

Audience; the weak link in the securitization process of the environment?

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The 3 pillars of securitization

Actor

- Performing the securitizing move by making a “speech act”

Speech act

- Conveying the meaning of urgency about a designated threat toward the “audience”

Audience

- Receiving the securitizing move and responding to it either by concurring and granting a mandate to address the threat, or not

1. Actors



Institutionally powerful actors

Presidents, ministers, local administration officials, international organizations, etc



Widely known figures

Former state leaders, artists, academics, etc



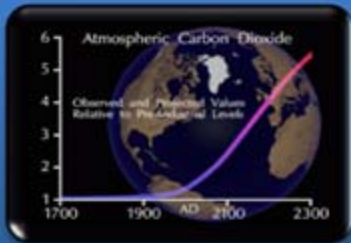
Mass media (possibly)

Wide circulation newspapers, news networks, television, etc

2. Speech acts



Verbal utterances in the form of bold political speeches



Official argumentation for climate change's imminence, highlighting its impact



Public calls for action

3. Audience



Single individuals



Citizens/the electorate



Local communities



Civil Society

How can an audience be convinced



1. By traditional speech acts

(all verbal utterances made by institutionally powerful actors)

Political speeches urging for extreme measures

Empirical or theoretical analyses of relevant phenomena

Presentation of alarming evidence in numbers

Explanation of nature's mechanisms and the physics of climate change

In essence, scientifically based discourses coming into play with strict political language

2. Through visual representations



Images of reducing glaciers and melting polar icecaps



Pictures of flooded cities



Televsual contact with the effects of hurricanes and similar phenomena



In a nutshell, viewing the consequences of climate change's effect on the planet's everyday life

3. By being an actual victim



Suffering family loss due to catastrophic events



Suffering income loss due to decreased agricultural productivity in desertificated lands



Suffering the immediate sociopolitical repercussions in areas adjacent to the directly affected ones (sudden and massive immigration, armed conflict over natural resources etc)

4. By being positively prepared (or constructed)



Having undergone an environmentally responsible social construction



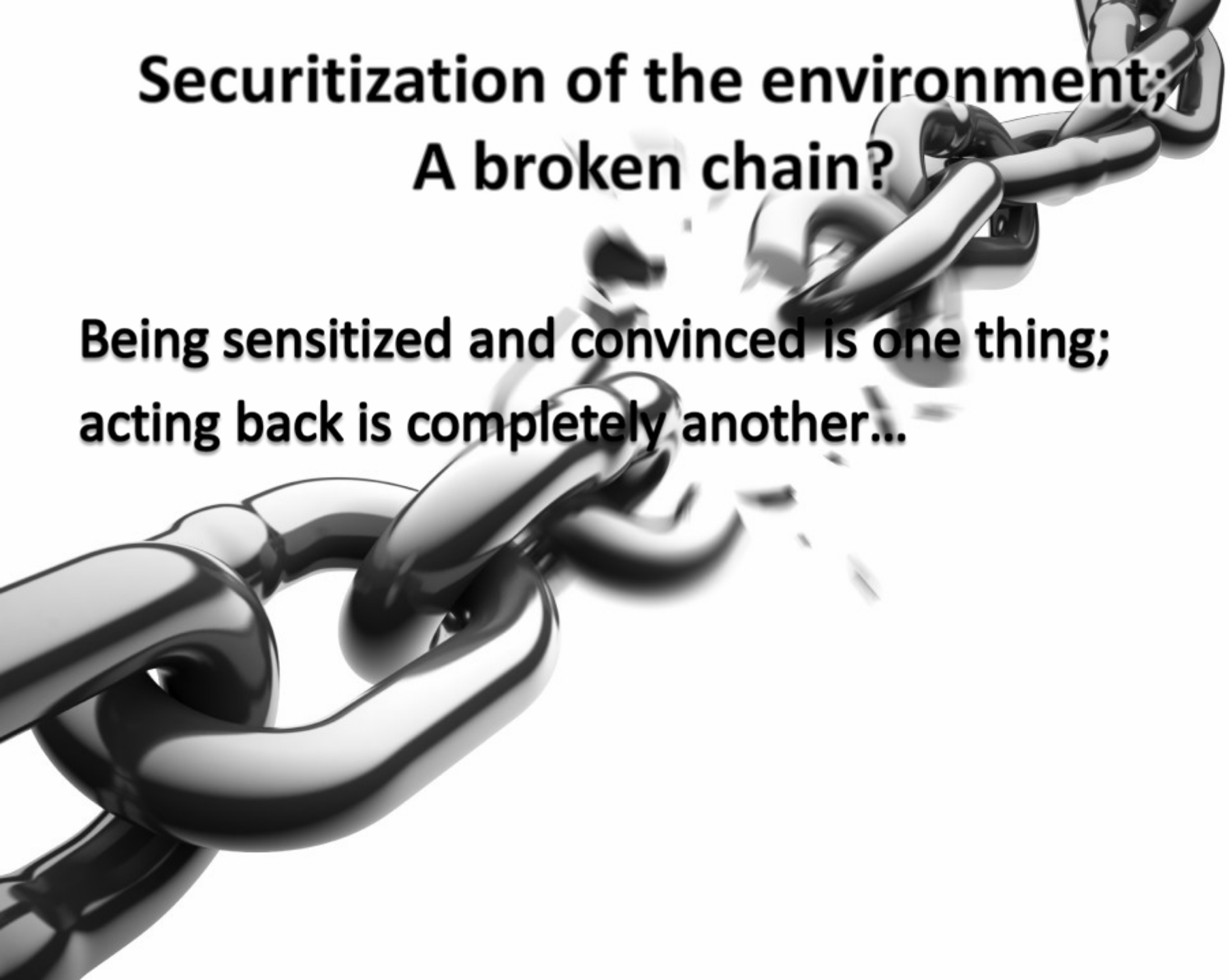
Having embedded environmental concerns in its behavioral patterns



Having developed a strong environmental awareness within its identity

Securitization of the environment; A broken chain?

**Being sensitized and convinced is one thing;
acting back is completely another...**



Ineffective speech acts?

Speech acts may convey meaning to the audience, but cannot guarantee a positive reaction from its part

Ephemeral visual images?

Images can evoke the public's feelings but they can seldom cause any further reaction

Insufficient suffering?

Being harmed by climate change's consequences does not always increase people's will to address the threat

Investing on social construction

Embedding environmental responsibility in our identity can lead both to persuasion over the securitization of climate change and to active response from the respective audience

Externally provoked sensitivity has proven insufficient to cause the audience's positive reaction. It is internalized sensitivity that we should seek