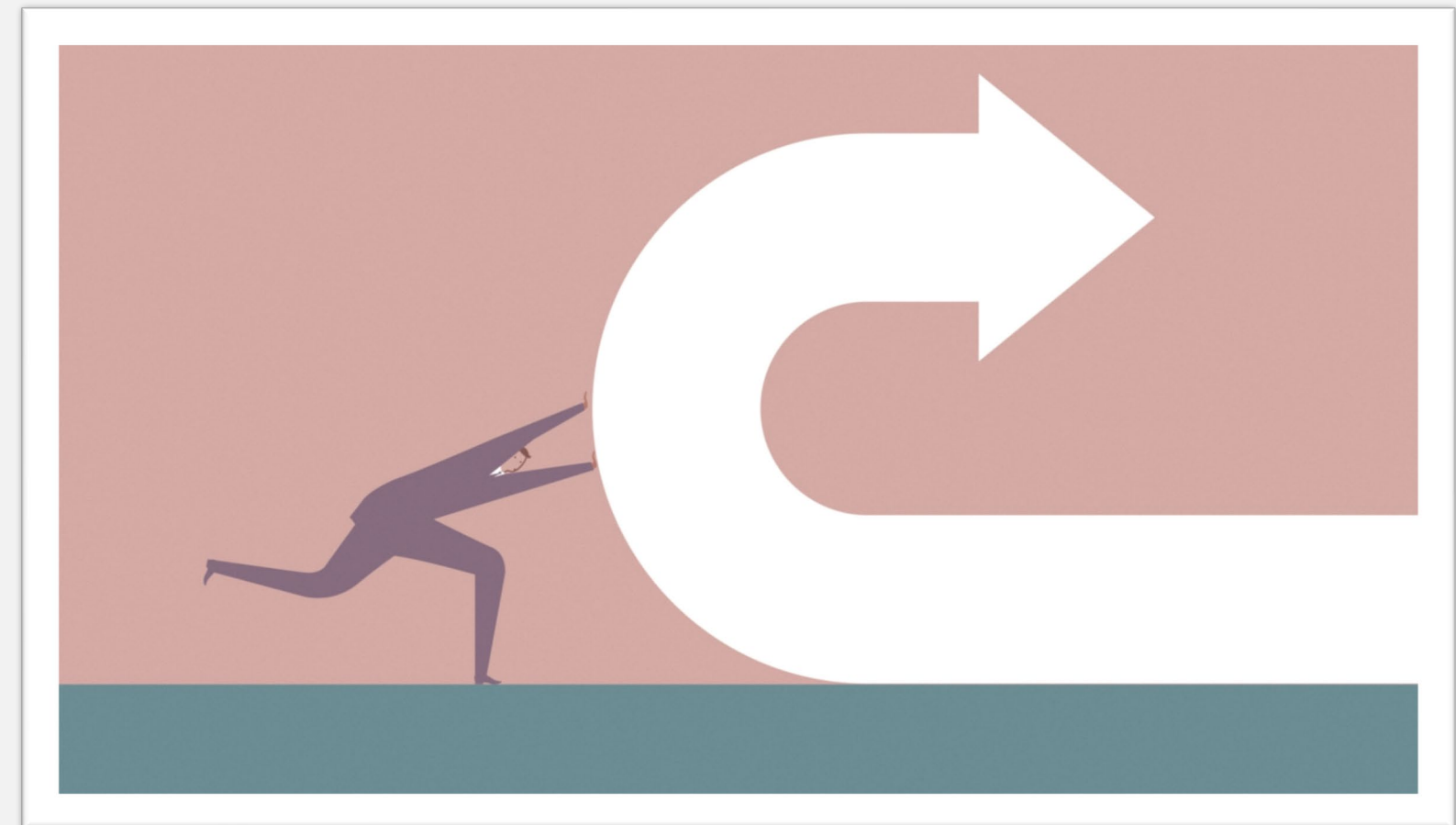


**What we say matters.**



Scientific  
discovery **ride**

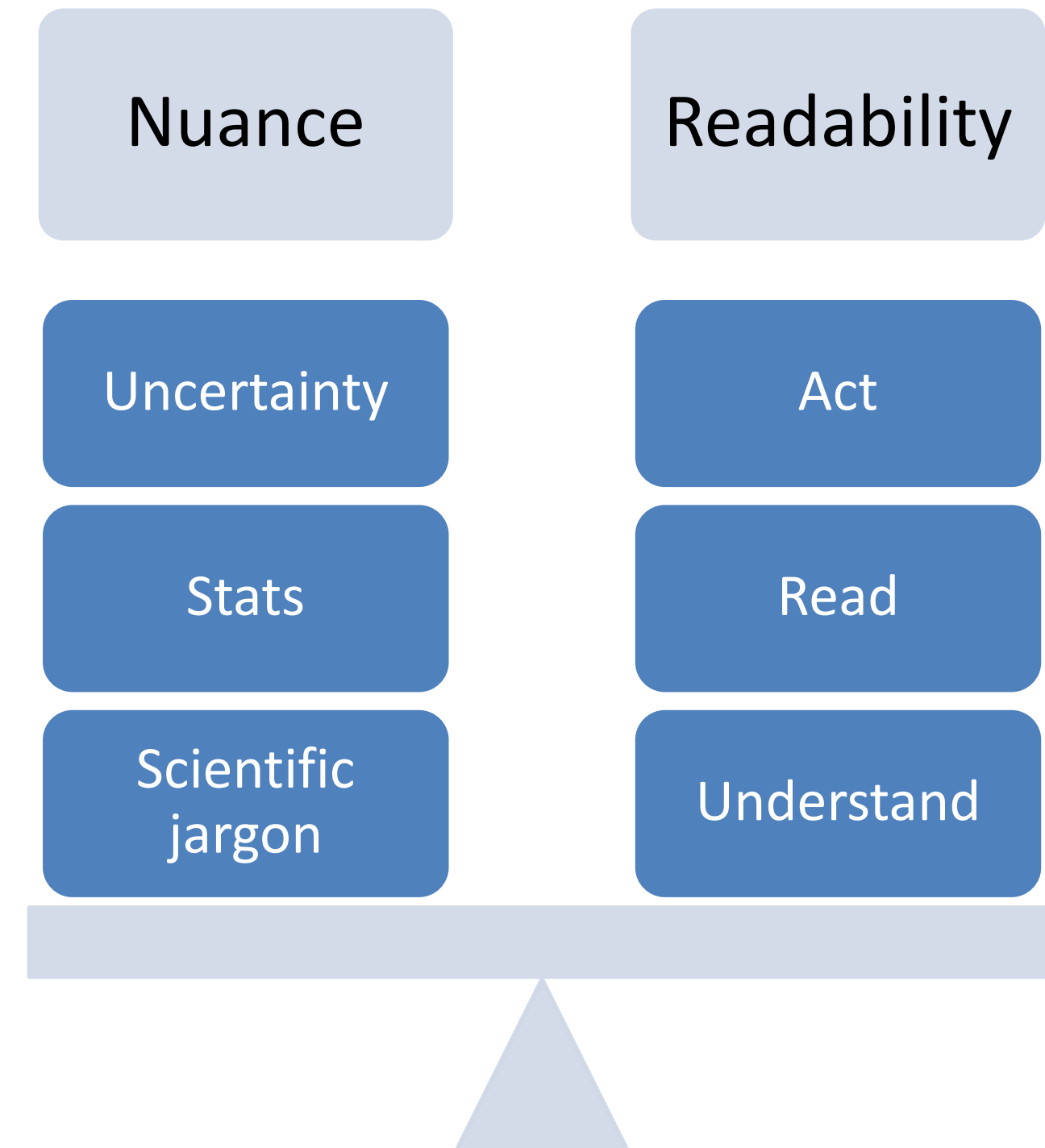
- ☑ What do we know?
- ☑ What do we **not** know?
- ☑ How are we finding answers?



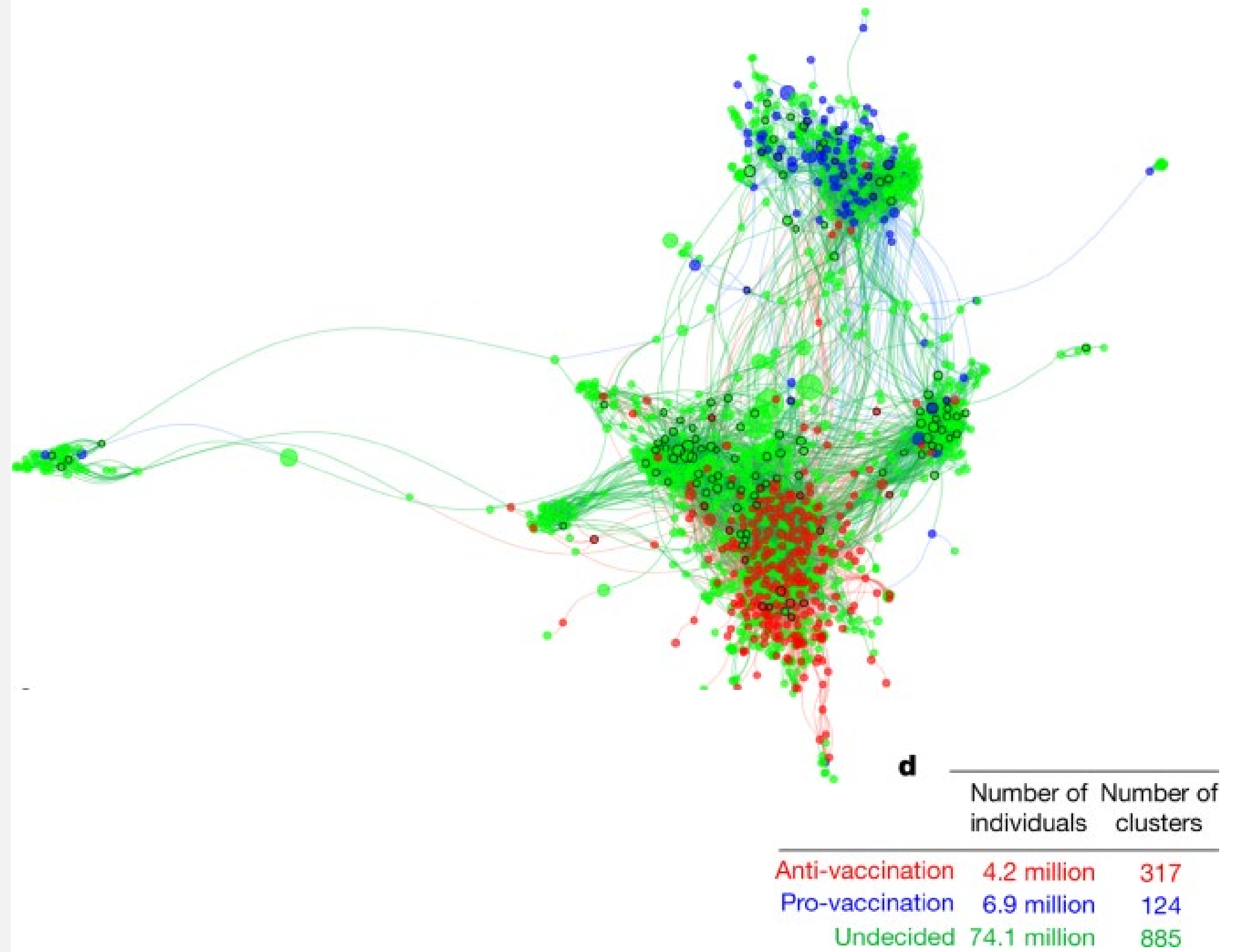
Translate science

“If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.”

-Albert Einstein



Be inclusive



Johnson et al. (2020) The online competition between pro- and anti-vaccination views. Nature.

Here's why Facebook, YouTube,  
and more are removing that **dumb**  
Plandemic video

**Coronavirus : 9 réactions **absurdes** des  
humains face à l'épidémie**

**'Absolutely insane': Anti-vaxxers promote  
coronavirus conspiracies**

**A bizarre conspiracy theory puts Bill Gates at the center of  
the coronavirus crisis — and major conservative pundits are  
circulating it**

---

**Coronavirus y conspiración: historia de las  
**teorías absurdas** durante las pandemias**

*Alors que l'épidémie continue de gagner du  
terrain, **les théories fumeuses** sur l'origine du  
coronavirus fleurissent sur internet. Petit  
florilège.*

Remember **why** you got into public health.

**% of people who say they trust to provide reliable information about the COVID-19 vaccines**



Chart: Katelyn Jetelina • Source: KKF • Created with Datawrapper

# Needed now more than ever

Serious

|   | Name             |
|---|------------------|
| 1 | Spanish Flu      |
| 2 | Asian Flu (H2N2) |



Years

| US. Deaths |
|------------|
| 675,000    |
| 116,000    |
| 100,000    |
| 700,000    |



|      |  |
|------|--|
| 2015 |  |
| 2018 |  |
| 2019 |  |





Thank you!

Katelyn Jetelina, MPH PhD  
Your Local Epidemiologist