



The Science of what makes people care.

The Stanford Social Innovation Review - 2018

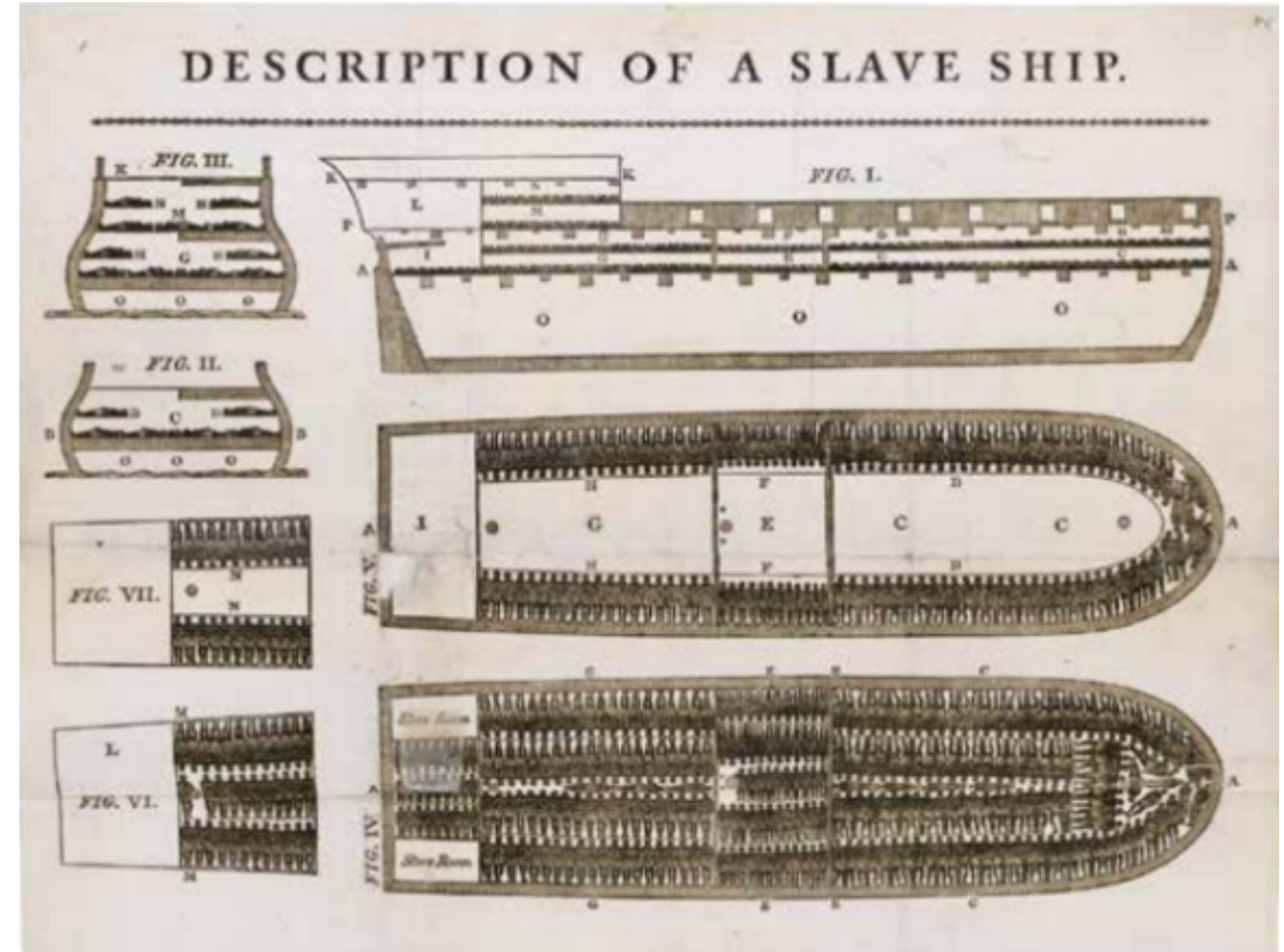




Summary

John Newton

- Worked in the slave trade in Europe in the mid 1700s
- Converted to an Anglican priest, wrote “Amazing Grace”
- 1787 founded the organization called Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade
- **Studying this campaign is a great way to understand how to get people to care and change their perspective on a social issue.**
- Their campaign included a very impactful logo printed on off links and snuff boxes and were sent all over Europe.
- Part of the campaign they created what is known as the first “info-graphic”, this cutout of a slave trade ship showing the horrors of how people were treated. They printed them and put them in pubs across Europe.
- They Boycotted Sugar, targeting moms (who made the food decisions) reducing the demand for sugar by 30%
- Their work succeeded, in 1807 parliament passed the Abolition of Slave Trade act.





The 5 Principles

- 1. Start with the audience, not the message**
- 2. Show don't tell**
- 3. Invoke emotion with intention**
- 4. Make the solution visible**
- 5. Create meaningful CTAs**



Principle #1

Start with the audience, not the message

- Identify a group whose change in behavior could make a profound difference for your issue or inspire others to take action, and figure out how to bring that group value.
(Adventurous Environmentalist)
- People engage and consume information that affirms their identities and aligns with their deeply held values and worldview (even more so with algorithms), and avoid or reject information that challenges or threatens them.
(“Trophy Hunting”)
- **Don’t just build a message - join the community.**

Q: HOW can we do a better job at joining the **adventurous environmentalist** community, not just talking to them and hope they get it?





Principle #2

Show, don't tell

- Are you using abstract concepts to describe your organization, issue, or solutions? Try creating a picture in the mind of your audience of what that concept looks like. Use visual language to help people connect with your work.
- Use imagery that creates the picture in ones mind of a feeling.
- Make sure imagery is authentic.

Q: HOW can we make our imagery more intriguing, honest and relatable?

Q: Does imagery of cute animals create a feeling for our audience?



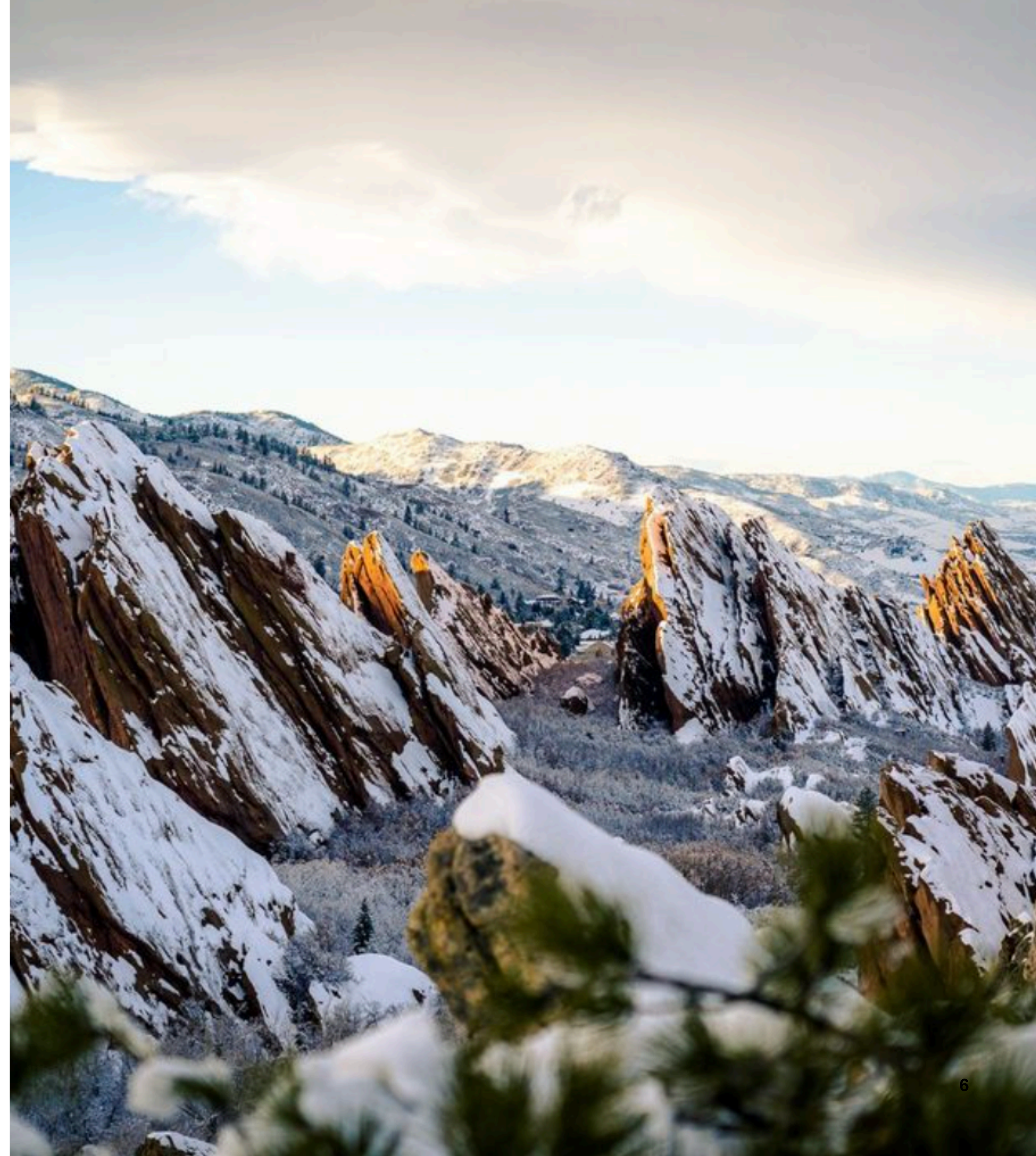


Principle #3

Invoke emotion with intention

- Getting people to care requires a nuanced approach to emotion.
- “Pulling on heartstrings” may actually result in your community tuning you out entirely.
- Create a feeling of AWE.
- Another pleasant emotion, *pride*, can be exceptionally powerful. Researchers have found that people anticipating feeling pride in helping the environment were more likely to take positive action than those anticipating guilt for having failed to do so.
- Think about what you’re trying to get people to do and how they would feel if they were doing it. Then think about stories that would make them feel that way

Q: How do we want people to feel when they see our content? (Answer for both hunters & AEs)





Principle #4

Make the solution visual

- Tell Better Stories.
- Storytelling is the best tool we have for helping people care about issues. (*Real People / Day in the Life*)
- Stories have the unique power to convey new perspectives and thereby lower counter-arguing, increase perspective and empathy, and capture and maintain people's attention.
- Stories have characters; a beginning, middle, and end; plot, conflict, and resolution. If you do not include these elements, you are not telling a story.

Q: Are we telling stories with a beginning/middle/end or just simply sharing a message?

Q: HOW can we tell better stories?





Principle #5

Create Meaningful CTAs

- People need to see how their action will affect a problem.
- If people believe they have no power to produce results, they will not attempt to change their opinion.
- People need to know how to do the thing you are asking them to do, and be able to easily incorporate it into their daily routines and habits.

Q: What action can we ask people to take other than just influencing their mindset/decision making at the ballot box?

Q: How do we make people feel like their action matters?





Strategic Takeaways

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- 1. Awareness alone rarely drives change**
 - 2. Relevance + emotion + clear action drives change**



Thank you.