Risk Communication

An ethial risk communication prtocol for sicne ca nd mass communication

J. Valenti and L Wilkins p177-194 PUS v4 issue 2 April 1995

1970s – defined as unilateral sending a message to the public about a particular risk. The message came from govt and sci circles, to persuade recievers that the information was accurate. Goal of risk communication was education, persuasion and behaviour change.

Deficit model, accepted authority, understood and adopted uniformly

Risk assessment is an evolving process – not just a message about risk but also a discussion of how the risk was assessed. Applies to an average.

Individuals interpret messages.

Risk communication should be interactive – messages going both ways. Public will ask different questions to experts.

See krimsk nad ploug, Douglas and Wildavsky and PErrow.

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Open dialogue with or within the public, intended receiver of the risk message and sources of the messge. Encourage discussion of the causes of risk, possibilities for prevetion and provision o fmobilising information (follow up info in sotry, access agencies to provide aid, suggest approaching doctor, take precuastions ) behaviourly empowering mobilising info.

Sci/experts should contribute info beyond hard facts. Journos should seek this information from multiple surces and report their context.

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Journos should facilitate participation in communication - provide details of afency, or selection of sources for further discussion/info

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Scientists need to show that they hold one piece of a puzzle.

See

Johnson and Covello *The social and cultural construction of risk: Essays on risk selectio and perception.*

Fisher 1991, Risk communication challengers *Risk Analysis 11 (2) 173-179*

Mazur 1981 – Media coverage and public opion on oscienfitic controversies. *Journal of Communication*  21 (2) 106-115

Zeckhauser and Viscusi 1990: Risk within Reason *Science* 248 (4 may) 559-564

British Medical Association *The BMA guide to living with risk* 1990

*Health Edication and the Mass Media –* ed Leathar, Hastins, O’Reilly and Davies

Wellings K Help or hype – media coverage of the 1983 pill scare

V. Entwistle and M Hancock-Beaulieu Health and Medical coverage in the uK national press

Sampled 2 months of coverage 1981 and 1990

% heatl related articles (quality and pop ress) in major subject categories in 1981

Disease 23.8

Other 15.2

Prevention 10.3

Medical rsearch 9.7

NHS 9.2

**Environment 9.1 compared to 6.4% in 1990** no comment given – but env was considered in context of class, poverty andn ill health

Disabilities 8.4 (1981 was year of disabled people)

Death and Euthanasia 7.6

Medical Incompetance 6.6