

Human Population. Term Project 2018.

April 27 and May 1, 2018

"Messaging"

Please read the instructions thoroughly.

Work in groups of two (three if necessary).

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the human population problem is communicating it to the very same humans that are each both a potential contributor to and a potential victim of the population problem. Assume you are tasked with speaking to one of the following groups about overshoot and what the future holds, with the goal of inspiring their action towards a humane solution. Find out about the worldview of that group. Create a compelling slide show that will convince them of the urgency of the problem without scaring them, without triggering their sensitivities, and without offending them. Convince them to support family planning measures, female empowerment, maternal/child health, climate care, renewable energy and/or sustainable models for economics with the goal of achieving humane zero growth in population/environmental impact within five decades (negative growth is even better).

The job is all the harder because you only have 15 minutes to do it in!

You won't have time to cover all of the bases. Focus on the most important issues. Find a way to point out a way that sustainability resonates with the social group in question. Stimulate critical thinking by pointing to conflicts between current practices of that group and the desires for a peaceful and prosperous future. Try to dispel cultural notions that disavow, deny, compartmentalize or politicize the population problem, or that treat it as unsolvable. On this issue, first make sure you understand the modes of disavowal as described in Diana Coole's paper.

Pretend you have gathered a large group of people that are not necessarily good listeners -- in other words a realistic audience! The way to get people to listen is to make your message compelling. They are all from one social group, so find a commonality.

Again, don't alienate your audience. Don't offend them. Don't bore them. And don't assume they cannot be changed. As the speaker(s), for the purpose of this term project, your own cultural identity is irrelevant and should be ignored (i.e. It's not about you!). You may wish to pretend that you are a member of the social group you are addressing, or you may choose to address the group as an outsider.

Messaging is interactive acting, with no "fourth wall". You must engage the audience, who will pretend to be the social group you are addressing. We'll train for this. Audience members will be graded on how well they follow the instructions.

Do not assume this task is impossible or attempt to prove it is impossible, even if it seems that way. (If you do, you will certainly get a very poor grade on the project!) It may be hard, but it is never impossible to reach out and connect to a different culture.

At several points prior to this point in our course I have asked you to avoid taking the worldview of economics. That restriction is hereby lifted. At this point in the course, I trust that you will maintain an inner worldview of science and therefore allow you to express outwardly any worldview you feel appropriate to the task, including the economics (grow grow grow!) worldview and any other worldview that helps to make the cultural connection. The point is not to teach science but to engage others in finding solutions. If science helps in that messaging process, great. However, it is the outcome of the messaging process that matters in the end. It is not necessarily the goal to pass on "scientific knowledge", especially if science does not resonate with the cultural worldview. Every culture has a history, a value system, and a worldview through which they see everything -- facts, stories, themselves, others. Even science is subject to the worldview and is judged by it. We cannot assume people value science and the scientific method, as we do in the academic world.

Social groups/nationalities: (Please choose one that you do not identify with.)

African men
Indian women
Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party
Narendra Modi and the Indian Parliament
MbS and the Saudi royal family
Europeans
Evangelical christians in the US
Refugees from the global south
Wall street executives
People of color in the US
White nationalists in the US
Mexican/Latin American immigrants in the US
US Congress
The World Bank
UNICEF/WHO
Venezuelans
Japanese
Vladimir Putin and the Russian people
Native americans/First peoples/Aboriginal australians

Components of your project:

- **Preparation.**
 - **Data.** Study the culture.
 - **Interpret.** Evaluate how the culture and its practices are consistent or not consistent with the conditions for sustainability (zero net growth, zero net environmental impact).
 - **Predict.** Based on your interpretation, predict the future trends in growth and environmental impact of your culture.
 - **Action.** Hypothesize that your message will lead to zero net growth and impact.
 - **Memorize.** Do not read your talk and do not use notes. Instead give your presentation from *memory!* (You can do it!) Reading from the slides should be

minimized!

- **Presentation.** Deliver a presentation in three parts. April
 - **Part 1)** Train your audience to think like the selected cultural group. Provide background. Identify cultural triggers and common values and are distinguishing of the culture. Practice delivering a cultural trigger. Keep the discussion relevant to sustainability (i.e. music and art are probably not relevant) (10-15 minutes)
 - **Part 2)** Try to convince the audience to change their ways and adopt a sustainable and low I=PAT. (10-15 minutes)
 - **Part 3)** Engage in challenge/response dialog with the trained audience. Audience will simulate cultural resistance, including triggered, knee-jerk reactions based on specific cultural mores where appropriate. (10-15 minutes)

- **Documentation:**
 - **Slides.** Please convert slides to PDF format. Thank you.
 - **Notes.** Please write up parts 1 and 2 of your presentation separately.
 - **Part 1** should be in **bullet points**. Sentence fragments are allowed, but the meaning should be clear. Be very concise. This should not be a transcript of your talk. Cite references for this part (but not for Part 2). Use numbers in brackets, with numbered bibliography.
 - **Part 2** should be a **transcript** of part 2 of your talk, but it need not be a word-for-word accurate transcript. It may be structured as a speech or as a script. A script is more appropriate if audience participation is used in Part 2.

Grading rubric: (grade is average of eight scores)

1. Quality and relevance of cultural description and training of audience.
2. Compelling slides.
3. Compelling speech.
4. Part 1 notes. Bullet points are short (one or two lines) and clearly written.
5. Part 2 notes. Approximately consistent with Part 2 speech.
6. Messaging in Part 2 is consistent with the cultural model of Part 1.
7. Appropriate trained audience participation with other speakers.
8. Memorization ability, based on focus and flow.