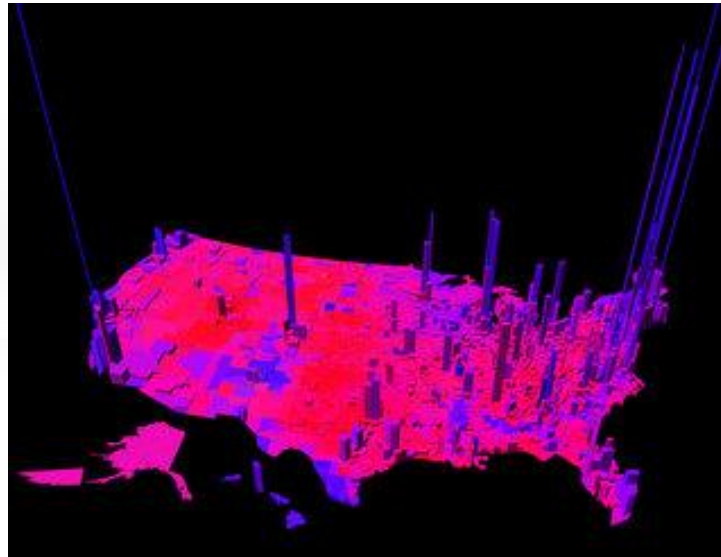


# Strategic Messaging

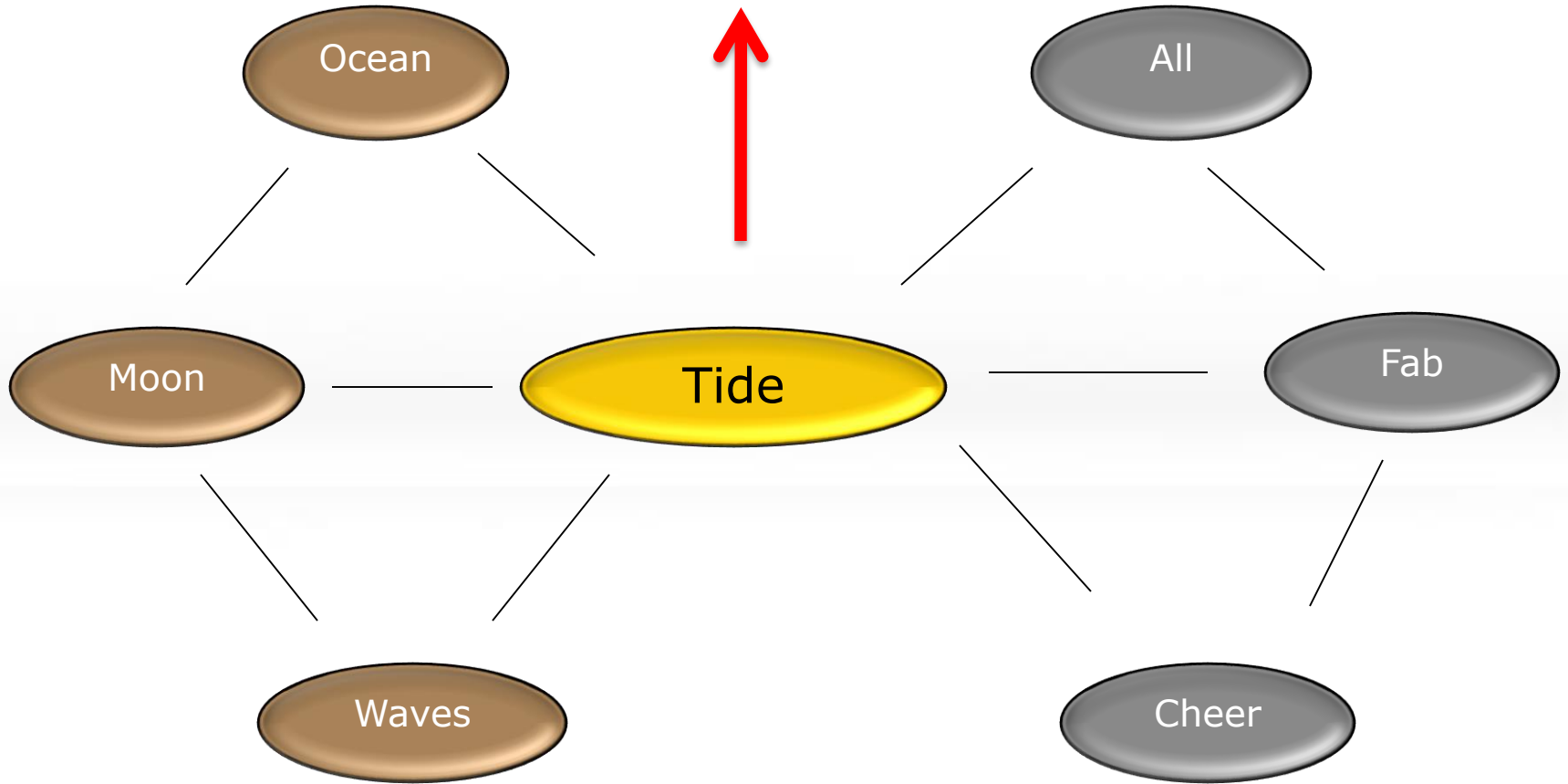
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## Putting Rural America Back on the Map Making Food Production More Palatable



**Drew Westen, Ph.D.**

# An experiment



# Why networks matter

Instead of this...	Try this...
The unemployed	People who've lost their jobs
Entitlement programs	Insurance we pay for through our taxes
My 10-point plan	Three principles
47.3 million Americans...	Nearly 50 million Americans...
Genetically engineered	FDA approved Scientifically approved Scientifically and naturally raised Grown by nature, enriched by science

# Three principles of effective messaging

- Know what networks you're activating
- If you don't feel it, don't use it
  - Make people see, smell, or taste it
  - The goal is not to "dumb it down"
  - It's to increase their emotional intelligence
  - Don't try to talk people out of feelings
  - Positive and negative are not just opposites
- Tell a story (rather than showing off your fact collection)
  - The structure of an effective message:
    - Shared values/aspirations
    - Anxiety, anger, or reassurance – make it visual and visceral
    - Return to values, aspirations, and hope

# Example: Labeling for “GMOs” or “GE” products

- An ounce of acronyms is worth a pound of manure
- Different analogies, different networks, emotions, and stories
  - Dominant networks now: artificial/unnatural, cloning, unknown dangers
  - An alternative analogy: medications
    - Should we stick with herbal remedies, or develop medications?
    - Early-onset breast cancer: What if we can turn off the gene?
    - Designer drugs: reducing *your* risk for heart disease or diabetes
  - Another alternative analogy: making a fire
    - We could continue to rub sticks together
    - Matches, gas stoves
    - Risks and benefits of each
  - Yet another analogy: traveling between two cities
    - Walking vs. driving: advantages and disadvantages

# Strategies for turning down the heat on attacks

- Focus on shared values
  - National security: WWII: what if we couldn't have grown our food? Do we want to depend on other countries for our food like we depend for our oil?
  - Choice: PPOs vs. HMOs; buying fruits at one store but dry goods at a cheaper one; choosing organic if you can and want to spend the money
  - Tradeoffs: If letting chickens run free means one out of five for the coyote, that's 20% fewer chickens (and not too humane to the 1 in 5)
- Depoliticize
  - You can't ask the public to accept science on one issue but not another
    - Roughly 90 percent of scientists (e.g., WHO, AAAS) believe genetically altered foods are safe
    - Surprise your audience: if you quote science on *your* issue, acknowledge science they would not expect from you (e.g., climate change; vaccines)
  - Personalize: I wouldn't sell to another parent anything I wouldn't feed my own kids; children don't come in red and blue