

# Going Uptream: The boulder in the way

**National Summit for Rural Traffic Safety Culture  
Big Sky, Montana**

**Lawrence Wallack, DrPH  
Dean and Professor of Public Health  
College of Urban and Public Affairs  
Portland State University**

**July 12, 2010**



*"I was able to get in one last lecture about diet and exercise."*

# OPINION



**YOYOs**

**WITTs**

**Jared Bernstein**  
***All Together Now:***  
***Common Sense for a Fair Economy***

# The Odds Metaphor

# Some questionable beliefs

- ✓ The facts will set you free.
- ✓ The data speak for themselves.
- ✓ We need to educate everyone.
- ✓ We just need a catchier message/slogan.
- ✓ I understand it so everyone else should.
- ✓ Those who don't support us don't make sense.

# Mission of Public Health

**The mission of public health is to fulfill society's interest in assuring conditions in which people can be healthy.**

**Institute of Medicine, 1988**





# What does the upstream landscape look like?

*Policies designed to make health damaging conditions rare and health promoting conditions commonplace.*

| Reduce Health Damaging | Increase Health Promoting |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.                     | 1.                        |
| 2.                     | 2.                        |
| 3.                     | 3.                        |
| 4.                     | 4.                        |
| 5.                     | 5.                        |

# DIRAI TRAFFIC SAFETY



PI IBAL TB AEEJG SAEFTV



## It Depends on How You Ask

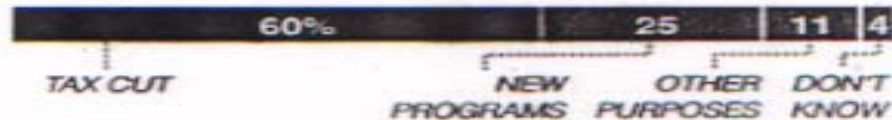
The public's desire for tax cuts can be hard to measure. Pollsters asking what should be done with the nation's budget surplus got different results depending on the specifics of the question.

### THE QUESTION

*President Clinton has proposed setting aside approximately two-thirds of an expected budget surplus to fix the Social Security system. What do you think the leaders in Washington should do with the remainder of the surplus? ...*

#### Variation 1

*... Should the money be used for a tax cut, or should it be used to fund new government programs?*



#### Variation 2

*... Should the money be used for a tax cut, or should it be spent on programs for education, the environment, health care, crime-fighting and military defense?*



Source: Pew Research Center

# John Boehner on Health Care Reform

(House Minority Leader on PBS NewsHour 11/5/09)

“This bill is the greatest **threat to freedom** that I have seen in the 19 years I have been here in Washington....It’s going to lead to a **government takeover** of our health care system, with tens of thousands of **new bureaucrats** right down the street, **making** these **decisions** [choose your doctor, buy your own health insurance] **for you.**”

# Framing tension

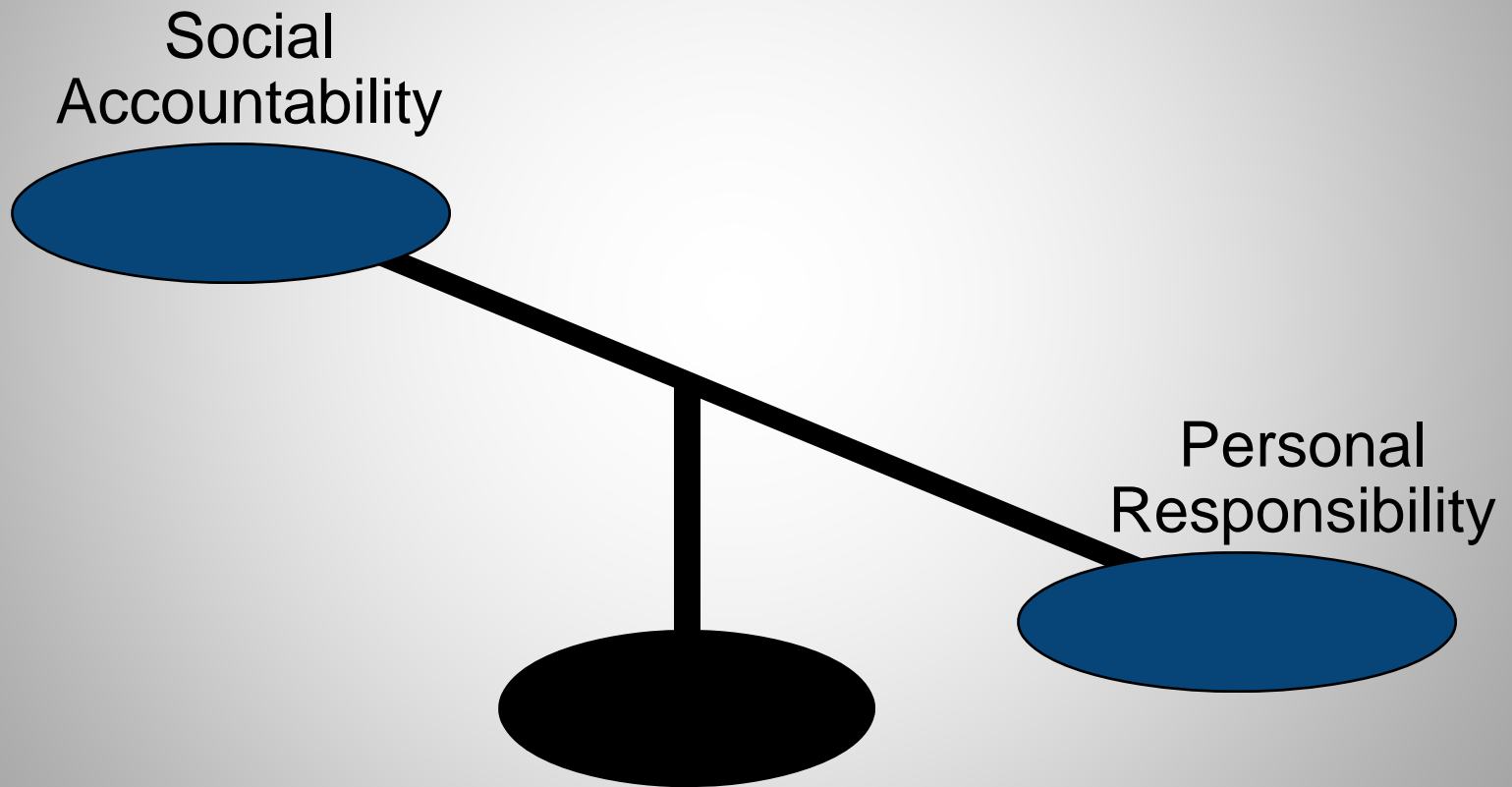
## Social Justice

- Shared responsibility
- Interconnectedness
- Strong obligation to collective good
- Basic benefits should be assured
  - Government involvement necessary

## Dominant Values

- Self-determination/Self discipline/Rugged individualism
- Benefits based solely on effort
- Limited obligation to collective good
- Voluntary and moral nature of behavior
- Limited government intervention

# Balancing Values



# The After All Challenge

- Traffic crashes and the resultant injuries and fatalities are a significant problem for rural communities. Of course, people should be educated about safe driving and encouraged to be better drivers. But education may be necessary but it isn't sufficient to really reduce this problem. After all...



# Framing

- ✓ **What is the broader social/community issue?**
- ✓ **What are the shared social justice values?**
- ✓ **What is the shared responsibility for change?**
- ✓ **What needs to be done in policy terms?**

# Moving ahead

- ✓ **Travel to the upstream territory**
- ✓ **Advance research-based policy for change**
- ✓ **Rebalance our stories to reflect policy issues and the upstream terrain**
- ✓ **Root our stories in community and social justice values**