

HOW CLIMATE NEWS FRAMING IMPACTS READERS



Read the original research led by Dr. Alyssa Sinclair

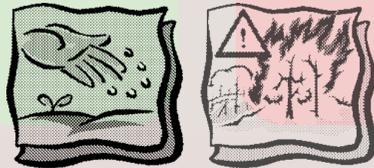
in collaboration with journalists from The Associated Press and Tampa Bay Times



How does emotional framing of climate news impact Engagement? Action? Memory?

Opportunity framing

Focuses on solutions, progress, collective action
(AKA: *solutions journalism*)



Crisis framing

Focuses on disaster, urgency and the severity of climate change

In this study

People read alternate versions of real climate headlines and lede sentences. They saw the same articles presented either with opportunity (+) or crisis (-) framing, or as the original publication

EXAMPLES

Alaska Villagers adapt to climate change threats

There's still life happening despite all the weight that climate change can cast upon this community.

Climate change threatens to destroy Alaska village

Homes are perilously close to falling into the ocean and this town is on the verge of disappearing

The researchers found these frames led to:

- more positive affect
- increased reading & sharing intentions
- more accurate memory and better recall of content

- more negative affect
- increased reading & sharing intentions
- overall higher immediate engagement
- worse memory
- more money donated

in a secondary study looking at 25k **social media posts** from 13 major news outlets (2010-2024):

- more consistent engagement across audiences

- more variable, audience dependent effects

Bottom line for journalists:

Opportunity framing leads to:

- Better memory, learning (Can support resistance to misinformation, future action)

Crisis framing leads to:

- Short-term engagement (clicks, sharing)
- Urgency; on-the-spot donations

Use these frames for:

Informing the public & Supporting sustained actions

Getting immediate metrics

and ultimately... **Doomism Is Not Necessary for Engagement!**

