



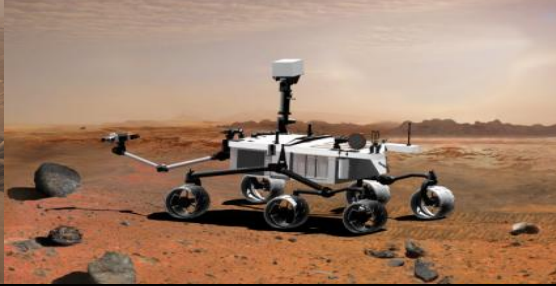
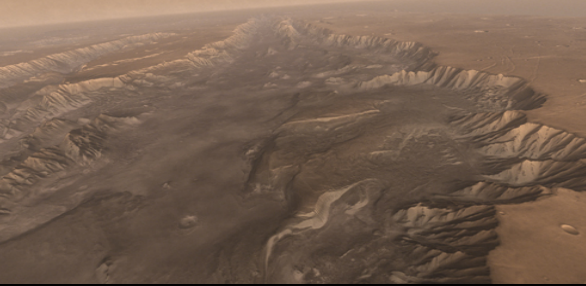
# MARS SAMPLE RETURN: Do Australians Trust NASA?

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# Overview

- Background Information
- Methodology
- Results
- Implications for the future

# MARS SAMPLE RETURN

## WHAT?

Aims to bring rocks, soil and other samples from Mars to Earth

## WHY?

To understand Mars as a possible abode of life

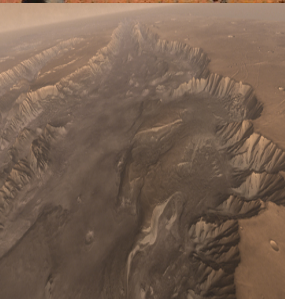
## WHO?

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Support from other international space agencies

## WHEN?

Next decade





## Why do the study?

- First time material from another planet will be returned to Earth
- NASA required to release Environmental Impact statement
- Generate international media attention
- Prepare for potential backlash/controversy



## Previous Research

Author	Year	Country	Finding
MacGregor and Slovic	1994	USA	Trust NASA to complete mission successfully <u>Don't</u> trust NASA to honestly inform public about risks
Race and MacGregor	1998	USA	<u>Don't</u> trust NASA to honestly inform public about risks

# What's different since then?

Launch of Mars  
Exploration  
Rovers and  
Beagle 2 (2003)

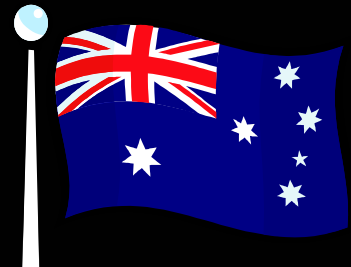
Genesis space  
capsule  
crashes in Utah  
(2004)

Columbia and  
Discovery shuttle  
problems (2003 –  
2005)

Increased media  
attention

Change in public perception of  
NASA?

**PLUS** - Australian perspective



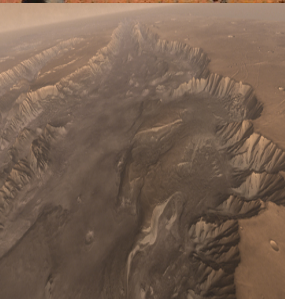


# OBJECTIVES

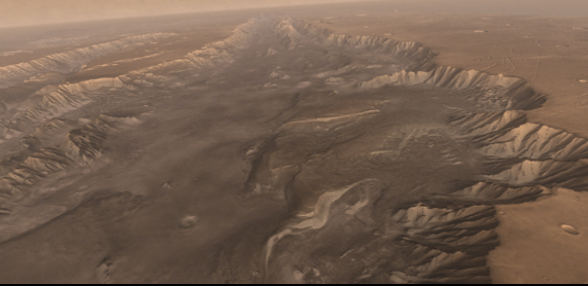
1. Consider the opinions and attitudes of an Australian sample towards NASA and a MSR mission
2. Compare Australian results to similar data from the USA

# METHODOLOGY

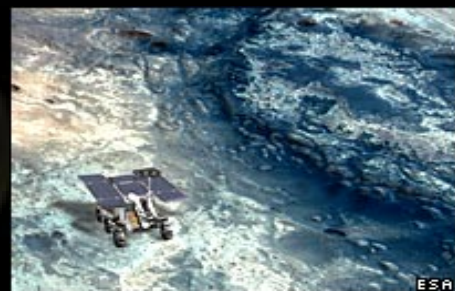
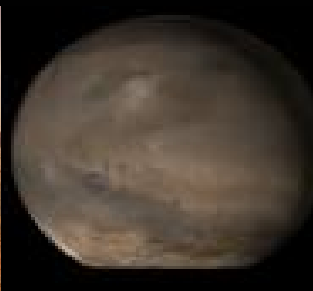
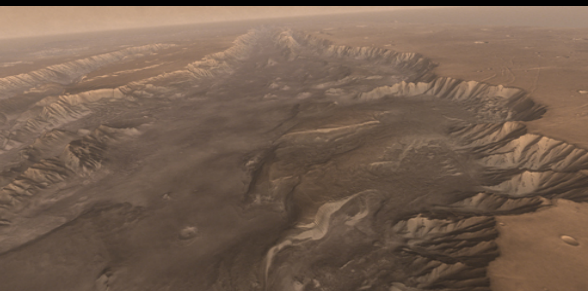
- Cross-sectional survey
- Sample size: 74
- Questionnaire
  - online via MSA
  - demographic questions
  - perception of NASA
- Statistical analysis

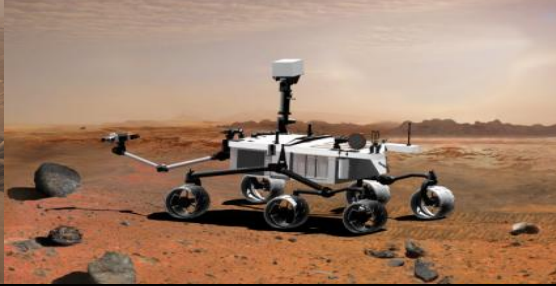
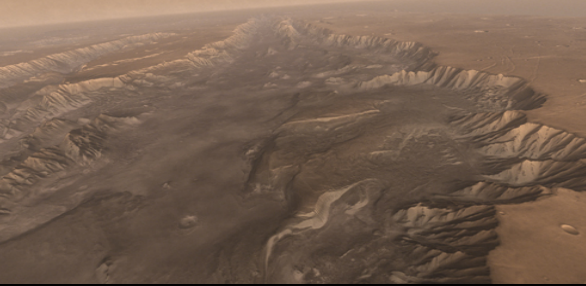






# RESULTS





## SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS



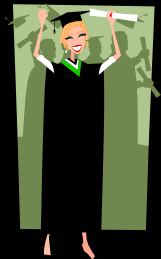
70.2 % Male



29.8% Female

60.8% under age of 45

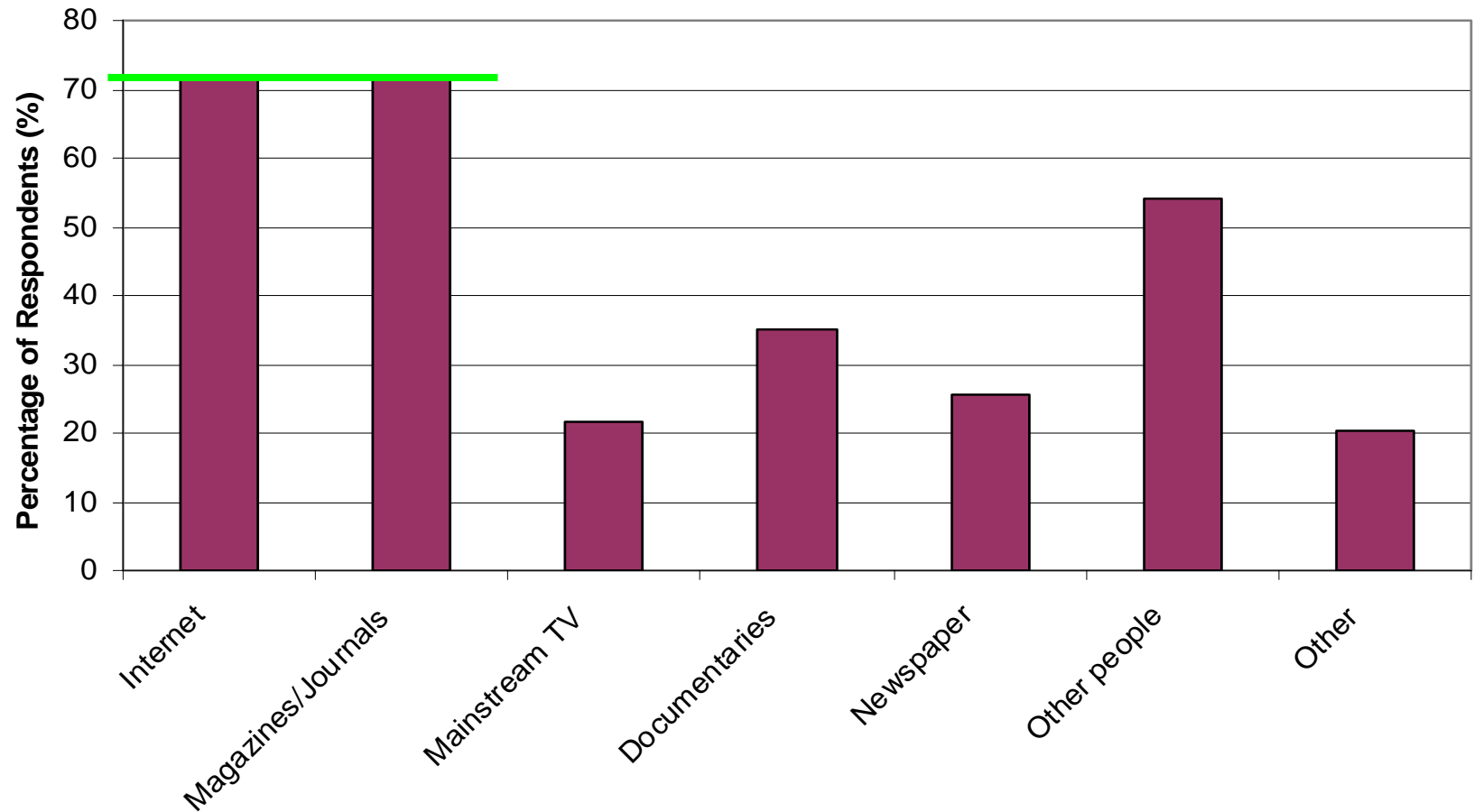
45.9 % with postgraduate education



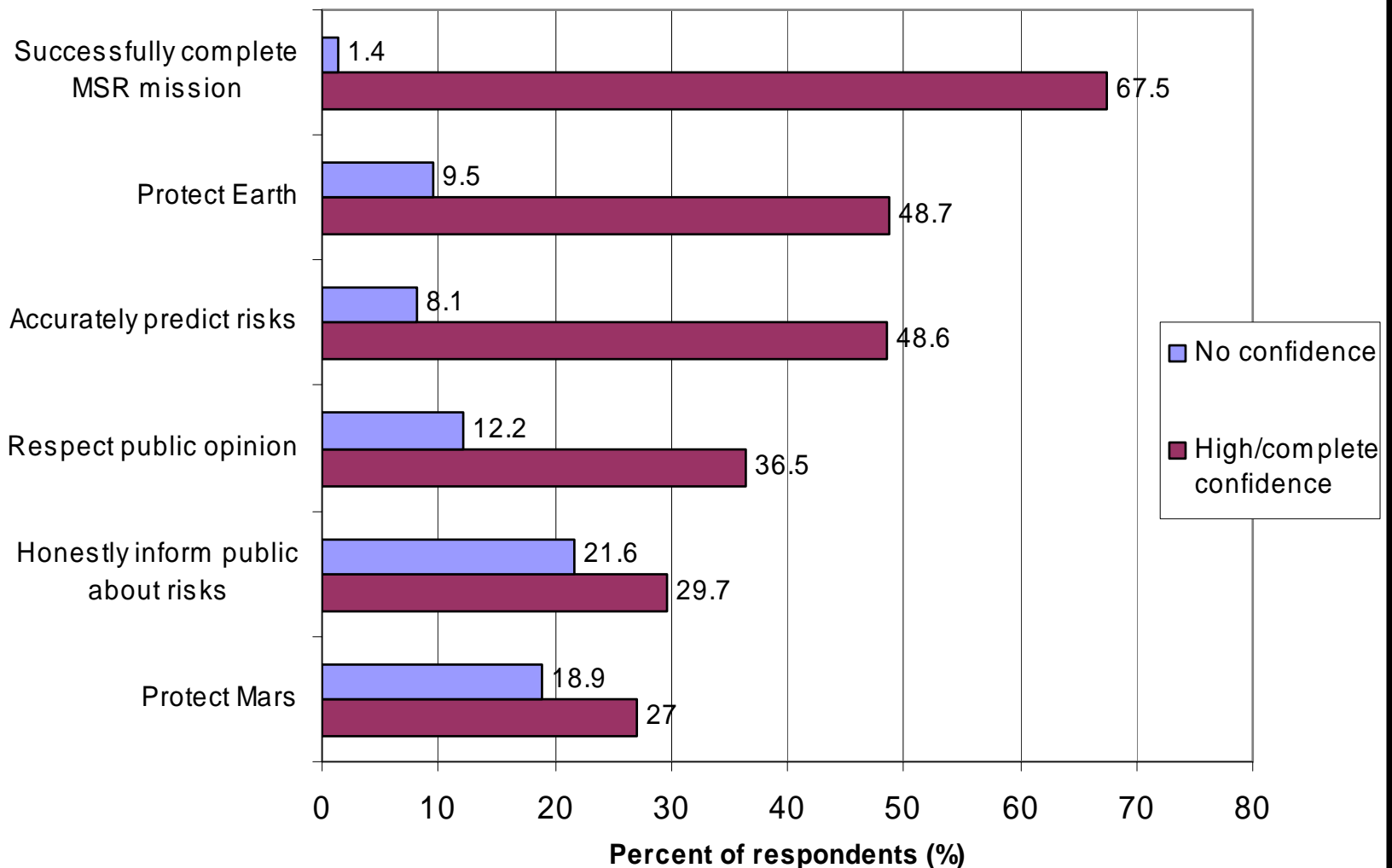
52.6% MSA members



# Where people get their knowledge about Mars Sample Return



# Degree of trust in NASA to accomplish the following aspects of the mission

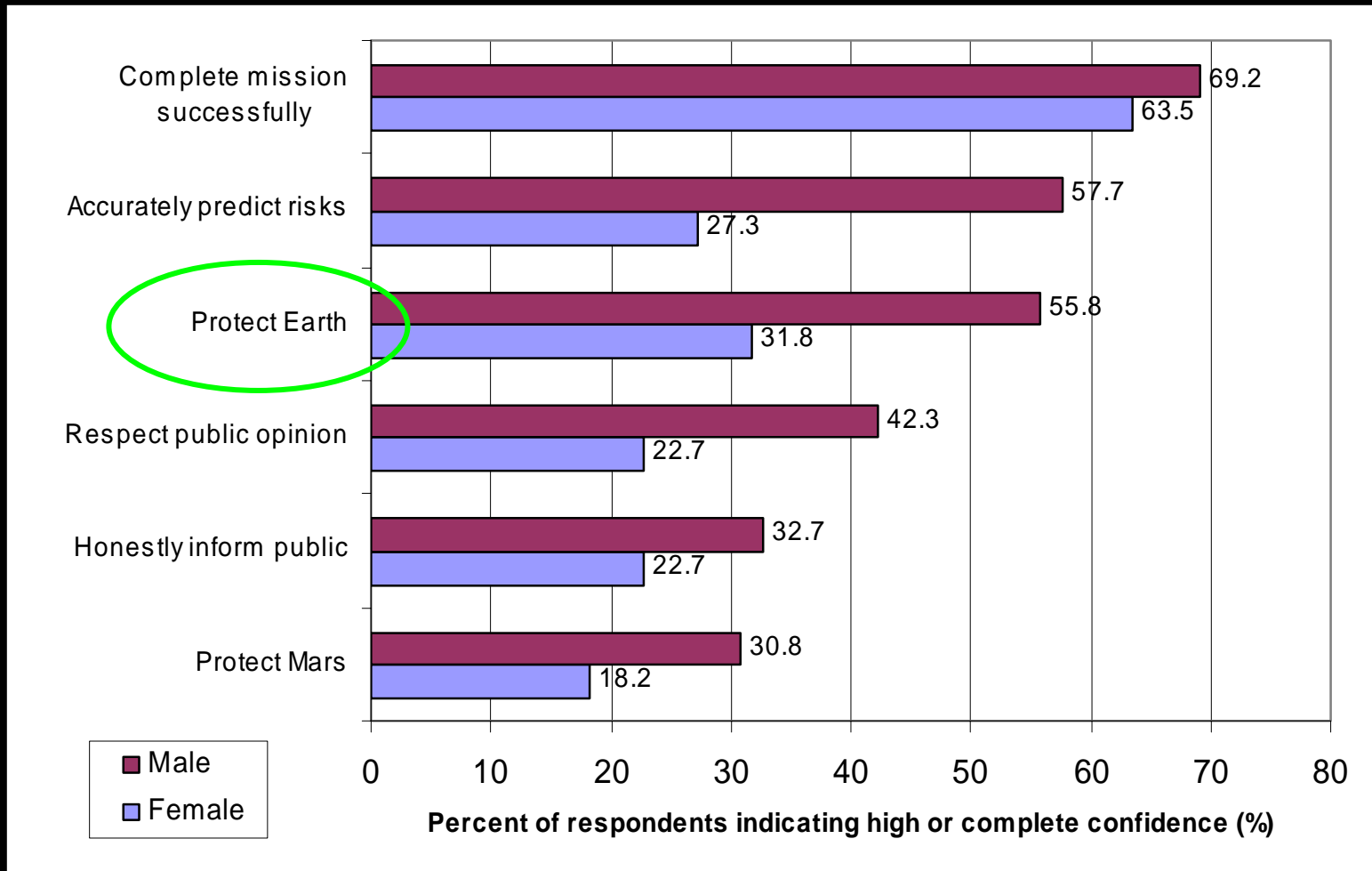


# Comparison of perceived trust in NASA

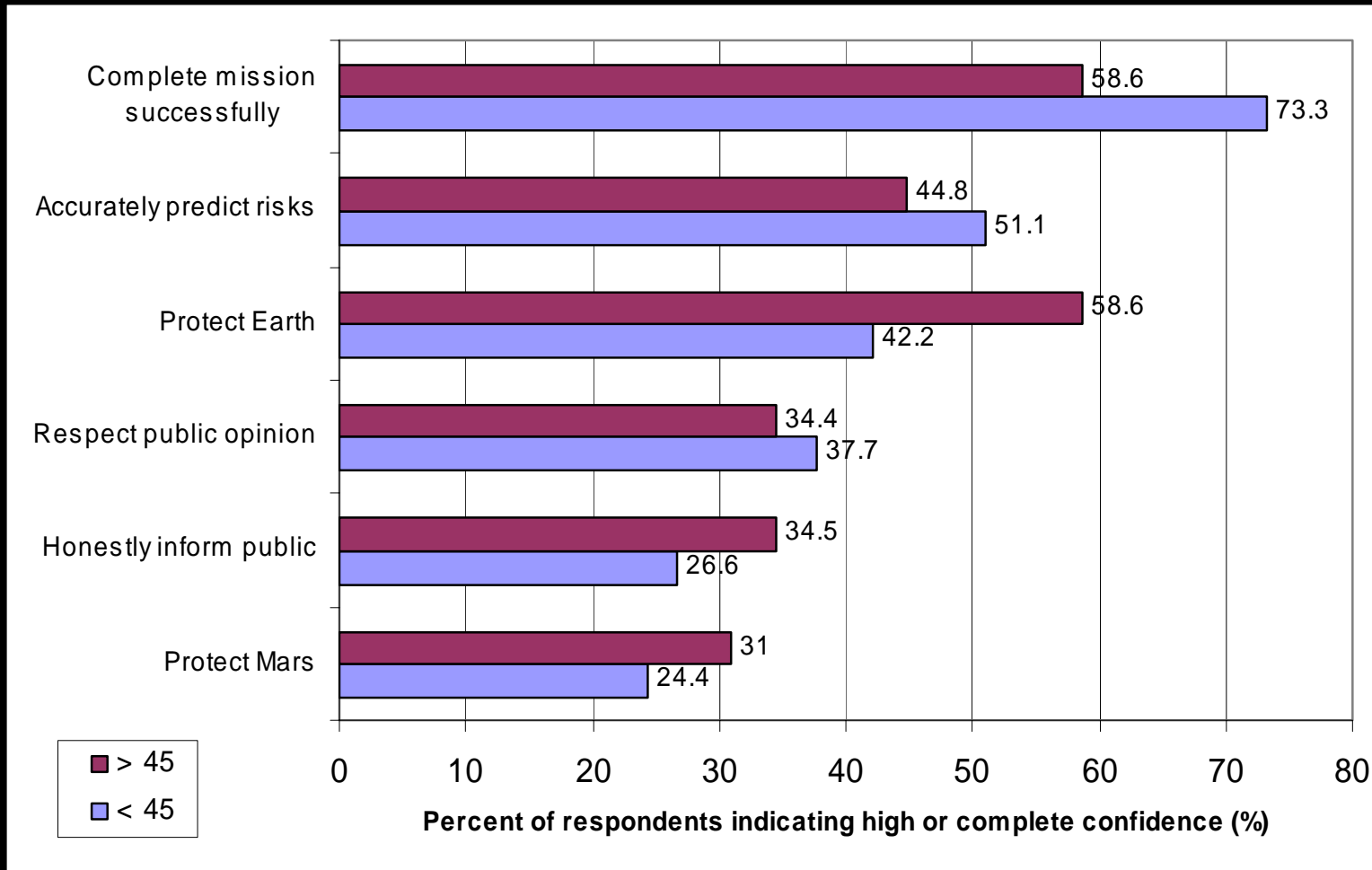
(by examining the percentage of respondents to indicate moderate to high trust in NASA)

	Race and MacGregor USA 2000	This study AUSTRALIA 2006
Successfully complete the mission	96.1%	90.5%
Protect Earth	77.2%	71.7%
Respect public opinion	70.2%	67.6%
Honestly inform the public	59.7%	55.4%
Protect Mars	58.7%	55.4%

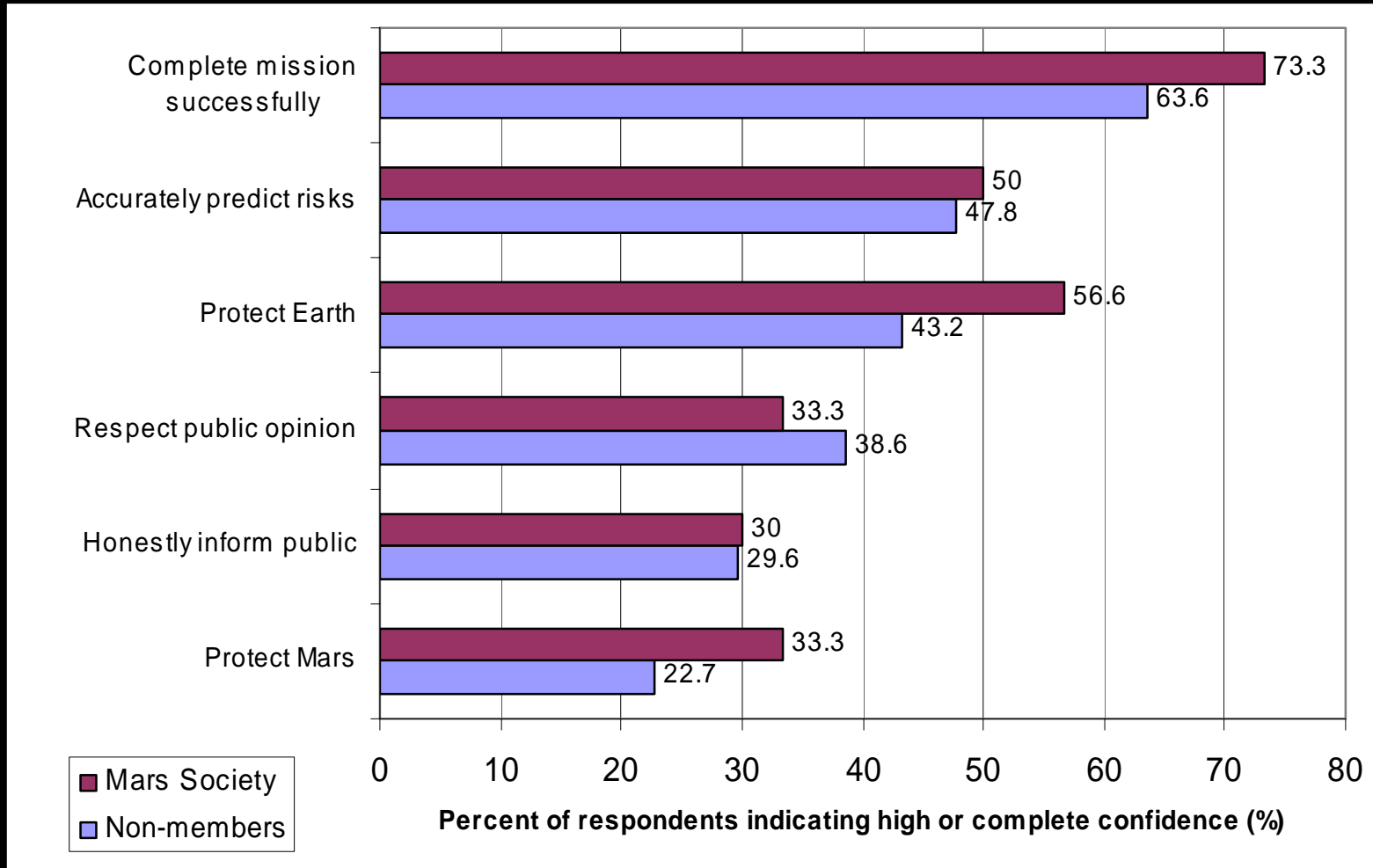
# Difference in degree of trust in NASA by gender



# Difference in degree of trust in NASA by age

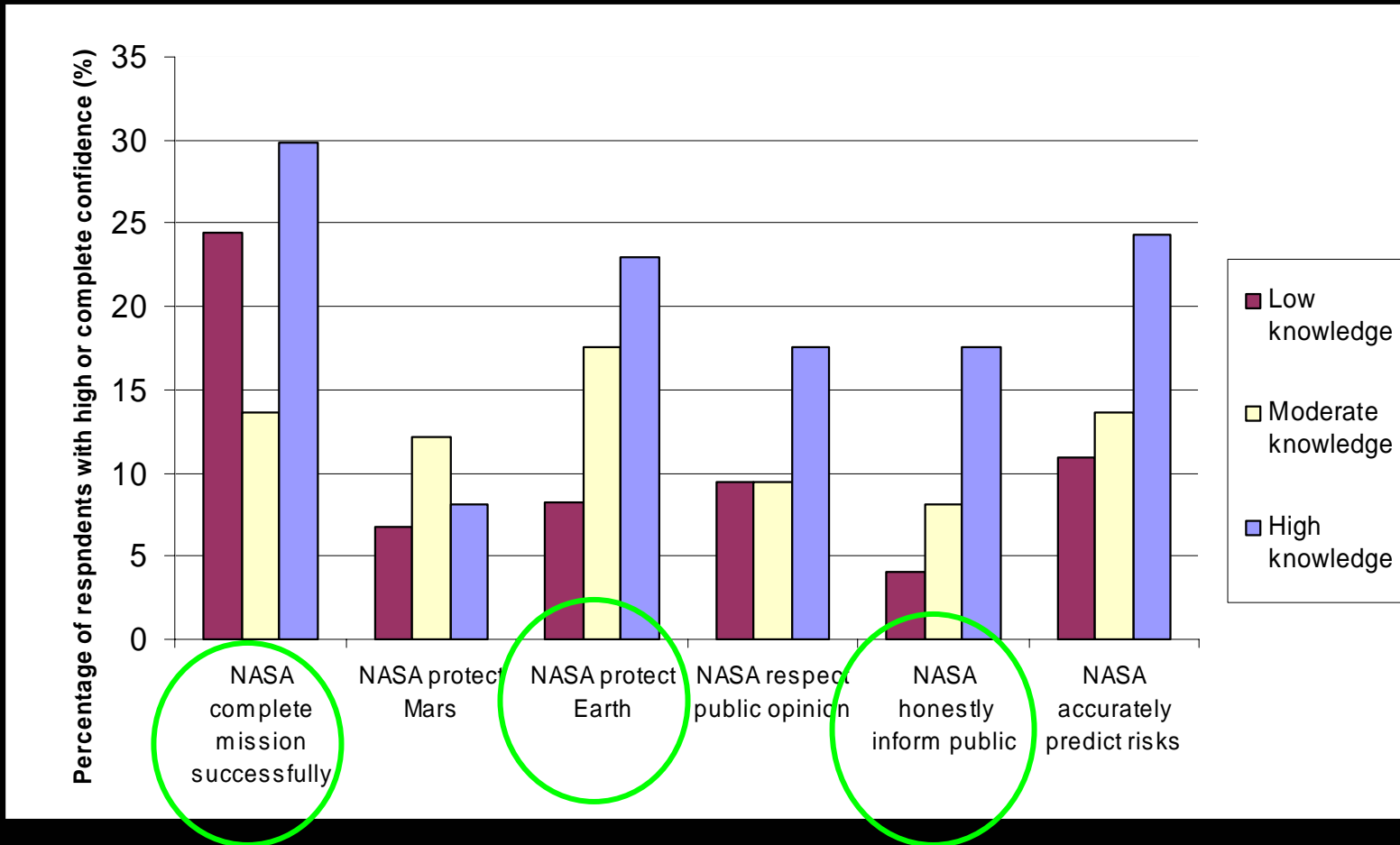


# Difference in degree of trust in NASA by MSA membership





# Difference in degree of trust in NASA by knowledge of MSR





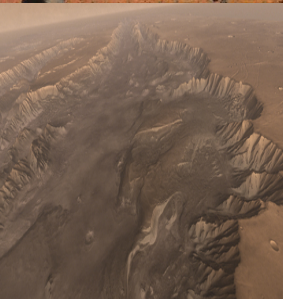
## FINDINGS

- Similar findings to American studies
- **Knowledge of MSR a statistically significant predictor of trust in NASA**
- Males appeared to be more trusting than females (NS)
- Age was not a factor
- MSA members appeared to be more trusting than other respondents (NS)

# IMPLICATIONS

## Risk Management and Risk Communication Strategies

- Tailored to suit different sections of the public
- Layperson lack of knowledge a potential barrier
- How to present or “frame” information
- Do it early
- Third party to disseminate information
- Influence of special interest groups



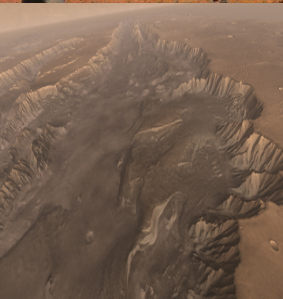


## WHERE TO NEXT?

Other sectors of the community – children, scientists, general public?

## CONCLUSION

Allows policymakers to forecast levels of acceptance and opposition and act in ways that address public attitudes and concerns



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Photos courtesy of NASA/JPL-Caltech