

What is it about journalists,  
anyway?

What don't they get?

# Journalists often ....

- Have humanities, not science backgrounds
- Have not taken (much) college statistics
- Confuse descriptive data with normative statements
- Are under daily deadline pressure
- Must snag new stories; can't get scooped
- Have little time for in-depth research
- Look for color, stories, quotes
- Yet have tight word counts: quotes get cut
- Confuse correlation with causation



**CORRELATION  
IS NOT  
CAUSATION**



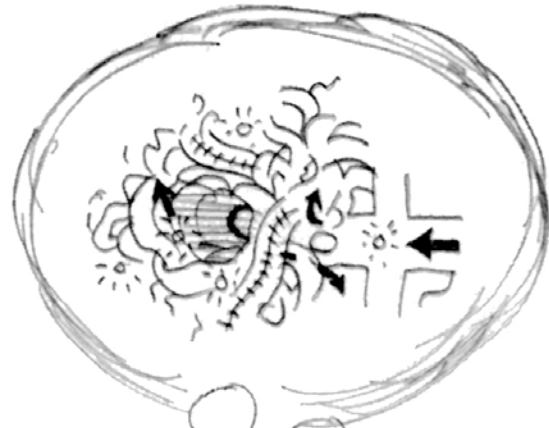
**BUT IT  
SURE  
HELPS**

What is it about scientists,  
anyway?

What don't *they* get?

# Scientists often...

- **Neglect to personalize**
- Forget to use the power of the story
- **•Use technical terms, abbreviations, jargon**
- Forget how long they needed to master the field
- **subject to the curse of knowledge**
- Forget: listener doesn't know what they know



STEVENS