MINISTERSTWO INFRASTRUKTURY I ROZWOJU

PARP

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NARODOWA STRATEGIA SPÓJNOŚCI
dla rozwoju Polski

MINISTERSTWO INFRASTRUKTURY I ROZWOJU

UNIA EUROPEJSKA
EUROPEJSKI FUNDUSZ ROZWOJU REGIONALNEGO

Which Evaluations Should We Believe?

Origins of Credibility and Legitimacy in Politicized Environments

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University of Michigan

Government decisions often rely on

evaluations

of past actions.

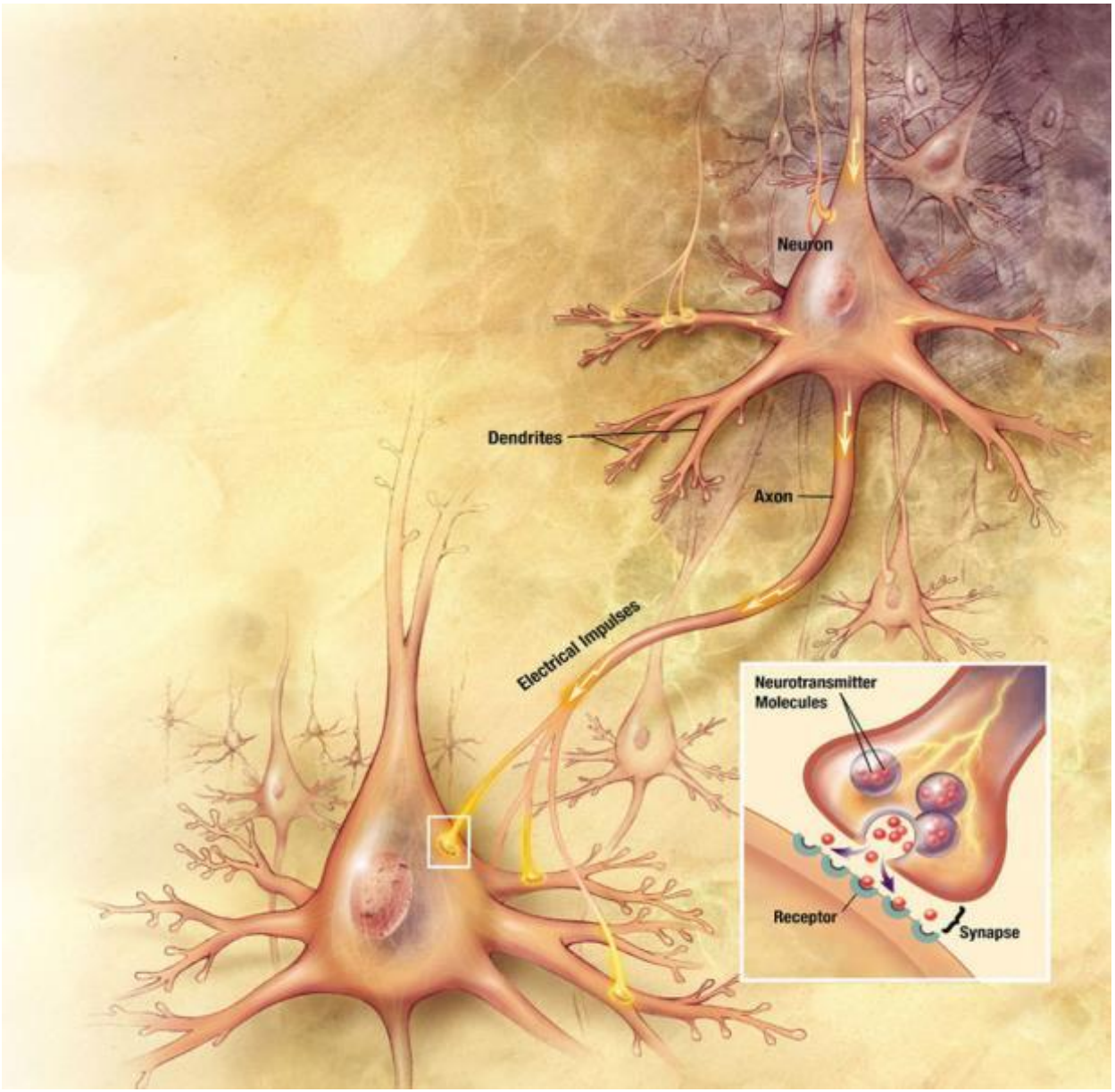
How do people choose what to believe?

A challenge:

The communicative space is increasingly competitive

www.bigstock.com · 8311828

Human attentional capacity has remained constant



Source: www.c2cinternet.org/index.php?id=185

It is harder to win battles for attention

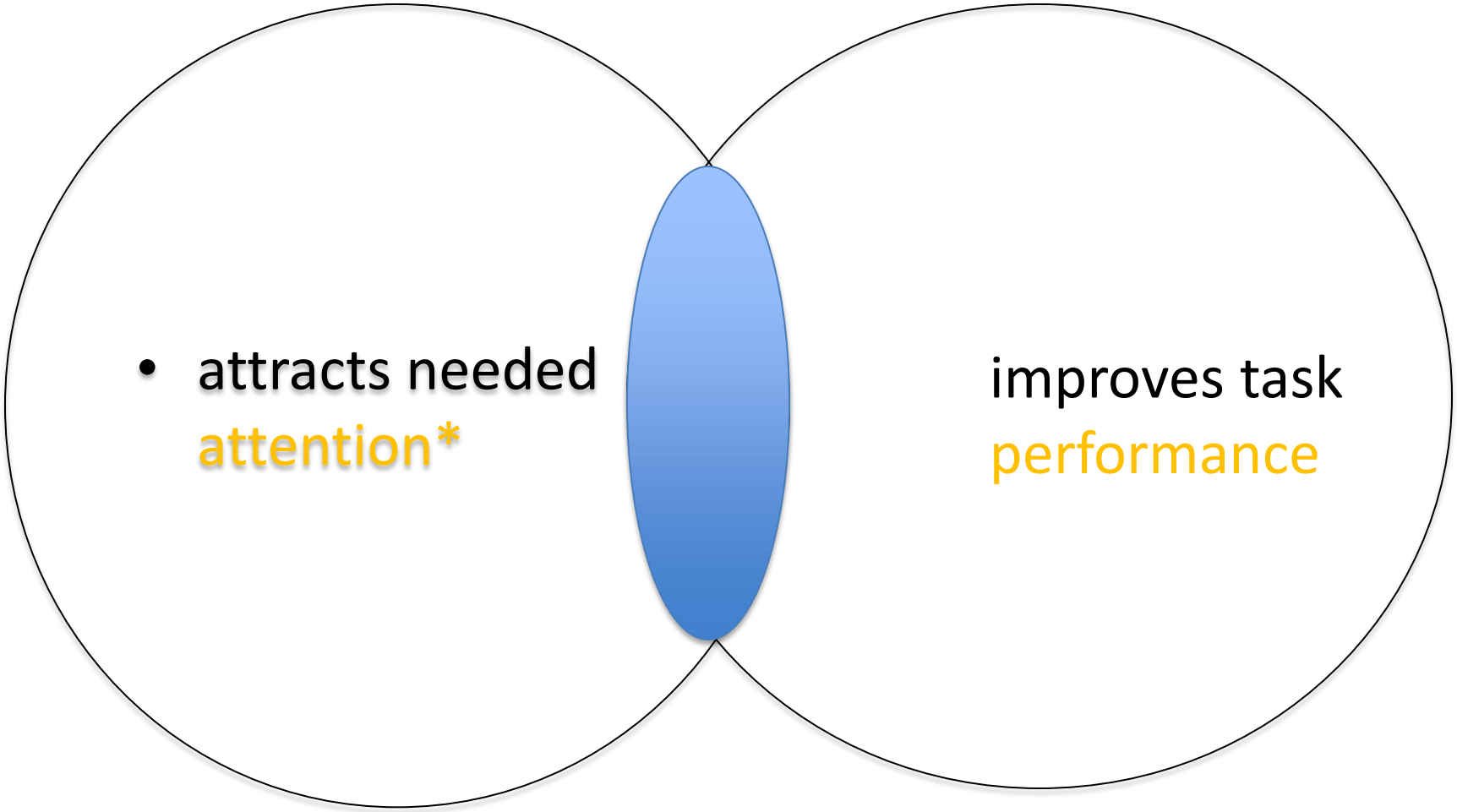
BLAH
BLAH
BLAH
BLAH

How to increase your chances of winning

A goal

- To improve quality of life by conveying more insights of greater value to more people.

The “sweet spot” (Lupia 2015)



Evaluative Criteria that Attract Attention

- LEGITIMATE
  - in accordance with recognized or accepted standards or principles

- CREDIBLE
  - the quality of being believable or trustworthy

What makes a claim:

1. Legitimate?

2. Credible?

1. Legitmacy

Social Science Principles

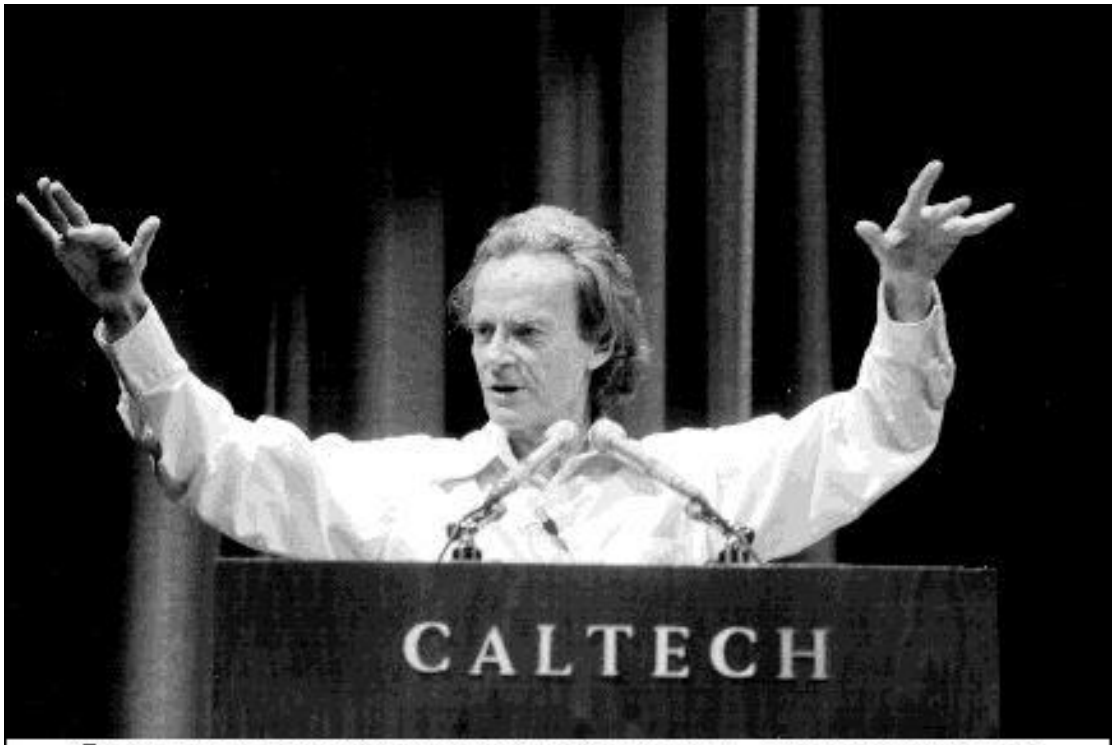
(Lupia and Elman 2014)

- Analytic communities develop norms and rules about how to draw inferences from the past.

- A conclusion is “valid” if it is conducted in accordance with accepted rules.

- Richard Feynman (1974 – Caltech Commencement Address)

"[Scientific integrity] corresponds to a kind of utter honesty—a kind of leaning over backwards….



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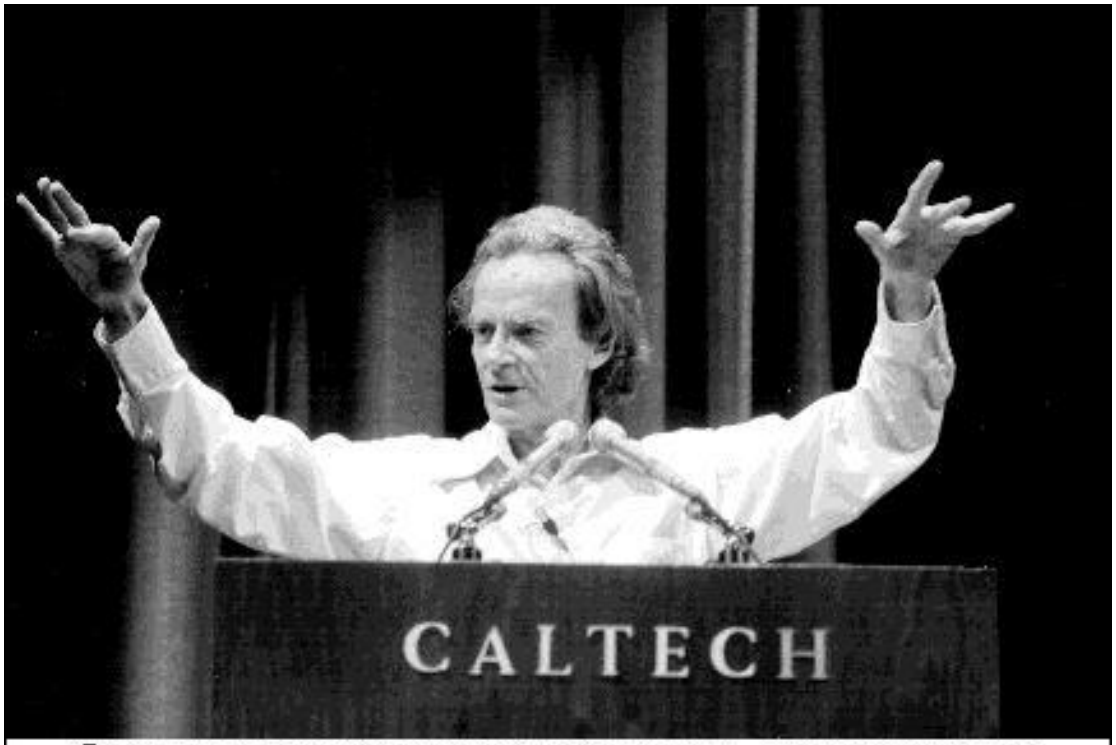
- Richard Feynman (1974 – Caltech Commencement Address)

"…the idea is to give all of the information to help others judge the value of your contribution;

not just the information that leads to judgment in one particular direction…"



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Baghdad

Did the surge work?

NB Weidmann, I Salehyan. 2013.
Intl Stud Q 57: 52-64.

- Baghdad, 2003-2008
  - A spike in conflict
  - A surge
  - Violence declines

Why less violence?

- Hypothesis 1:
  - The surge detects and defeats insurgents
- Hypothesis 2:
  - Ethnic unmixing reduced contact

Data

- Ethnic composition of neighborhoods
- Changes in settlement patterns over time
- Location of violence
- Date of violence

FIG 1. Empirical data used for seeding and validation of the model. Ethnic maps show Shia (grey), Sunni (black) and mixed neighborhoods (striped). The level of violence by neighborhood is displayed in different grey shades (center map)

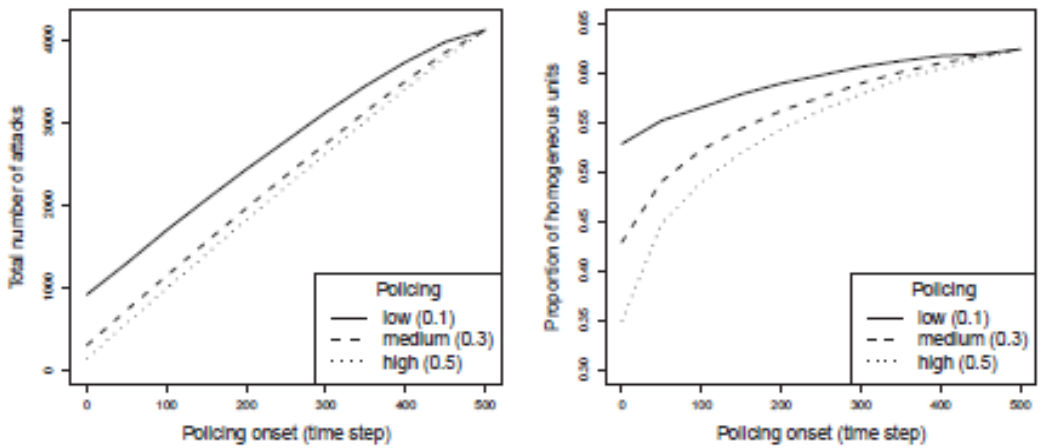
Weidmann-Salehyan Method

- All data geocoded
- Ethnic-geo-temporal patterns identified
- Patterns provide estimates of how different policing policies would work

Findings

- Most attacks against nearby ethnic rivals
  - Attackers need “local” support.
- Civilians search for safety
  - Ethnic enclaves emerge & prepare
- Ethnic segregation limits violence

Early Surge More Effective



(A) Violence (B) Segregation

FIG 7. Effect of the onset of policing on the reduction of violence (left) and segregation (right)

What is the value of a scientific approach?

It can be a source of

legitimate conclusions.

2. Credibility

How audiences process information

What does this image represent?

…in the Political Context

- Politics entails conflicts not easily resolved.
- It yields language indeterminacy with a nasty edge.
  - Conflict brings incentives to manipulate context and meaning.
- Result: “communication games” with unusual incentives.

“Lipstick on a Pig”

- A phrase that dates back to the 18th century.
- Controversial in 2008, but not in 2004.
- Why?

VP Cheney (2004)

- "…Now, in the closing days of this campaign, John Kerry is running around talking tough. He's trying every which way to cover up his record of weakness on national defense. But he can't do it. It won't work.

- As we like to say in Wyoming, you can put all the lipstick you want on that pig, but at the end of the day it's still a pig. (Applause.)

- That's my favorite line. (Laughter.)" (19)

©

Senator Obama (2008)

- “John McCain says he's about change too, and so I guess his whole angle is, 'Watch out George Bush -- except for economic policy, health care policy, tax policy, education policy, foreign policy and Karl Rove-style politics -- we're really going to shake things up in Washington. That's not change. That's just calling something the same thing something different.

- You know you can put lipstick on a pig, but it's still a pig”

Governor Palin (three days earlier)

- “You know the difference between a hockey mom and a pit bull?...
- Lipstick”

Congressperson Drake (R-VA) (same day)

- "Barack Obama sunk to a new low today with his remarks today regarding Governor Sarah Palin….

- It is offensive not only to women, but anybody that cares about having a substantive debate on the issues."

Credibility

- For contested issues, high credibility is a must.
- Credibility is domain-specific and is bestowed by the audience.
- Credibility is a function of
  - Source attributes*
  - Message attributes
  - Contextual attributes*
  - Audience effects*

Credibility Formula

(Lupia & McCubbins 1998, Lupia & Menning 2009)

Source Credibility is a non-decreasing function of

- Perceived interest proximity,
- Perceived relative expertise,
- and their interaction

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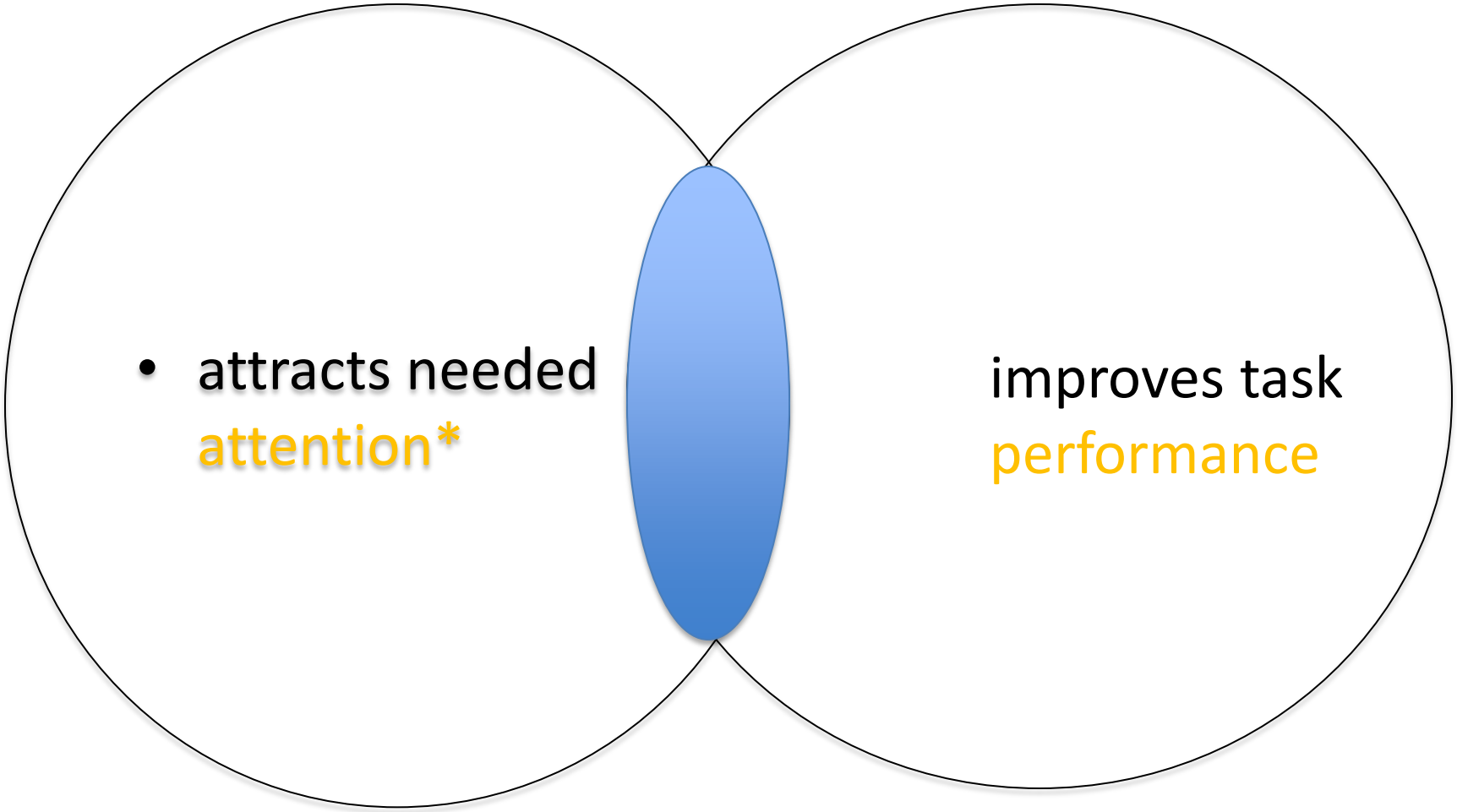
Richard Alley
Earth: The Operators Manual

-
- "I'm a registered Republican, play soccer on Saturday, and go to church on Sundays. I'm a parent and a professor…
- the sooner we move forward, the better."

For more information, read Arthur Lupia "Communicating Science in Politicized Environments" *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, 2013.

The “sweet spot” (Lupia 2015)



Thank You!

UNINFORMED: Why People Know So Little About Politics and What We Can Do About It

(Oxford University Press, December 2015)

@ArthurLupia