



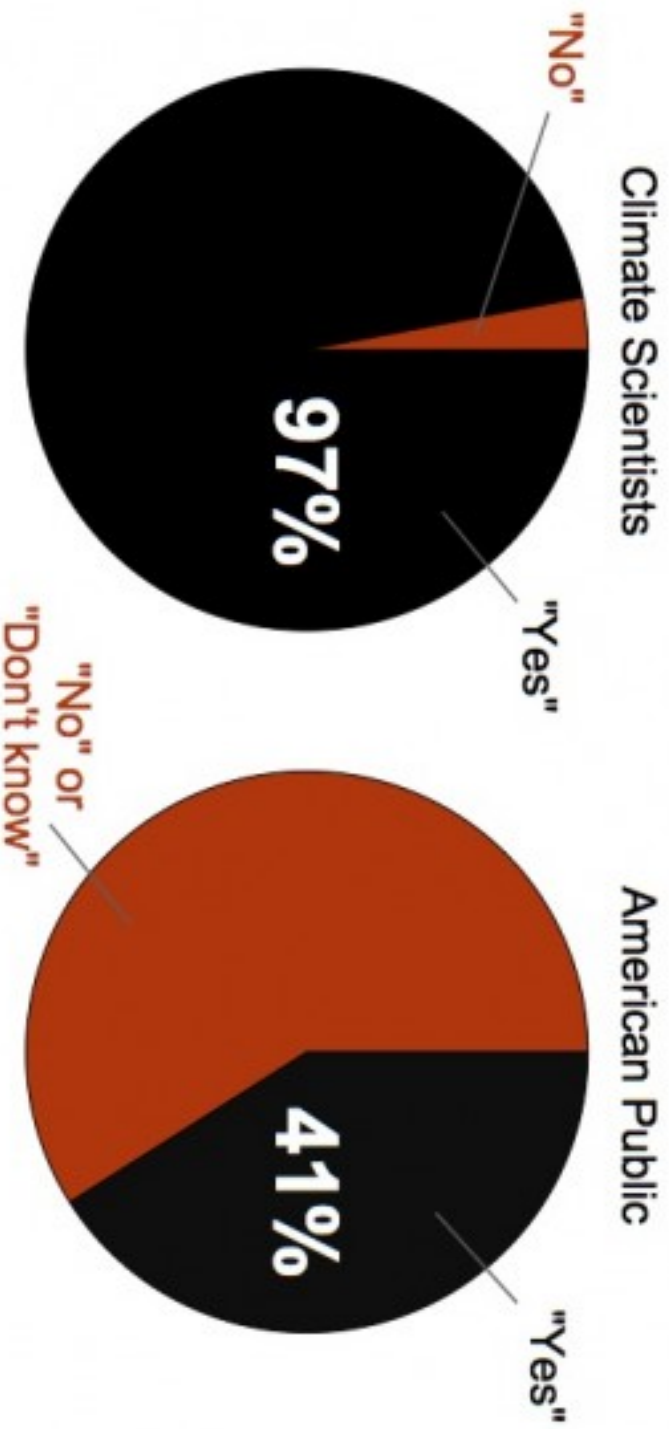
Reaching Conservative America

The Rev. Mitchell C. Hescox

The Evangelical Environmental Network

Reaching Conservative America

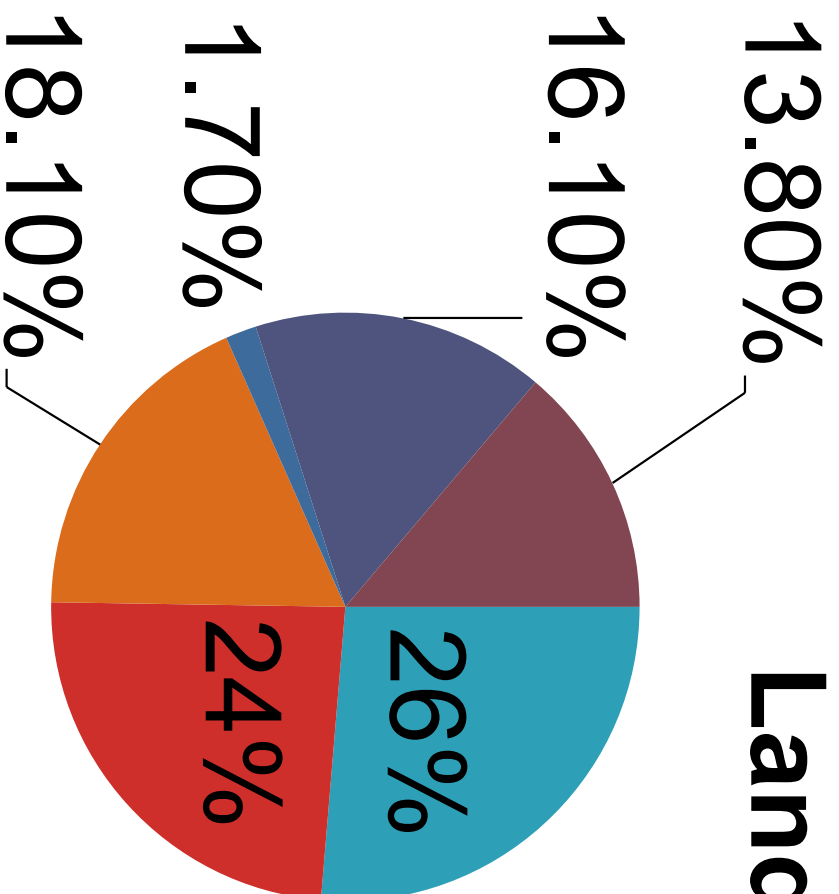
Say Climate Change is Happening and Human Caused



Left: Proportion of peer-reviewed research papers that stated a position on the reality of human-caused global warming and said that it is happening and human caused (Cook et al. 2013). *Right:* Proportion of the American public that says climate change is happening and human caused (Leiserowitz et al. 2013).

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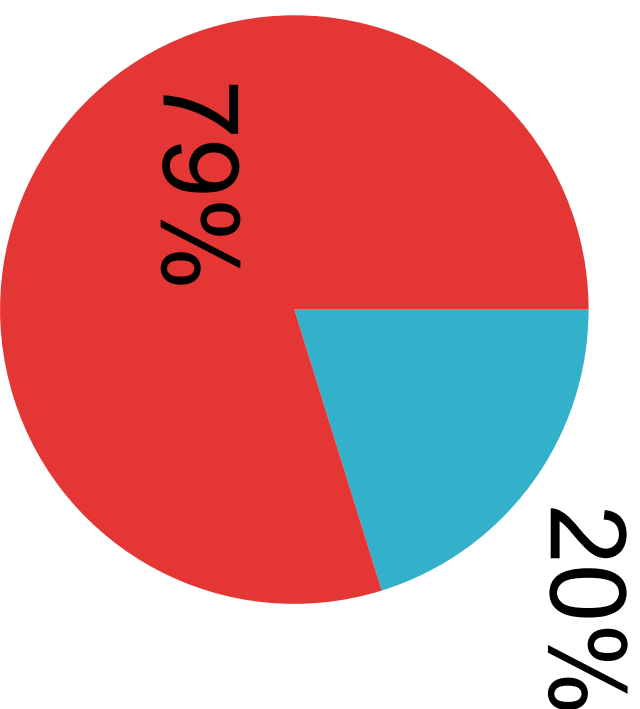
Americas Religious Landscape



- Evangelicals
- Catholics
- Mainline
- Jewish
- Unfiliated
- Others

Reaching Conservative America

2012 Presidential Elections Evangelical

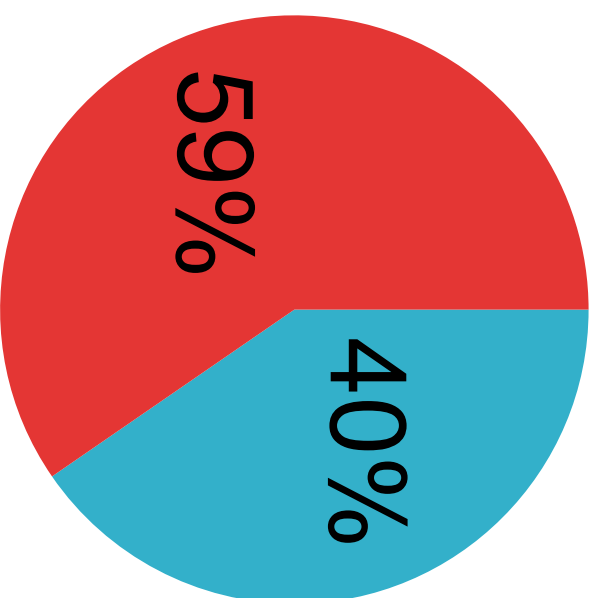


■ Obama

■ Romney

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2012 Presidential Elections White Catholics



■ Obama

■ Romney

Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ **To date the solutions for creating a sustainable planet and minimizing the most severe climate impacts have focused on priorities not consistent with conservative American values.**

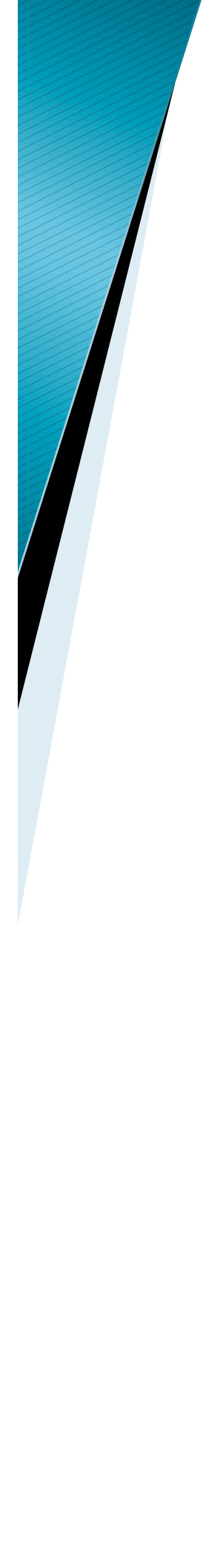
Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ **Typical Messaging**
 - **Future Threat**
 - **Prove The Science**
 - **Establish National Policy**



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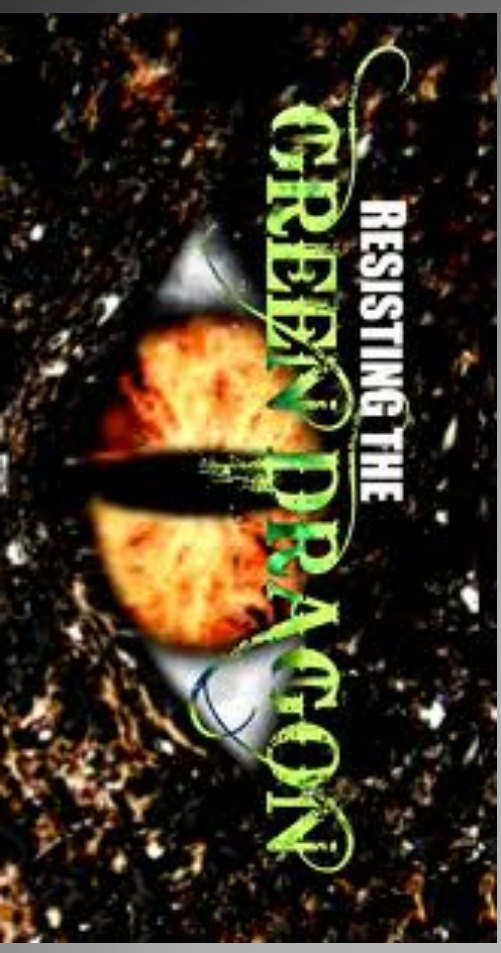
- ▶ **Conservative America holds different values.**
- ▶ **Change requires understanding existing values.**



Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ **Science is not a primary value.**
- ▶ **Government is not a primary value.**
- ▶ **Ongoing National Study with a leading evangelical group and major scientific body.**
- ▶ **Climate change is not even a scientific issue – it's political**

- ▶ **Climate change messaging using science and government policy fuels denial.**



Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ **Conservative Values/Beliefs**
 - **Faith**
 - **Family**
 - **Life (pro-life as whole life)**
 - **Children's Health**
 - **Elected conservative leaders**

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- ▶ **“In an extremely partisan environment, Republican votes against environmental bills legitimate public opinion opposed to action on climate change. When the Republicans increase voting support for environmental bills, it reduces partisanship and increases public support for actions to address climate change.”**

Reaching Conservative America



George W. Bush

**2003 - President's Emergency Plan
for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)**

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Rich Stearns

President of World Vision

Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ **Vincent Moyo, Malawi country representative for Tearfund, went so far as say, "climate change is turning out to be more challenging than HIV/AIDS." Nearly 1 million Malawians are infected with HIV or AIDS, but the entire population of 15 million suffers from the symptoms of climate change.**

Reaching Conservative America

▶ **Transforming Conservative America**

- ▶ **Who**
- ▶ **Why**
- ▶ **What**
- ▶ **Hope**

Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ **Who is impacted**
- ▶ **Health Impacts¹**
 - **Children's Health Domestic**
 - **Children's Health International**

¹ Myers, Nisbet, Maibach, Leiserowitz, 2012

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- ▶ My shoes sank deep into the crystalline sand of what used to be a river. An elderly man from Fombe village, Malawi



Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ told me that water streamed here year round when he was a child. Banana trees and other vegetation once flourished on its banks,



Reaching Conservative America

- ▶ ... In America, climate change is a matter of debate, but in places like Malawi, it's a matter of life and death.



▶ **Who is impacted**

▶ **Health Impacts¹**

- **Current Children's Health Domestic**

- **Children's Health International**

- **Extreme Weather as Health Concern**

- **Future Generations**

- ▶ **Why are our children hurting?**
 - Engage personal experience on their surroundings – share stories
 - Conversation on the science
 - Not new, understood for over a century
 - Answer questions
 - No hype – it's bad enough

▶ What to do?

- **Personal empowerment**
- **Care For Our Children – now & future**
- **Stewardship**
- **Energy Prosperity**

▶ What to do?

- **America's "Can Do Spirit"**
 - **Requires: All American Effort**
 - **Remember: Overcoming Past Adversity**
 - **5% Efficiency/year in Carbon Use¹**
 - **Following Lead of American Business**
- **American Ingenuity**

¹ Too Late For Two Degrees,
PriceWaterhouse Coopers,
November 2012

▶ What to do?

◦ Policy Efforts

- Energy Efficiency
- Energy Research
- Flood Insurance
- Cost Effective Foreign Aid
- Market Based Price on Carbon

Reaching Conservative America

◆ Hope

- Faith – All things are possible
- Better Future for our children
- Bipartisan Effort – working together

- ▶ **A National Consensus For Addressing Climate Change will not happen without a message consistent with conservative values delivered by creditable messengers.**

Works cited

- ▶ Brulle, Robert, Jason Carmichael, J. Craig Jenkins, *Shifting public opinion on climate change: an empirical assessment of factors influencing concern over climate change in the U.S., 2002–2010*, Climatic Change, September 2012, Volume 114, Issue 2, pp 169-188;
- ▶ Myers, Teresa A., Matthew C. Nisbet, Edward W. Maibach & Anthony A. Leiserowitz, ***A public health frame arouses hopeful emotions about climate change***, Climate Change (2012), 113, 1105-1112;

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- ▶ ***Too Late For Two Degrees?, Low carbon economy index***, Pricewaterhouse Cooper, UK, November 2012, www.pwc.uk.
- ▶ Yang, Z. Janet, LeeAnn Kahlor, ***What Me Worry? The Role of Affect in Information Seeking and Avoidance***, Science Communication (2013), 35, 189

