



Accreditation in a More Demanding World

**Presented by Dan Yankelovich to the
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Organization

- A new wave of mistrust
- Mounting pressures on accreditation
- 10 principles of responsiveness

Wave I: Mistrust in the Great Depression

Duration:

1930 - WWII

Causes:

Massive, unyielding unemployment

Consequences:

- Large scale government regulation
- Strengthened trade unions
- Loss of confidence in Republicans

Targets:

Business, market capitalism

Wave II: Mistrust in the 1970s

Duration:

Late 1960s - 1980

Causes:

- Vietnam, Watergate
- Stagflation
- Changing moral norms

Consequences:

- Grassroots movements (e.g. consumer, environment)
- Regulation
- Cynicism

Targets:

Government, all institutions, business, authority, other people

Wave III: The Current Wave of Mistrust

Duration:

2001 - ?

Causes:

- Crisis of ethical norms
- Scandals
- Failures of stewardship

Consequences:

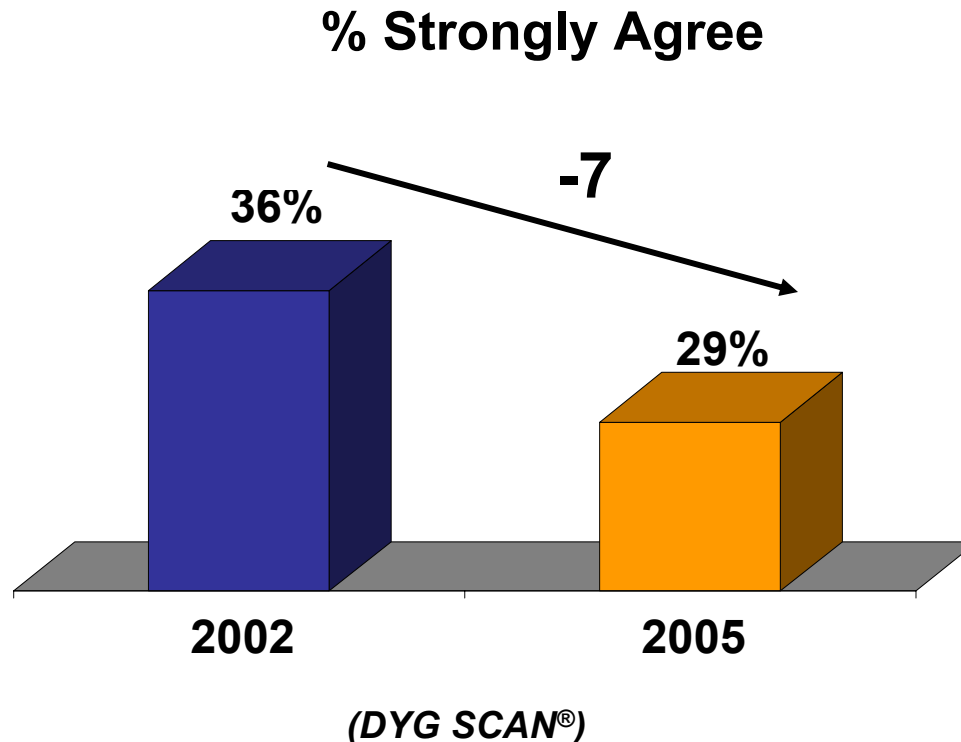
- Punitive attitudes
- Polarization and loss of civility
- Craving for integrity

Targets:

- Big business
- Government, Education

Trust in business continues to decline post-Enron

“You can trust business leaders to do what is right almost always/most of the time”



Consequences

The venom
produced by
mistrust

“Ressentiment”

Intense anger at perceived
unfairness and injustice

Ressentiment is especially strong when people feel stewardship has been betrayed:

(e.g.) Catholic church

(e.g.) Red Cross

(e.g.) Government response to Katrina

Events that fit the same pattern:

(e.g.) Congress (tax breaks for the wealthy; benefit cuts for the poor)

(e.g.) U.C. (rising student costs; raises for administrators)

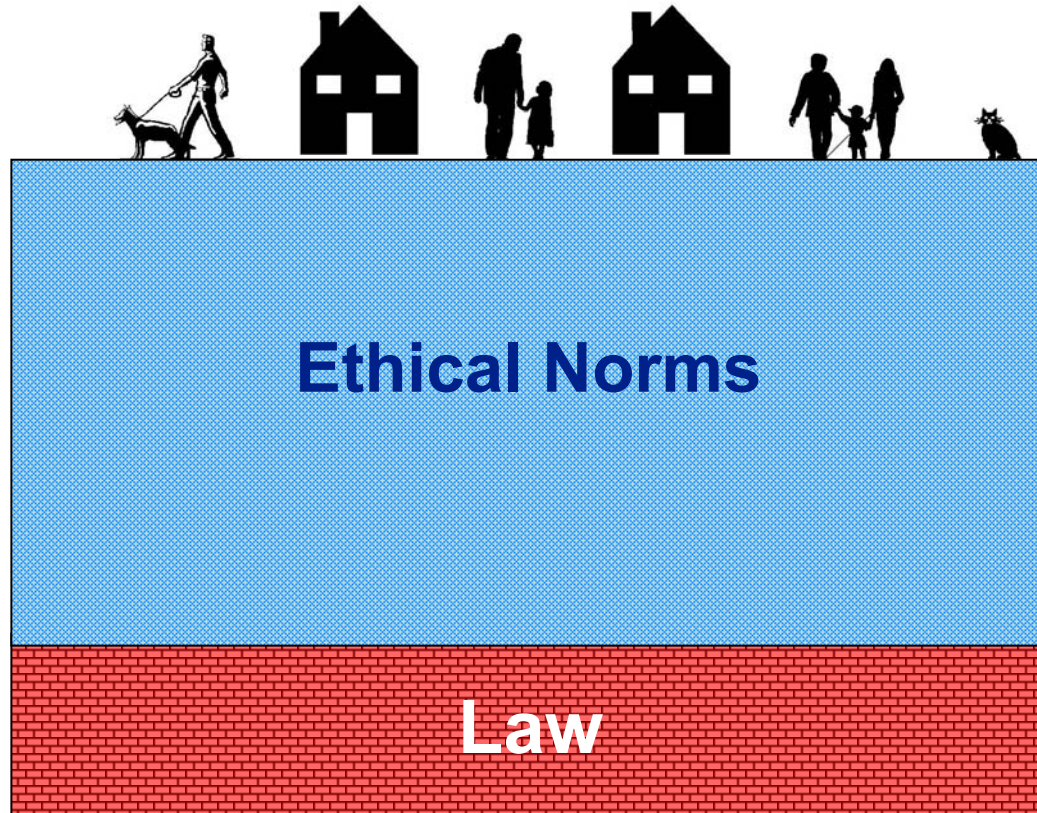
The current wave of mistrust arises out of the erosion of ethical norms

Shifting cultural values have taken a heavy toll on ethical norms:

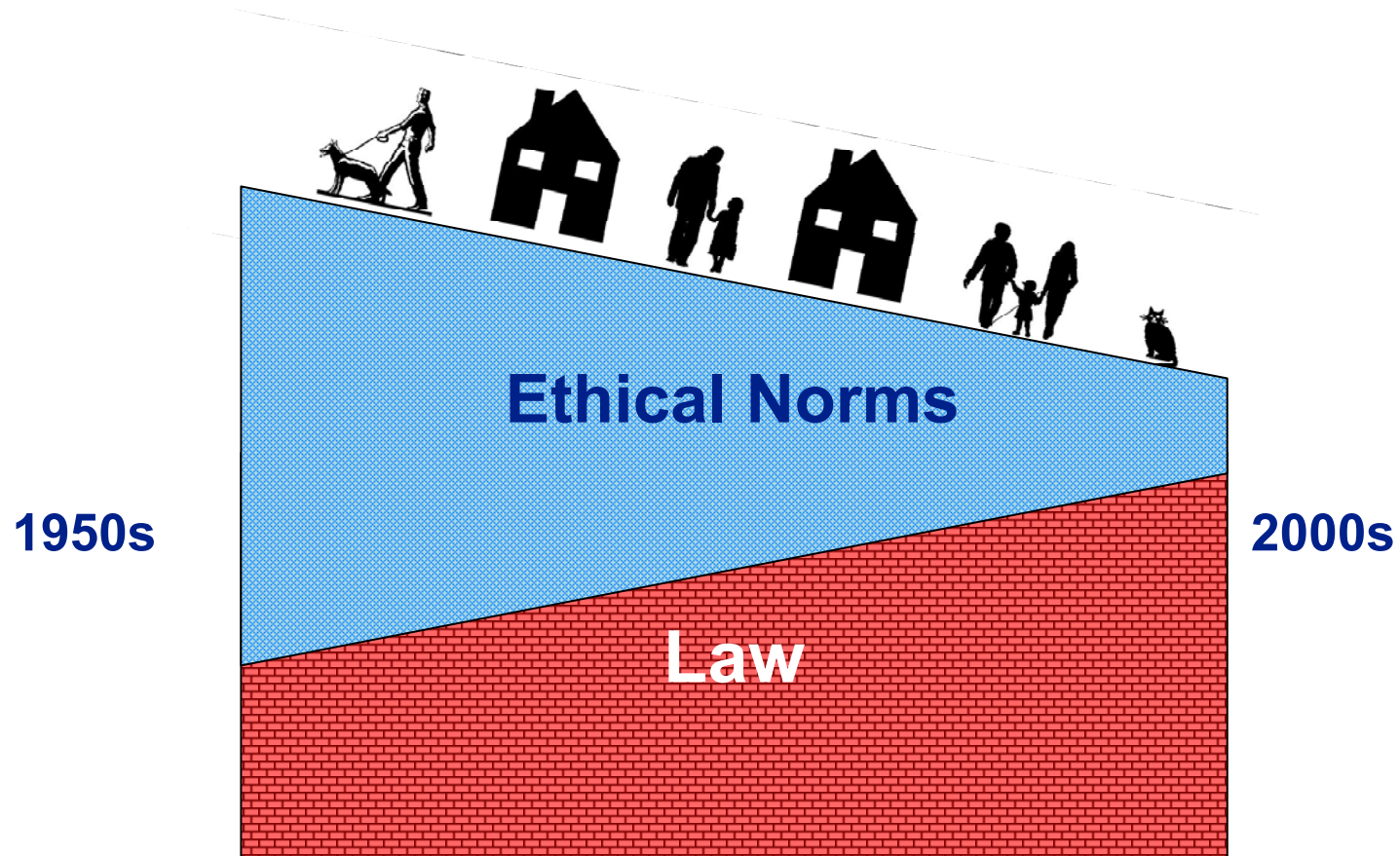
- “If it isn’t illegal, it’s OK”
- Gaming the system is good sport
- Win at any cost
- Conflict of interest is for dummies
- Strip away regulations and constraints

“Winning for myself”
(by bending the rules)

When ethical norms are strong, institutions can regulate themselves




When ethical norms erode, societies resort to punitive regulation



See *DYG SCAN*® 1995-2005

A new threat to the economic well-being of average Americans



**Low skilled
workers can no
longer earn
middle-class
incomes and
benefits**

Higher education is unprepared to cope
with this threat

The new threat creates mounting pressure on higher education

A mad scramble for high-paying skills

Pressure to validate these skills

If validation is seen as flawed, punitive regulation is likely

10 Principles of Responsiveness

- I. Recognize that more is expected from privileged institutions like higher education**

- II. Make a conscious effort to reinforce a “stewardship” ethic**
- **Demonstrate caring**

III. Become more responsive to students, parents and employers (and not primarily to institutions of higher education)

IV. Silence/denial/closed doors interpreted as evidence of bad faith

V. No one gets the benefit of the doubt. Assume the need to demonstrate good faith/responsiveness

VI. Anything but plain talk is suspect

VII. Being “good people” and having “good motives” are not acceptable justifications for poor results

Noble goals with deeply flawed execution is seen as hypocrisy, not idealism

**VIII. Honesty, integrity and stewardship
respond to a nation hungry for
ethical renewal**

IX. Build trust:

- **Make few promises/commitments**
- **Live up to each faithfully**
- **Performance should exceed expectations**

X. Legitimate the expectation of students, parents and employers that all forms of higher education can provide marketable skills...

... this means that accreditation must encompass this goal as well as the other objectives of higher education

Summary/Conclusion

- Higher education faces a formidable challenge: to keep the promise of equality of opportunity in the new global economy
- The challenge is doubly daunting in the current climate of mistrust
- Accreditation has an important role to play in insuring that this promise be kept