

Toward a Program of First Responder-based Disaster Research

**Charles R. Jennings, Associate Professor
Department of Protection Management
Director, Christian Regenhard Center for Emergency Response Studies
(RaCERS)**



About the Christian Regenhard Center for Emergency Response Studies

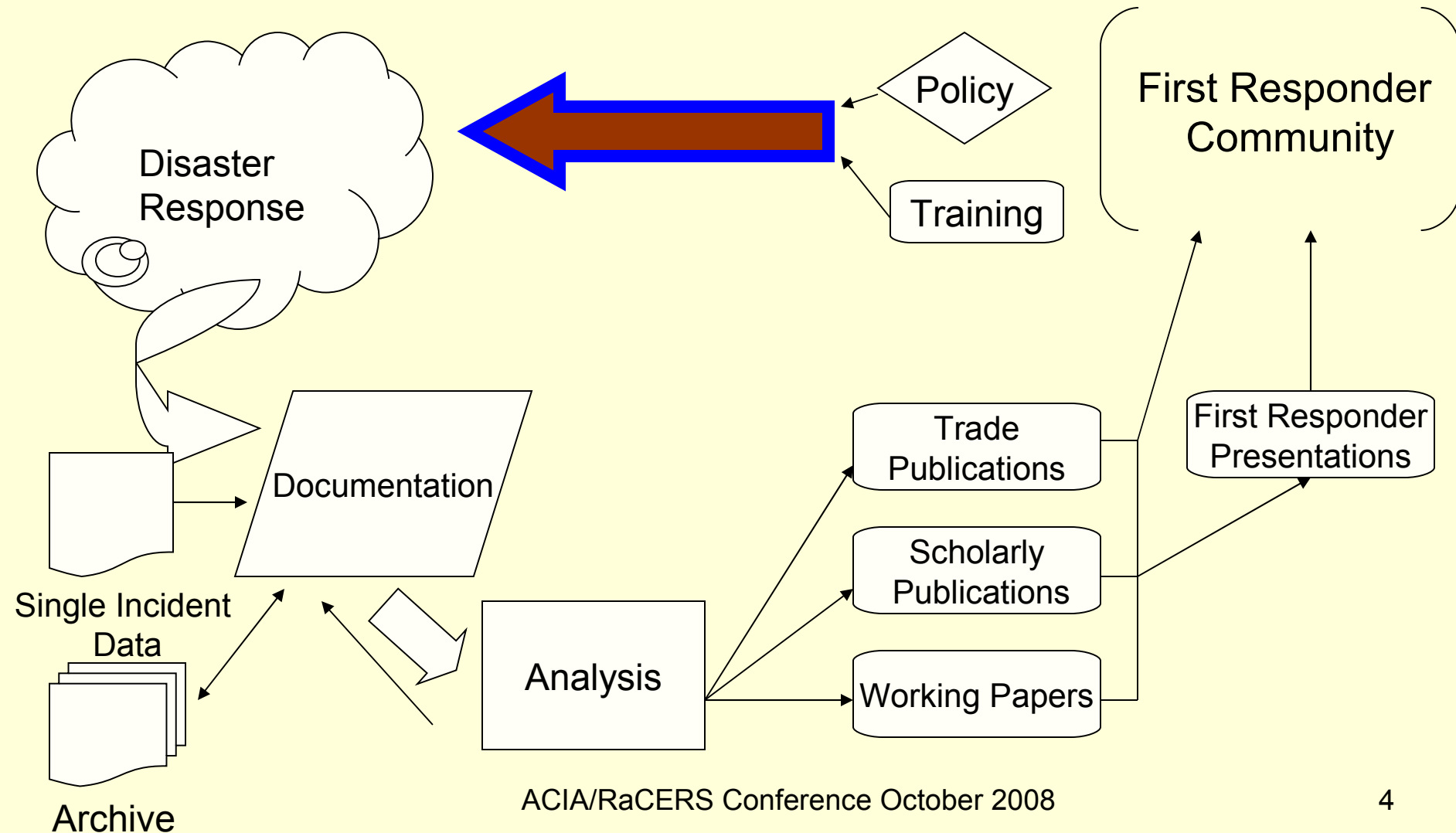
- Appointed Director – Summer 2008
- First Action – develop acronym
 - *RaCERS*
- Inaugural Funding just coming in
- Intellectual and organizational underpinning
 - Glenn Corbett and Sally Regenhard

Christian Michael Otto Regenhart

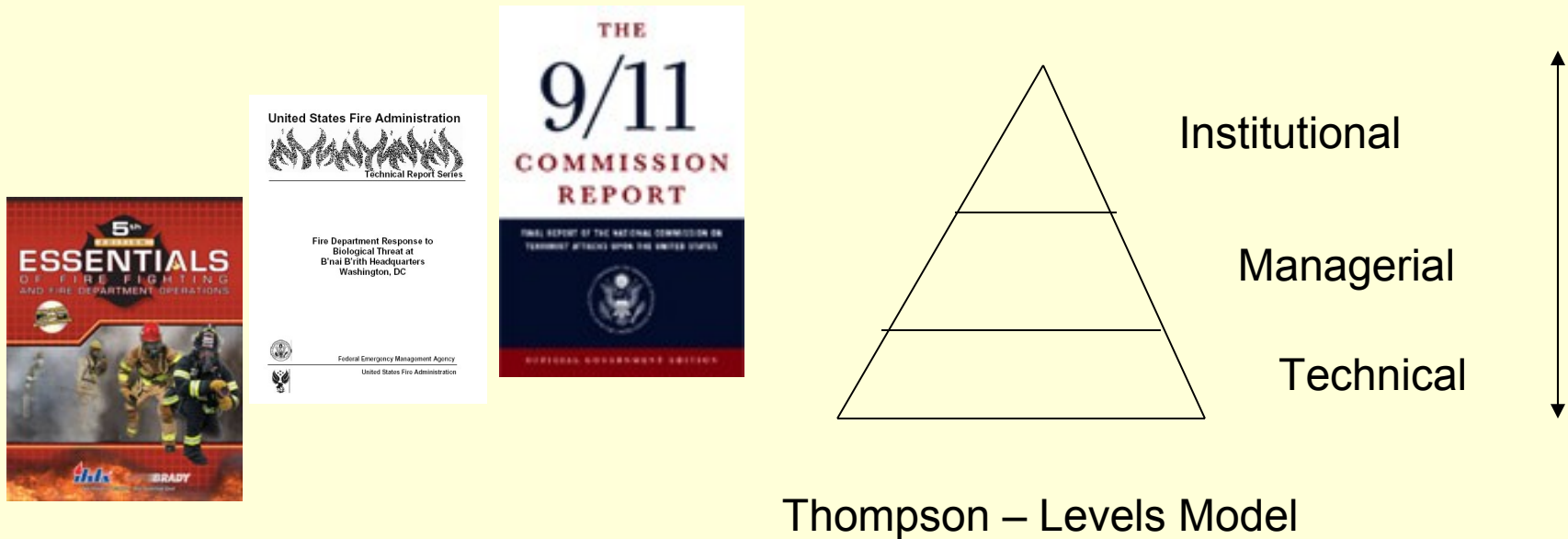
8/25/73 -- 9/11/2001



RaCERS First Responder Applied Policy Intervention Diagram



The *Lacuna* of First-Responder Perspective



- Organization Theory – Why?
 - Emergency Response is an activity that takes place within organizations
 - Interventions are directed through organizations, not individuals

Bridging the Gap Between Technical and Managerial Levels

After-Action Findings

- Institutional – First Responder Communication Must was Ineffective
- Managerial – Adequate frequencies and repeater systems should be available within high-rise buildings
- Technical – We tried to listen to the radio, but all we heard was static

Training Needs

- Institutional – Training is needed in Communications
- Managerial – Design course: Communications Challenges in High-rise Buildings
- Technical – How to operate radio systems in high-rise buildings

Review of RaCERS Action Agenda

- 1.0 Develop archive with emergency response information
 - Coordinate with ACIA Archive
 - Common coding convention and structure
 - Interoperability (unified database)
 - Long-term
 - Make data available online to authenticated users
 - Government reports and documents made available digitally through John Jay/CUNY library catalog

Review of RaCERS Action Agenda

- 1.1 Web Strategy
 - Listserv
 - Upload capability for incident information and documentation
 - Document and report download

Review of RaCERS Action Agenda

- 2.1 Framing Papers
- 2.2 Collect Incident Information from First Responder and Emergency Management Agencies (Local, State, Federal)
 - Pursue MOUs to facilitate data collection
 - Standing data requests for certain events

Review of RaCERS Action Agenda

2.2 Field Research

- Field-Based research including
 - First responder interviews
 - Collection of documentation
 - Radio transcripts
 - Photographs and videos
 - GIS maps
 - Agency Reports
 - Rapid Response Capability
 - Site Assessment Protocol
 - Access NSF-funded grants

Programmatic Plan (near term)

- 2.3 Research Agenda
 - Small Grant Program
 - Travel Grant Program
- 3.0 Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement
 - National Conferences
 - Advisory Board
- 4.0 Improve First Responder Training
 - Liaise with federal and state training agencies
 - Establish relationship with academic associations
 - (criminal justice, fire science, emergency medical services)

The End

