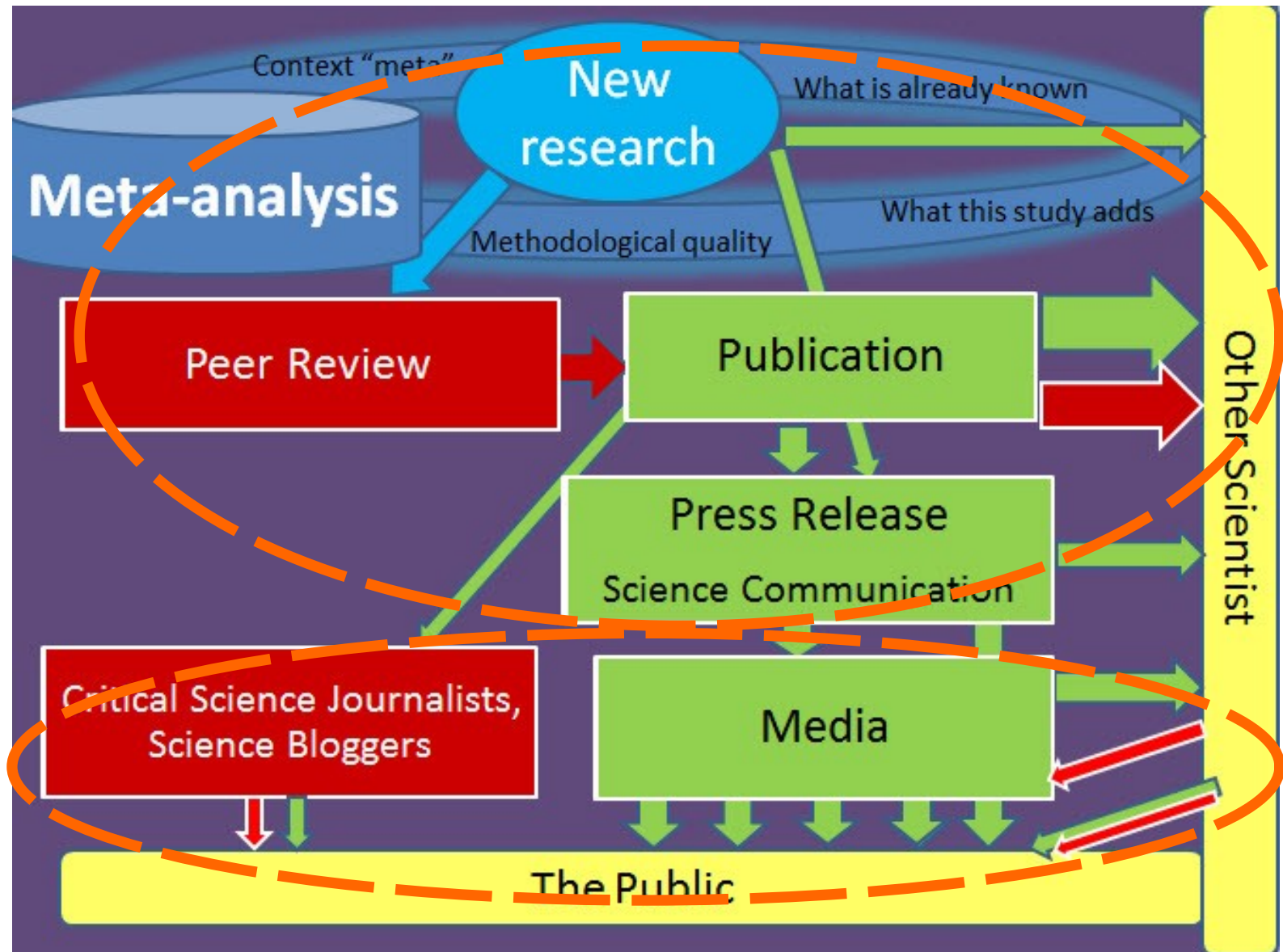


# **Writing for the general public**

**Massimiliano Razzano**  
**Università di Pisa & INFN-Pisa**

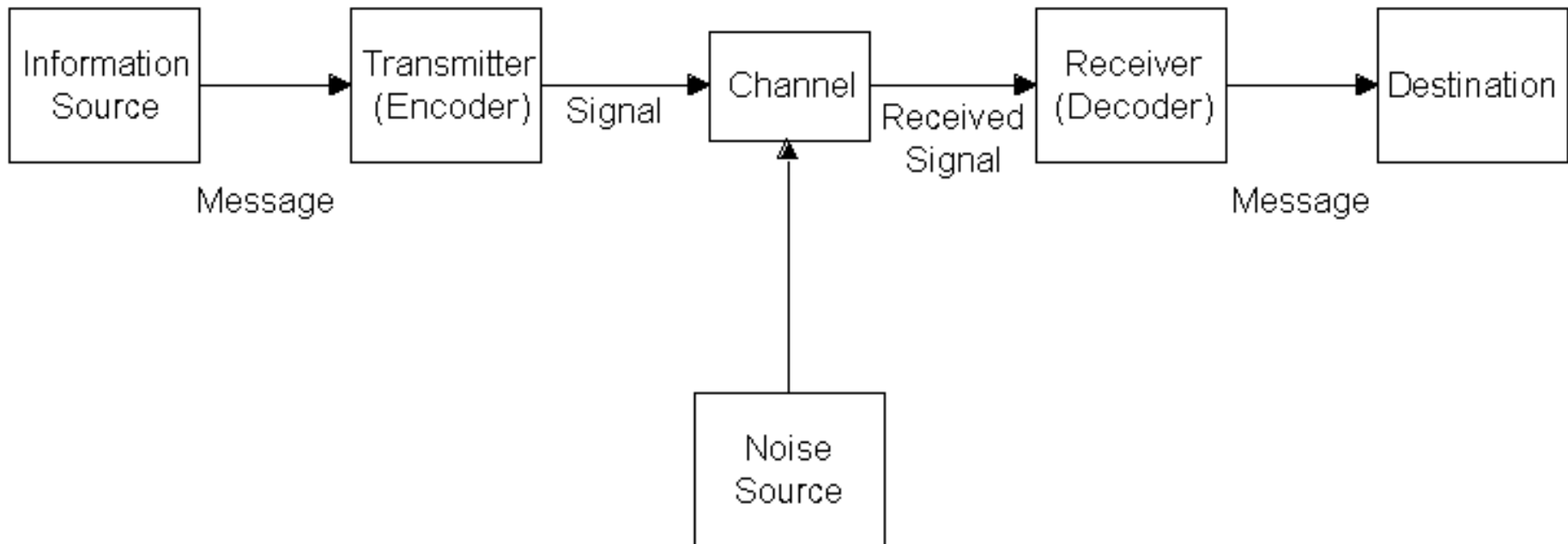
**INTENSE Meeting**  
**Pisa, 28 April 2023**

# The science communication process



# Communication?

## The Shannon-Weaver Mathematical Model, 1949



**The message should arrive!**

# The audience



**“who you are talking to?”**

# Who are you talking to ?



How would you explain a neutrino to:

- A school kid
- Your neighbour
- A fellow (non physicist) researcher
- etc...

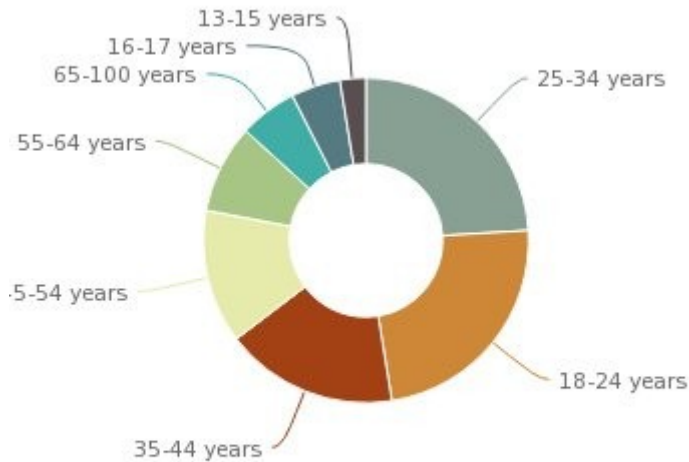
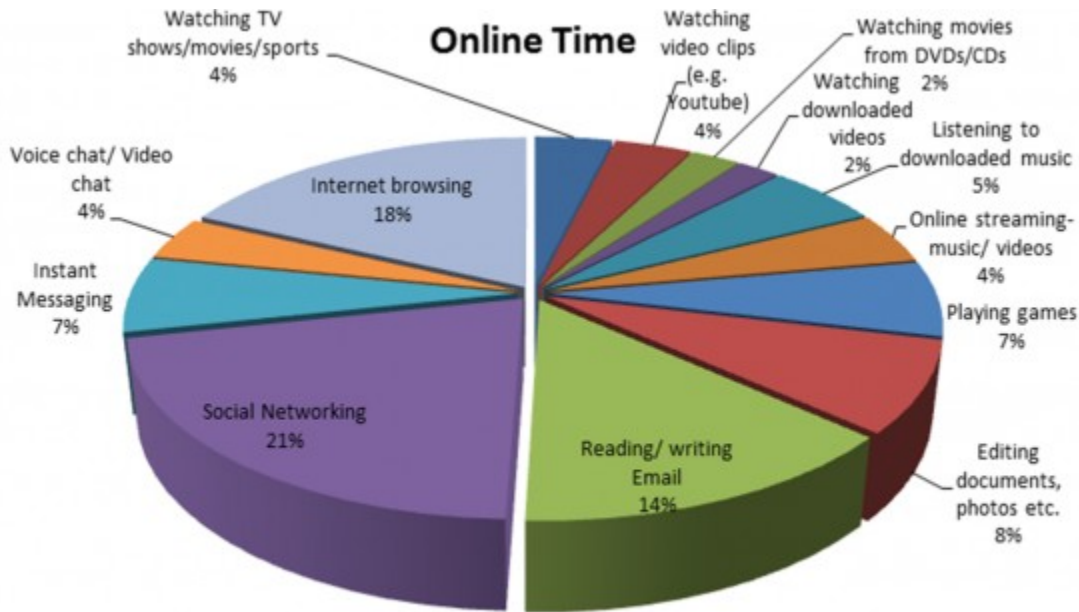
**Knowing your audience is crucial !**

- Other scientists
- General public
- Politicians and/or funding agencies
  - School
  - Journalists

# Know your audience !



# Know the audience !



Americans+Facebook



**SOCIAL NETWORK ACTIVE USERS 2013**

	<b>1.19B</b> active users	LAUNCHED 2004 (9 YEARS OLD)
	<b>540M</b> active users	LAUNCHED 2011 (2 YEARS OLD)
	<b>259M</b> active users	LAUNCHED 2003 (10 YEARS OLD)
	<b>232M</b> active users	LAUNCHED 2006 (7 YEARS OLD)
	<b>150M</b> active users	LAUNCHED 2010 (3 YEARS OLD)
	<b>70M</b> active users	LAUNCHED 2010 (3 YEARS OLD)

Active user base is an important metric to know, but always remember that it's not the size of the social network that matters, it's your ability to connect with your audience.

Read more at [dustn.tv/active-users-2013](http://dustn.tv/active-users-2013)

# **The “location”**

**“where are you writing?”**



# Science journals vs magazines

- Science magazine

- » General science (some exceptions)
- » Style: informative, creative and “catchy”
- » Timeline different: news/stories can be written in <hours
  
- » Newspapers (NYT, Times)
- » High-level general (Scientific American)
- » Broad audience general (Focus, etc...)
- » Specialistic (Sky & Telescope, etc...)

# **A key point: The message**

**“what is important?”**

# Catchy Titles for scientists

PRL

Featured in Physics

Editors' Suggestion

367 citations

PDF

HTML

## Detection of *B*-Mode Polarization at Degree Angular Scales by BICEP2

P. A. R. Ade et al. (BICEP2 Collaboration)

Phys. Rev. Lett. **112**, 241101 (2014) – Published 19 June 2014

[Show Abstract +](#)

PRL

Editors' Suggestion

45 citations

PDF

HTML

## Search for Low-Mass Weakly Interacting Massive Particles with SuperCDMS

R. Agnese et al. (SuperCDMS Collaboration)

Phys. Rev. Lett. **112**, 241302 (2014) – Published 20 June 2014

[Show Abstract +](#)

PRL

Editors' Suggestion

36 citations

PDF

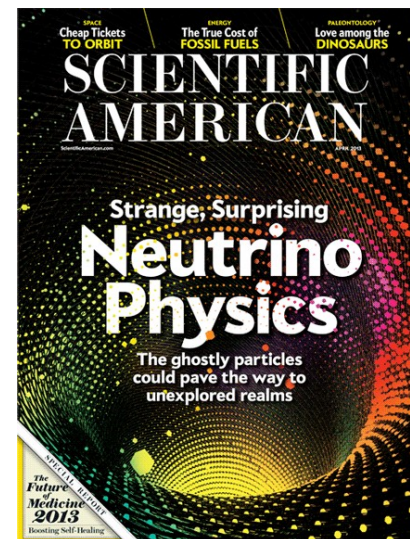
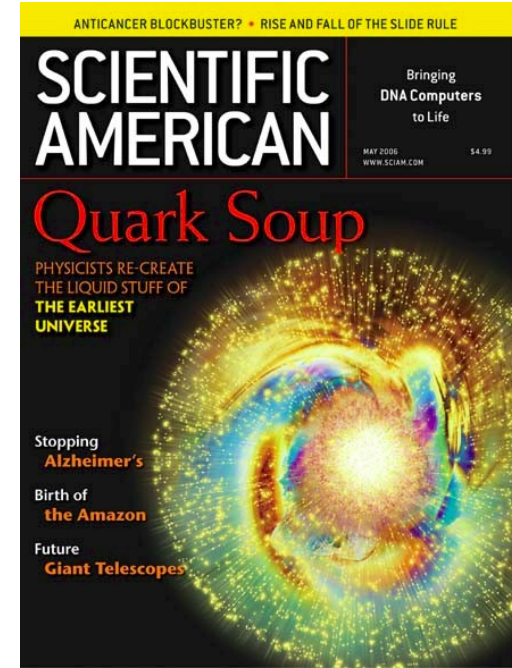
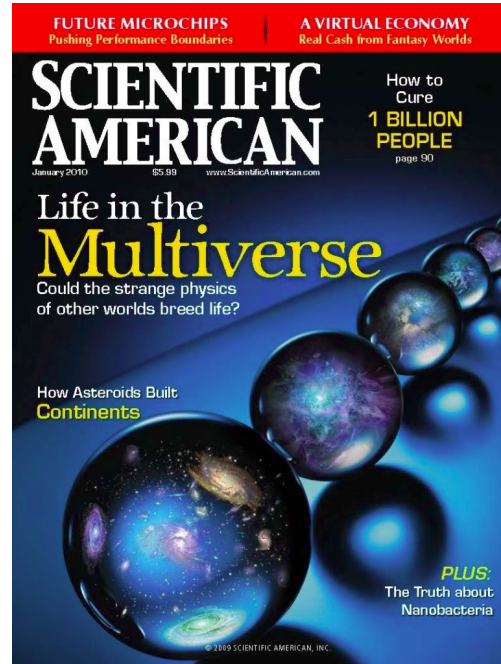
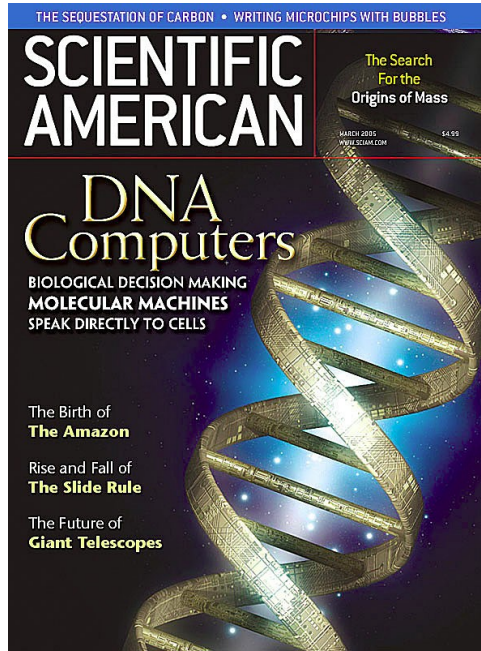
HTML

## Experimental Realization of a Three-Dimensional Dirac Semimetal

Sergey Borisenko, Quinn Gibson, Danil Evtushinsky, Volodymyr Zabolotnyy, Bernd Büchner, and Robert J. Cava

Phys. Rev. Lett. **113**, 027603 (2014) – Published 8 July 2014

# Catchy for the rest of the world



# **The content**

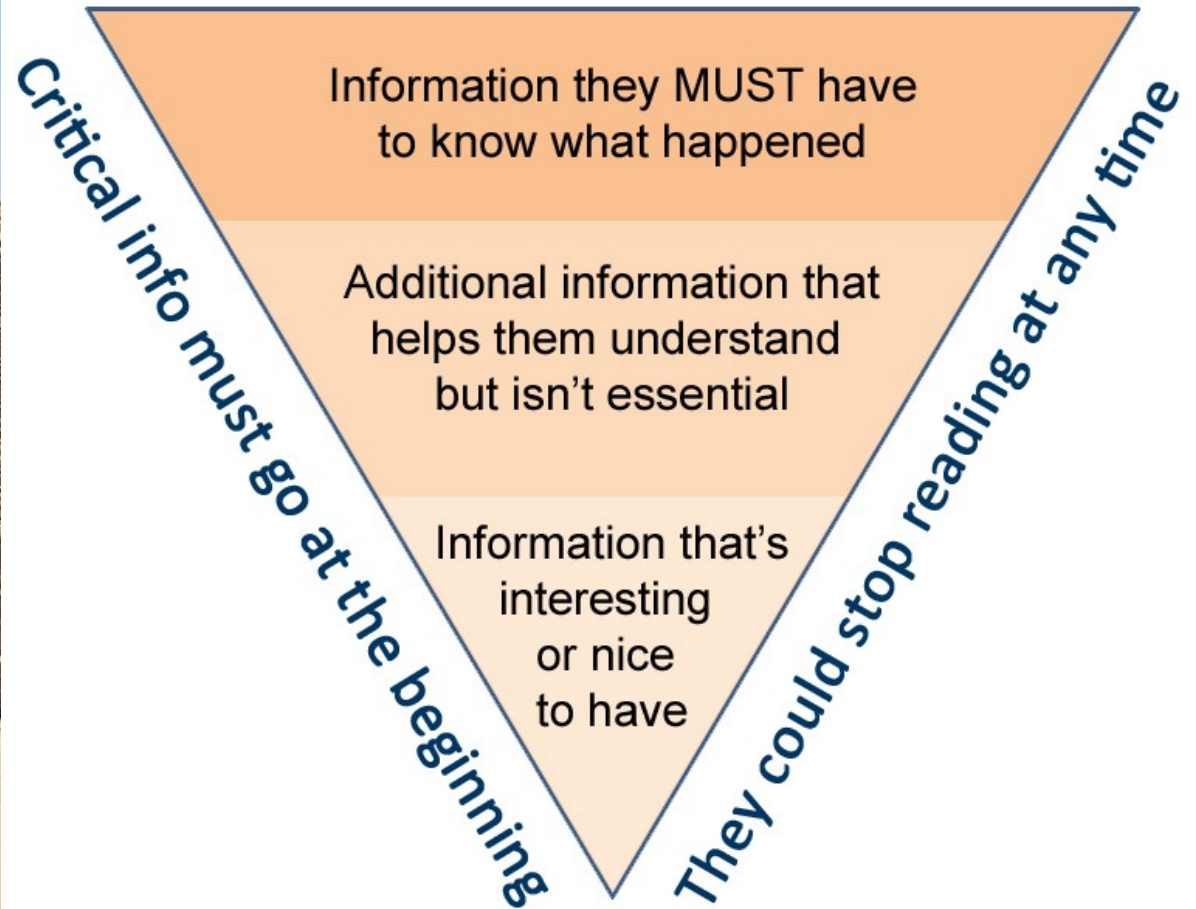
**“what are you writing?”**

# Paper vs story

- Some similar points
  - Perform an initial research
  - Look for sources
  - Present different points of view
- But...
  - Need to validate sources
  - No need to do original research
  - Very tight schedule (it's the market..)
  - Need to catch the reader, always!

# What comes first?

## Inverted Pyramid News Writing



# The KISS Principle

**KISS\***

(Keep It Simple, Stupid)

O

Keep it Short, Simple

\*US NAVY (ca 1960)





# Seven C of Communication\*

- Correct
  - - Don't add weight...
- Clear
  - -Find an honest critic
- Concise
  - - Don't make me wonder, don't make me wait
- Comprehensive
  - - Q&A
- Compelling
  - - Photos, animations, etc...
- Concrete
  - - Examples!
- Concentrated
- Your job is outreach. So reach out. Call us

Thanks for your attention!