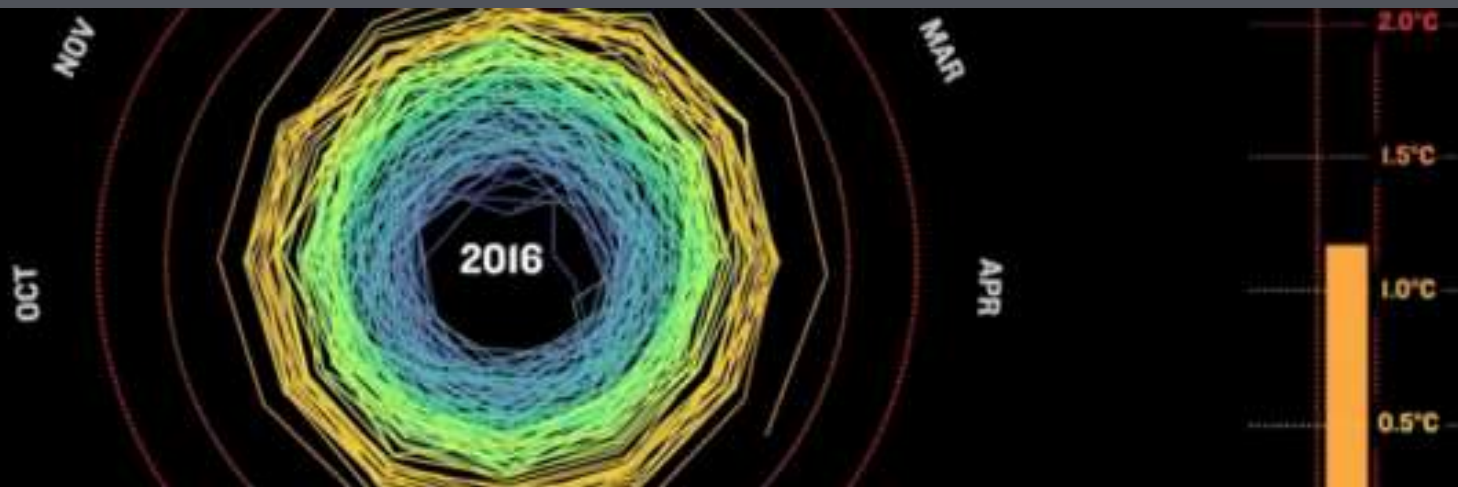


MEDIA ENGAGEMENT, SOCIAL NETWORKING – WHAT’S THE POINT?

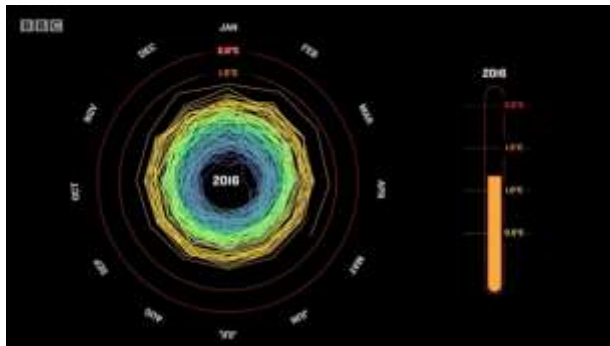


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INTRODUCTION

- These are some personal thoughts on the use of social networking and public engagement to help your career and contribute to the department, University and wider societal wellbeing
- Everyone is different and you can prioritise to suit your needs
- I'll cover twitter and media engagement as well as general public engagement from my perspective but also from the perspective of the department and the University.

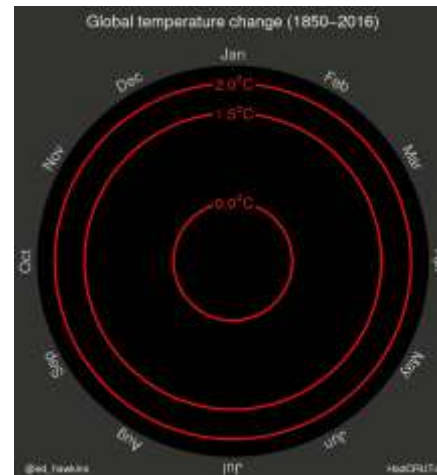


WHAT'S THE POINT?

- What's the point of wasting time on media engagement or social networking when you should be publishing papers?
- What's the point of doing research?
- Besides getting paid.
- Why spend days, weeks and months researching, designing, implementing and publishing a journal paper...
- ...if only you, your co-author and a couple of reviewers ever read it?
- If you're not proud of your research who else is going to be?
- If you don't promote your research, who else will? (unless it's so awesome you can just sit back and watch the citations pile up)

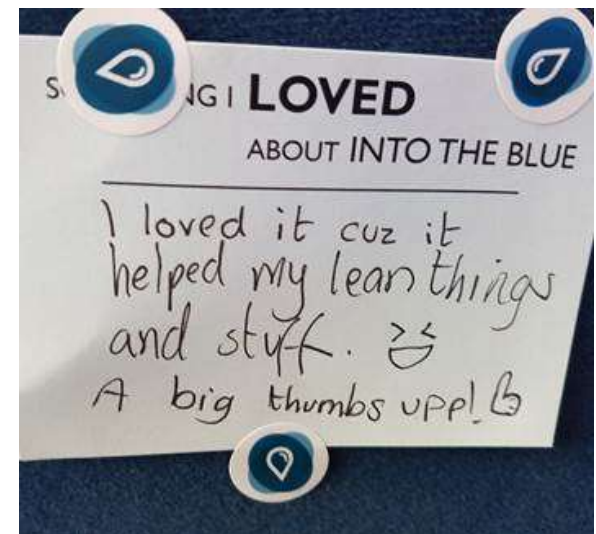
ENGAGE [EN-GEYJ]

- verb (used with object), **engaged**, **engaging**.
- 1. to occupy the attention or efforts of (a person or persons):
She engaged him in conversation.
- 2. to secure for aid, employment, use, etc.; hire:
to engage a worker; to engage a room.
- 3. to attract and hold fast: *The novel engaged her attention and interest.*
- 4. to attract or please: *His good nature engages everyone.*



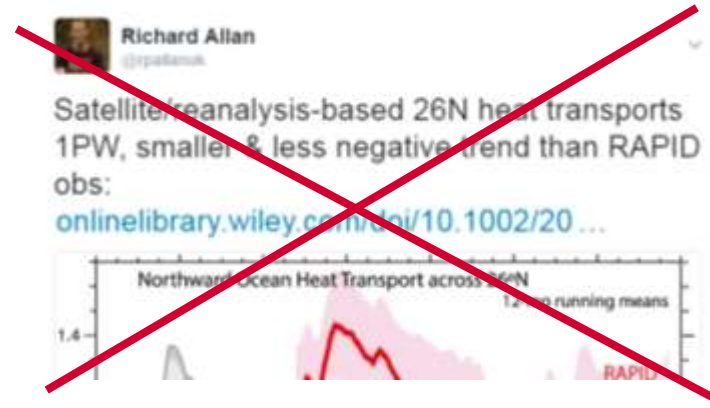
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- The public is everyone (including scientists, including you)
- Public engagement benefits wider society but also you e.g. *broader context, communication skills, fulfilment, public understanding of science...*
- Impact agenda & funding





TWITTER



- Follow people that are useful
- Don't follow people who just tell you about their kids/dinner/wonderful life (unless you're interested in that)
- Tweet useful information (not just about your kids/dinner/wonderful life)
- Also promote yourself/department/University
- Well, who else is going to?
- I put my tweets on my homepage – that's quite a good way to stop you from tweeting inappropriate rubbish (simple instructions on twitter)
- You can engage with people using “reply” – ignore people who are annoying
- Exemplar = @ed_hawkins (he's not annoying... well apart from being so bloody good at social media)

MEDIA: SOME CONTEXT



- The **University of Reading** wants as much media coverage as possible
 - This is to attract more students to Reading (££££)
- The **department** wants to promote our reputation in research
 - This is to increase impact of our research which helps funding and to attract more students (££££) but there is a risk of reputational damage
- **Individuals** want to do their job (see above) but also contribute to the public understanding of science and promote own research
 - There is a risk your peers will look down their nose at you and you can suffer reputational damage but also get wider recognition (e.g. useful in demonstrating impact/wider engagement for funding and doing your job as above is useful for promotion)
- Proactive vs reactive . Live vs recorded. TV vs radio vs web vs print

TO DO LIST

- 0) **Keep up the good work.** Publish and disseminate research.
- 1) **Update webpage.** All professional scientists should have their own webpage listing publications and their links as a bare minimum
- 2) **Keep a log.** Your contributions to outreach, media and wider engagement will be useful for your project but also your career
- 3) **Training.** Lifelong learning. Improving all forms of communication (written, oral, ...) it's a valuable transferable skill.
- 4) **Engage.** Don't jump in at the deep end. Prioritise engagement to suit your needs and situation. There are many options (blogs, adult education, school events, local radio, expert comments) – ask advice from project PI or mentor.

Sometimes it might not taste nice but it's good for you and can leave you with a warm glow inside (or is that the medicinal whisky?).