

APR14-2014-000369

Abstract for an Invited Paper  
for the APR14 Meeting of  
the American Physical Society

### **Stealth Physics: Sneaking in Science Where People Least Expect It**

DIANDRA LESLIE-PELECKY, Trivalent Productions

The majority of science outreach focuses on a small group of well-educated older people (still majority male) with an already existing interest in science. The dominant paradigm of “you-come-to-us” leaves out many more people than it brings in. Most people only become interested in science when it affects something they care about, whether that be their personal or economic health, or their recreational passions. My experiences writing and promoting *The Physics of NASCAR* forced me to change my approach to science outreach in terms not only of how to do outreach, but also what impact I hope to have. There are 75 million NASCAR fans. Every fan wants to know one thing: Why isn’t my driver winning? I’ll share my experiences using television, radio and blogging to reach an oft-neglected group that is characterized by a certainty that they – even if they wanted to – are not capable of understanding science. This lack of self-efficacy is likely the biggest barrier scientists have to reaching the general public. My central thesis is that “Science for All” doesn’t necessarily mean that scientists need to convince the public that what the scientists are doing is interesting. It means that scientists doing outreach need to learn how to engage the public with science that affects things the public already cares about.