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Protecting People and the Environment

Where the Rubber Meets the Road: NRC External Engagement

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What is the NRC Office of Public Affairs' mission?

- Act as the agency's primary link to the **news media**.
- Ensure **openness** in our regulatory process by making clear, accurate information available in a timely manner to the news media and the public about the NRC's policies, decisions, programs and activities.

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What is our mission?

- Provide advice and guidance to all NRC offices to support their communication needs with the public and their interaction with the media.

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What is our mission?

- Develop and implement crisis communication strategies that help educate the public during a nuclear emergency.

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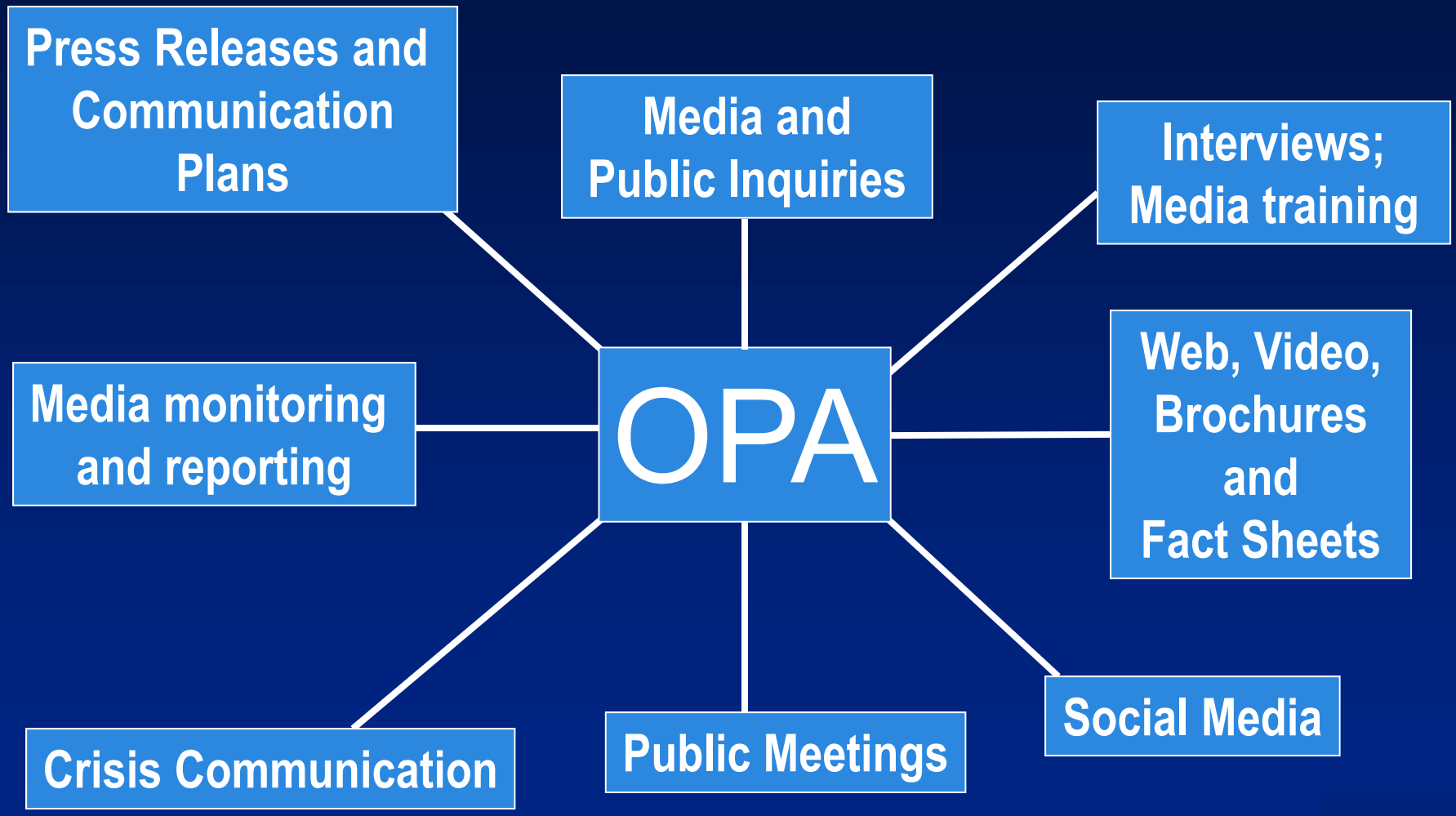
What do we do?



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Getting social

- **Facebook** – An average of 200 posts per year with 6,100 page likes since launching in August 2014
- **Twitter** – An average of more than 400 tweets per year with 10,000 followers since launching in Jun. 2011

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Keeping it simple

- "In politics, a bumper sticker always beats an essay."
- Emphasis on plain language
- Risk perspective is essential

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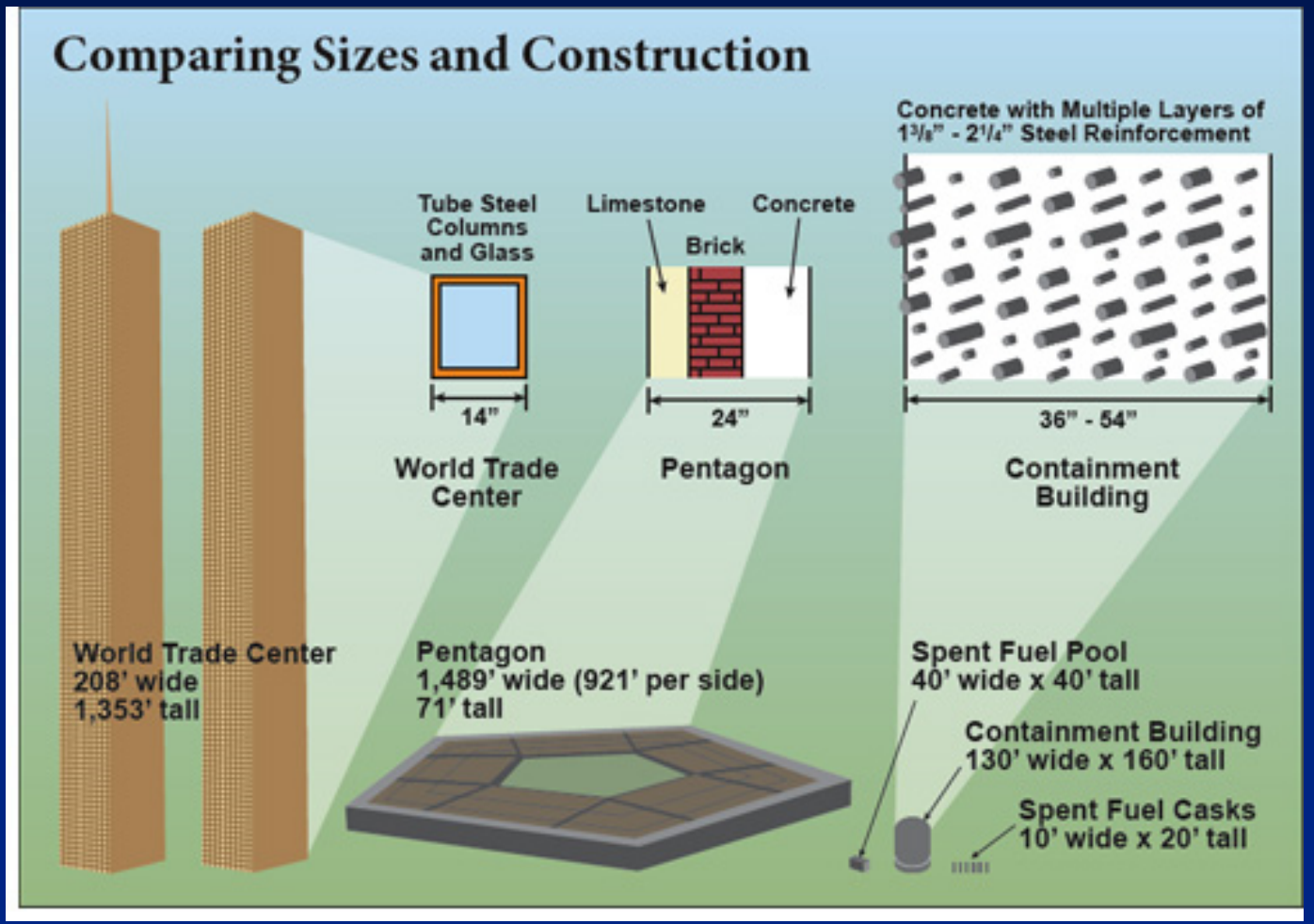
The power of visuals



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The power of visuals

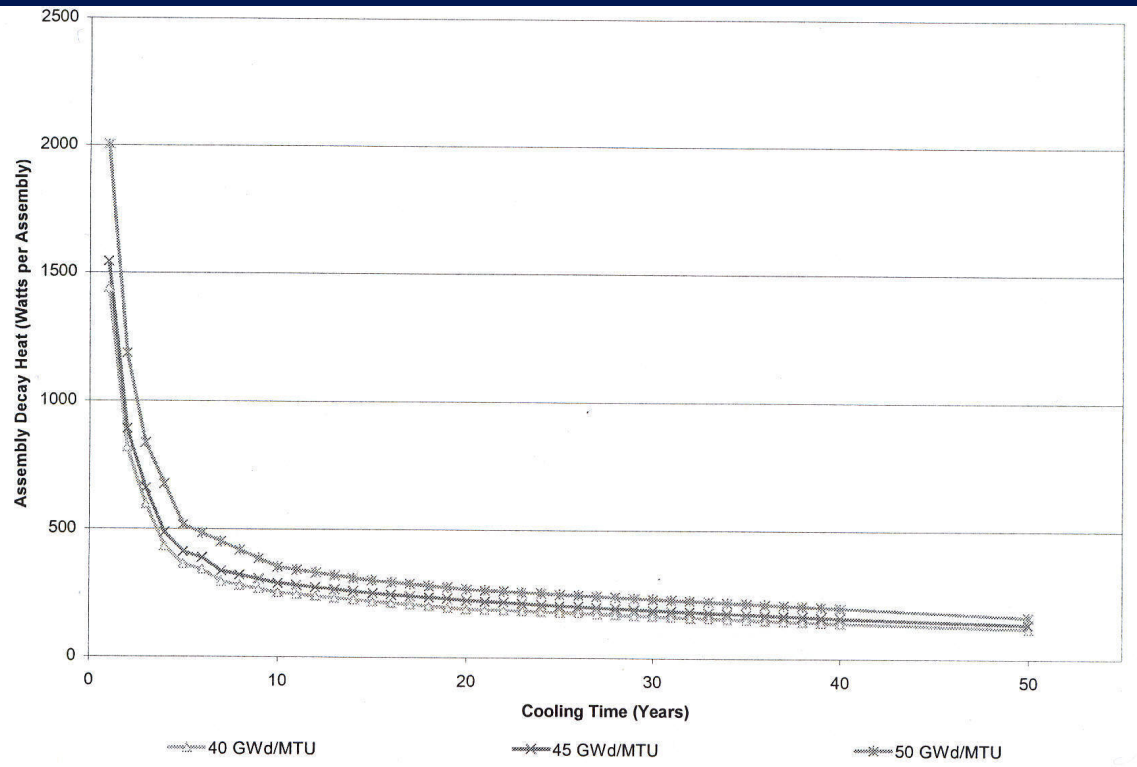

Figure 2-3
BWR SNF Assembly Decay Heat as a Function of Burnup and Cooling Time [NRC 1999, DOE 1992]

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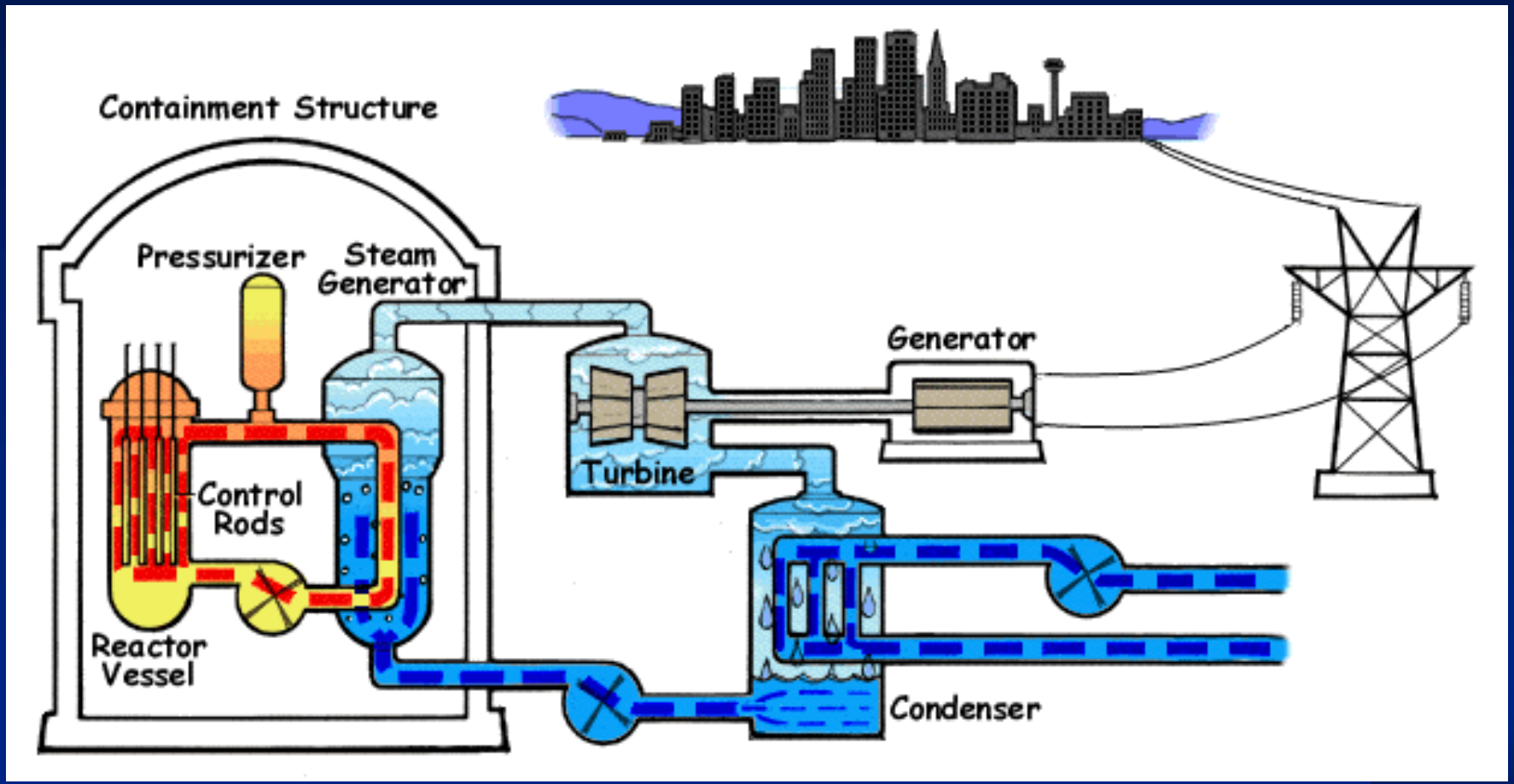
The power of visuals



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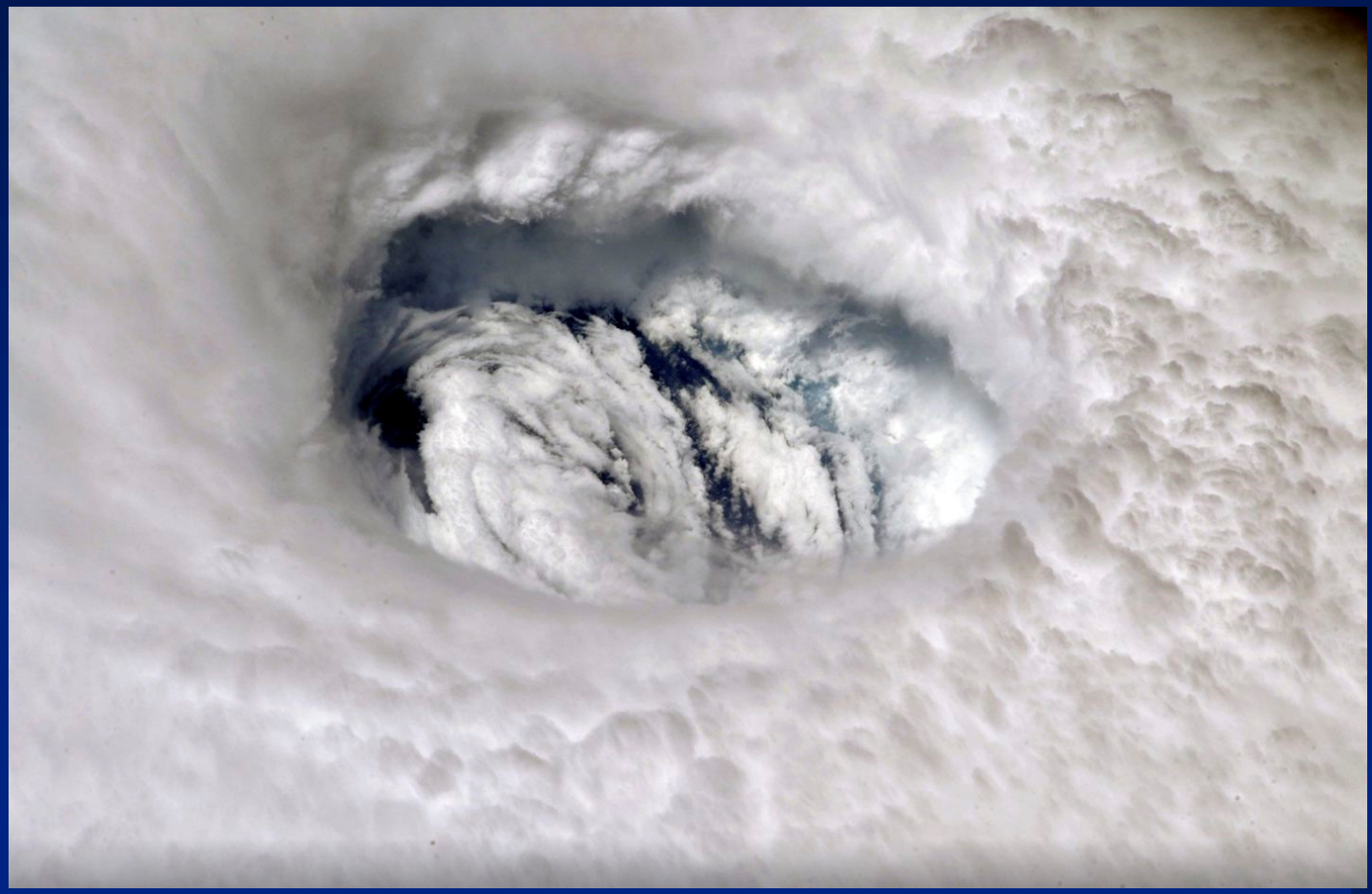
The power of visuals



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The power of narrative

- The importance of explaining difficult terms and processes in everyday language
- Importance of legitimizing fears and explaining technology in comparison to other risks
- Not approaching from the view of "educating the public"

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Frames of reference

- Using familiar frames of reference, i.e., how much is 1 million picocuries per liter
- The amount of used fuel generated by U.S. nuclear power plant would fill a football field
- The public often associates correlation and association as being the same as causality

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Where can you find us?

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