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SPECIAL REPORTS

## As The World Burns

ENVIRONMENT + HEALTH  
— Assignment 2020, Environment

### Some Like It Hot



— Illustration: Jason Holley

May/June 2005 Issue

*Forty public policy groups have this in common: They seek to undermine the scientific consensus that humans are causing the earth to overheat. And they all get money from ExxonMobil.*

— By Chris Mooney

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### As The World Burns

Climate of Denial

Some Like It Hot

Stranger Than Fiction

Put a Tiger In Your Think Tank

Put a Tiger in Your Think Tank, Part II

Black Gold?

Escaping the Burn

## Some Like It Hot

Forty public policy groups have this in common: They seek to undermine the scientific consensus that humans are causing the earth to overheat. And they all get money from ExxonMobil.

— By Chris Mooney

May/June 2005 Issue

WHEN NOVELIST MICHAEL CRICHTON took the stage before a lunchtime crowd in Washington, D.C., one Friday in late January, the event might have seemed, at first, like one more unremarkable appearance by a popular author with a book to sell. Indeed, Crichton had just such a book, his new thriller, *State of Fear*. But the content of the novel, the setting of the talk, and the audience who came to listen transformed the Crichton event into something closer to a hybrid of campaign rally and undergraduate seminar. *State of Fear* is an anti-environmentalist page-turner in which shady ecoterrorists plot catastrophic weather disruptions to stoke unfounded fears about global climate change. However fantastical the book's story line, its author was received as an expert by the sharply dressed policy wonks crowding into the plush Wohlstetter Conference Center of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI). In his introduction, AEI president and former Reagan budget official Christopher DeMuth praised the author for conveying "serious science with a sense of drama to a popular audience." The title of the lecture was "Science Policy in the 21st Century."

Crichton is an M.D. with a basketball player's stature (he's 6 feet 9 inches), and his bearing and his background exude authority. He describes himself as "contrarian by nature," but his words on this day did not run counter to the sentiment of his AEI listeners. "I spent the last several years exploring environmental issues, particularly global warming," Crichton told them solemnly. "I've been deeply disturbed by what I found, largely because the evidence for so many environmental issues is, from my point of view, shockingly flawed and unsubstantiated." Crichton then turned to bashing a 1998 study of historic temperature change that has been repeatedly singled out for attack by conservatives.

There is overwhelming scientific consensus that greenhouse gases emitted by human activity are causing global average temperatures to rise. Conservative think tanks are trying to undermine this conclusion with a disinformation campaign employing "reports" designed to look like a counterbalance to peer-reviewed studies, skeptic propaganda masquerading as journalism, and events like the AEI luncheon that Crichton addressed. The think tanks provide both intellectual cover for those who reject what the best science currently tells us, and ammunition for conservative policymakers like Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.), the chair of the Environment and Public Works Committee, who calls global warming "a hoax."

This concerted effort reflects the shared convictions of free-market, and thus antiregulatory, conservatives. But there's another factor at play. In addition to being supported by like-minded individuals and ideologically sympathetic foundations, these groups are funded by ExxonMobil, the world's largest oil company. Mother Jones has tallied some 40 ExxonMobil-funded organizations that either have sought to undermine mainstream scientific findings on global climate change or have maintained affiliations with a small group of "skeptical" scientists who continue to do so. Beyond think tanks, the count also includes quasi-journalistic outlets like Tech CentralStation.com (a website providing "news, analysis, research, and commentary" that received \$95,000 from ExxonMobil in 2003), a FoxNews.com columnist, and even religious and civil rights groups. In total, these organizations received more than \$8 million between 2000 and 2003 (the last year for which records are available; all figures below are for that range unless otherwise noted). ExxonMobil chairman and CEO Lee Raymond serves as vice chairman of the board of trustees for the AEI, which received \$960,000 in funding from ExxonMobil. The AEI-Brookings Institution Joint Center for Regulatory Studies, which officially hosted Crichton, received another \$55,000. When asked about the event, the center's executive director, Robert Hahn—who's a fellow with the AEI—defended it, saying, "Climate science is a field in which reasonable experts can disagree." (By contrast, on the day of the event, the Brookings Institution posted a scathing critique of Crichton's book.)

During the question-and-answer period following his speech, Crichton drew an analogy between believers in global warming and Nazi eugenicists. "Auschwitz exists because of politicized science," Crichton asserted, to gasps from some in the crowd. There was no acknowledgment that the AEI event was part of an attempt to do just that: politicize science. The audience at hand was certainly full of partisans. Listening attentively was Myron Ebell, a man recently censured by the British House of Commons for "unfounded and insulting criticism of Sir David King, the Government's Chief Scientist." Ebell is the global warming and international policy director of the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI), which has received a whopping \$1,380,000 from ExxonMobil. Sitting in the back of the room was

**Christopher Horner**, the silver-haired counsel to the Cooler Heads Coalition who's also a CEI senior fellow. Present also was **Paul Driessen**, a senior fellow with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (\$252,000) and the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise (\$40,000 in 2003). Saying he's "heartened that ExxonMobil and a couple of other groups have stood up and said, 'this is not science,'" Driessen, who is white, has made it his mission to portray Kyoto-style emissions regulations as an attack on people of color—his recent book is entitled *Eco-Imperialism: Green Power, Black Death* (see "Black Gold?"). Driessen has also written about the role that think tanks can play in helping corporations achieve their objectives. Such outlets "can provide research, present credible independent voices on a host of issues, indirectly influence opinion and political leaders, and promote responsible social and economic agendas," he advised companies in a 2001 essay published in *Capital PR News*. "They have extensive networks among scholars, academics, scientists, journalists, community leaders and politicians.... You will be amazed at how much they do with so little."

THIRTY YEARS AGO, the notion that corporations ought to sponsor think tanks that directly support their own political goals—rather than merely fund disinterested research—was far more controversial. But then, in 1977, an associate of the AEI (which was founded as a business association in 1943) came to industry's rescue. In an essay published in the *Wall Street Journal*, the influential neoconservative **Irving Kristol** memorably counseled that "corporate philanthropy should not be, and cannot be, disinterested," but should serve as a means "to shape or reshape the climate of public opinion."

Kristol's advice was heeded, and today many businesses give to public policy groups that support a laissez-faire, antiregulatory agenda. In its giving report, ExxonMobil says it supports public policy groups that are "dedicated to researching free market solutions to policy problems." What the company doesn't say is that beyond merely challenging the Kyoto Protocol or the McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act on economic grounds, many of these groups explicitly dispute the science of climate change. Generally eschewing peer-reviewed journals, these groups make their challenges in far less stringent arenas, such as the media and public forums.

Pressed on this point, spokeswoman Lauren Kerr says that "ExxonMobil has been quite transparent and vocal regarding the fact that we, **as do multiple organizations and respected institutions and researchers, believe that the scientific evidence on greenhouse gas emissions remains inconclusive and that studies must continue.**" She also hastens to point out that ExxonMobil generously supports university research programs—for example, **the company plans to donate \$100 million to Stanford University's Global Climate and Energy Project.** It even funds the hallowed National Academy of Sciences.

Nevertheless, no company appears to be working harder to support those who debunk global warming. "Many corporations have funded, you know, dribs and drabs here and there, but I would be surprised to learn that there was a bigger one than Exxon," explains Ebell of the Competitive Enterprise Institute, which, in 2000 and again in 2003, sued the government to stop the dissemination of a Clinton-era report showing the impact of climate change in the United States. Attorney Christopher Horner—whom you'll

recall from Crichton’s audience—was the lead attorney in both lawsuits and is paid a \$60,000 annual consulting fee by the CEI. In 2002, ExxonMobil explicitly earmarked \$60,000 for the CEI for “legal activities.”

Ebell denies the sum indicates any sort of quid pro quo. He’s proud of ExxonMobil’s funding and wishes “we could attract more from other companies.” He stresses that the CEI solicits funding for general project areas rather than to carry out specific sponsor requests, but admits being steered (as other public policy groups are steered) to the topics that garner grant money. While noting that the CEI is “adamantly opposed” to the Endangered Species Act, Ebell adds that “we are only working on it in a limited way now, because we couldn’t attract funding.”

EXXONMOBIL’S FUNDING OF THINK TANKS hardly compares with its lobbying expenditures—\$55 million over the past six years, according to the Center for Public Integrity. And neither figure takes much of a bite out of the company’s net earnings—\$25.3 billion last year. Nevertheless, “ideas lobbying” can have a powerful public policy effect.

Consider attacks by friends of ExxonMobil on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). A landmark international study that combined the work of some 300 scientists, the ACIA, released last November, had been four years in the making. Commissioned by the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum that includes the United States, the study warned that the Arctic is warming “at almost twice the rate as that of the rest of the world,” and that early impacts of climate change, such as melting sea ice and glaciers, are already apparent and “will drastically shrink marine habitat for polar bears, ice-inhabiting seals, and some seabirds, pushing some species toward extinction.” Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) was so troubled by the report that he called for a Senate hearing.

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Industry defenders shelled the study, and, with a dearth of science to marshal to their side, used opinion pieces and press releases instead. “Polar Bear Scare on Thin Ice,” blared FoxNews.com columnist Steven Milloy, an adjunct scholar at the libertarian Cato Institute (\$75,000 from ExxonMobil) who also publishes the website JunkScience.com. Two days later the conservative Washington Times published the same column. Neither outlet disclosed that Milloy, who debunks global warming concerns regularly, runs two organizations that receive money from ExxonMobil. Between 2000 and 2003, the company gave \$40,000 to the Advancement of Sound Science Center, which is registered to Milloy’s home address in Potomac, Maryland, according to IRS documents. ExxonMobil gave another \$50,000 to the Free Enterprise Action Institute—also registered to Milloy’s residence. Under the auspices of the intriguingly like-named Free Enterprise Education Institute, Milloy publishes CSRWatch.com, a site that attacks the corporate social responsibility movement. Milloy did not respond to repeated requests for comment for

this article; a Fox News spokesman stated that Milloy is “affiliated with several not-for-profit groups that possibly may receive funding from Exxon, but he certainly does not receive funding directly from Exxon.”

Setting aside any questions about Milloy’s journalistic ethics, on a purely scientific level, his attack on the ACIA was comically inept. Citing a single graph from a 146-page overview of a 1,200-plus- page, fully referenced report, Milloy claimed that the document “pretty much debunks itself” because high Arctic temperatures “around 1940” suggest that the current temperature spike could be chalked up to natural variability. “In order to take that position,” counters Harvard biological oceanographer James McCarthy, a lead author of the report, “you have to refute what are hundreds of scientific papers that reconstruct various pieces of this climate puzzle.”

Nevertheless, Milloy’s charges were quickly echoed by other groups. TechCentralStation.com published a letter to Senator McCain from 11 “climate experts,” who asserted that recent Arctic warming was not at all unusual in comparison to “natural variability in centuries past.” Meanwhile, the conservative George C. Marshall Institute (\$310,000) issued a press release asserting that the Arctic report was based on “unvalidated climate models and scenarios...that bear little resemblance to reality and how the future is likely to evolve.” In response, McCain said, “General Marshall was a great American. I think he might be very embarrassed to know that his name was being used in this disgraceful fashion.”

The day of McCain’s hearing, the Competitive Enterprise Institute put out its own press release, citing the aforementioned critiques as if they should be considered on a par with the massive, exhaustively reviewed Arctic report: “The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, despite its recent release, has already generated analysis pointing out numerous flaws and distortions.” The Vancouver-based Fraser Institute (\$60,000 from ExxonMobil in 2003) also weighed in, calling the Arctic warming report “an excellent example of the favoured scare technique of the anti-energy activists: pumping largely unjustifiable assumptions about the future into simplified computer models to conjure up a laundry list of scary projections.” In the same release, the Fraser Institute declared that “2004 has been one of the cooler years in recent history.” A month later the United Nations’ World Meteorological Organization would pronounce 2004 to be “the fourth warmest year in the temperature record since 1861.”

Frank O’Donnell, of Clean Air Watch, likens ExxonMobil’s strategy to that of “a football quarterback who doesn’t want to throw to one receiver, but rather wants to spread it around to a number of different receivers.” In the case of the ACIA, this echo-chamber offense had the effect of creating an appearance of scientific controversy. Senator Inhofe—who received nearly \$290,000 from oil and gas companies, including ExxonMobil, for his 2002 reelection campaign—prominently cited the Marshall Institute’s work in his own critique of the latest science.

TO BE SURE, that science wasn’t always as strong as it is today. And until fairly recently, virtually the entire fossil fuels industry—automakers, utilities, coal companies, even railroads—joined ExxonMobil in challenging it.

The concept of global warming didn't enter the public consciousness until the 1980s. During a sweltering summer in 1988, pioneering NASA climatologist James Hansen famously told Congress he believed with "99 percent confidence" that a long-term warming trend had begun, probably caused by the greenhouse effect. As environmentalists and some in Congress began to call for reduced emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, industry fought back.

In 1989, the petroleum and automotive industries and the National Association of Manufacturers forged the Global Climate Coalition to oppose mandatory actions to address global warming. Exxon—later ExxonMobil—was a leading member, as was the American Petroleum Institute, a trade organization for which Exxon's CEO Lee Raymond has twice served as chairman. "They were a strong player in the Global Climate Coalition, as were many other sectors of the economy," says former GCC spokesman Frank Maisano.

Drawing upon a cadre of skeptic scientists, during the early and mid-1990s the GCC sought to emphasize the uncertainties of climate science and attack the mathematical models used to project future climate changes. The group and its proxies challenged the need for action on global warming, called the phenomenon natural rather than man-made, and even flatly denied it was happening. Maisano insists, however, that after the Kyoto Protocol emerged in 1997, the group focused its energies on making economic arguments rather than challenging science.

Even as industry mobilized the forces of skepticism, however, an international scientific collaboration emerged that would change the terms of the debate forever. In 1988, under the auspices of the United Nations, scientists and government officials inaugurated the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a global scientific body that would eventually pull together thousands of experts to evaluate the issue, becoming the gold standard of climate science. In the IPCC's first assessment report, published in 1990, the science remained open to reasonable doubt. But the IPCC's second report, completed in 1995, concluded that amid purely natural factors shaping the climate, humankind's distinctive fingerprint was evident. And with the release of the IPCC's third assessment in 2001, a strong consensus had emerged: Notwithstanding some role for natural variability, human-created greenhouse gas emissions could, if left unchecked, ramp up global average temperatures by as much as 5.8 degrees Celsius (or 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit) by the year 2100. "Consensus as strong as the one that has developed around this topic is rare in science," wrote Science Editor-in-Chief Donald Kennedy in a 2001 editorial.

Even some leading corporations that had previously supported "skepticism" were converted. Major oil companies like Shell, Texaco, and British Petroleum, as well as automobile manufacturers like Ford, General Motors, and DaimlerChrysler, abandoned the Global Climate Coalition, which itself became inactive after 2002.

Yet some forces of denial—most notably ExxonMobil and the American Petroleum Institute, of which ExxonMobil is a leading member—remained recalcitrant. In 1998, the New York Times exposed an API memo outlining a strategy to invest millions to "maximize the impact of scientific views consistent with ours with Congress, the media and other key audiences." The document stated: "Victory will be

achieved when...recognition of uncertainty becomes part of the 'conventional wisdom.'" It's hard to resist a comparison with a famous Brown and Williamson tobacco company memo from the late 1960s, which observed: "Doubt is our product since it is the best means of competing with the 'body of fact' that exists in the mind of the general public. It is also the means of establishing a controversy."

Though ExxonMobil's Lauren Kerr says she doesn't know the "status of this reported plan" and an API spokesman says he could "find no evidence" that it was ever implemented, many of the players involved have continued to dispute mainstream climate science with funding from ExxonMobil. According to the memo, Jeffrey Salmon, then executive director of the George C. Marshall Institute, helped develop the plan, as did Steven Milloy, now a FoxNews.com columnist. Other participants included David Rothbard of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow (\$252,000) and the Competitive Enterprise Institute's Myron Ebell, then with Frontiers of Freedom (\$612,000). Ebell says the plan was never implemented because "the envisioned funding never got close to being realized."

Another contributor was ExxonMobil lobbyist Randy Randol, who recently retired but who seems to have plied his trade effectively during George W. Bush's first term. Less than a month after Bush took office, Randol sent a memo to the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The memo denounced the then chairman of the IPCC, Robert Watson, a leading atmospheric scientist, as someone "handpicked by Al Gore" whose real objective was to "get media coverage for his views." (When the memo's existence was reported, ExxonMobil took the curious position that Randol did forward it to the CEQ, but neither he nor anyone else at the company wrote it.) "Can Watson be replaced now at the request of the U.S.?" the memo asked. It went on to single out other Clinton administration climate experts, asking whether they had been "removed from their positions of influence."

It was, in short, an industry hit list of climate scientists attached to the U.S. government. A year later the Bush administration blocked Watson's reelection to the post of IPCC chairman.

PERHAPS THE MOST SURPRISING aspect of ExxonMobil's support of the think tanks waging the disinformation campaign is that, given its close ties to the Bush administration (which cited "incomplete" science as justification to pull out of the Kyoto Protocol), it's hard to see why the company would even need such pseudo-scientific cover. In 1998, Dick Cheney, then CEO of Halliburton, signed a letter to the Clinton administration challenging its approach to Kyoto. Less than three weeks after Cheney assumed the vice presidency, he met with ExxonMobil CEO Lee Raymond for a half-hour. Officials of the corporation also met with Cheney's notorious energy task force.

ExxonMobil's connections to the current administration go much deeper, filtering down into lower but crucially important tiers of policymaking. For example, the memo forwarded by Randy Randol recommended that Harlan Watson, a Republican staffer with the House Committee on Science, help the United States' diplomatic efforts regarding climate change. Watson is now the State Department's "senior climate negotiator." Similarly, the Bush administration appointed former American Petroleum Institute attorney Philip Cooney—who headed the institute's "climate team" and opposed the Kyoto Protocol—as chief of staff of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. In June 2003 the New

York Times reported that the CEQ had watered down an Environmental Protection Agency report's discussion of climate change, leading EPA scientists to charge that the document "no longer accurately represents scientific consensus."

Then there are the sisters Dobriansky. Larisa Dobriansky, currently the deputy assistant secretary for national energy policy at the Department of Energy—in which capacity she's charged with managing the department's Office of Climate Change Policy—was previously a lobbyist with the firm Akin Gump, where she worked on climate change for ExxonMobil. Her sister, Paula Dobriansky, currently serves as undersecretary for global affairs in the State Department. In that role, Paula Dobriansky recently headed the U.S. delegation to a United Nations meeting on the Kyoto Protocol in Buenos Aires, where she charged that "science tells us that we cannot say with any certainty what constitutes a dangerous level of warming, and therefore what level must be avoided."

Indeed, the rhetoric of scientific uncertainty has been Paula Dobriansky's stock-in-trade. At a November 2003 panel sponsored by the AEI, she declared, "the extent to which the man-made portion of greenhouse gases is causing temperatures to rise is still unknown, as are the long-term effects of this trend. Predicting what will happen 50 or 100 years in the future is difficult."

Given Paula Dobriansky's approach to climate change, it will come as little surprise that memos uncovered by Greenpeace show that in 2001, within months of being confirmed by the Senate, Dobriansky met with ExxonMobil lobbyist Randy Randol and the Global Climate Coalition. For her meeting with the latter group, one of Dobriansky's prepared talking points was "POTUS [President Bush in Secret Service parlance] rejected Kyoto, in part, based on input from you." The documents also show that Dobriansky met with ExxonMobil executives to discuss climate policy just days after September 11, 2001. A State Department official confirmed that these meetings took place, but adds that Dobriansky "meets with pro-Kyoto groups as well."

RECENTLY, NAOMI ORESKES, a science historian at the University of California at San Diego, reviewed nearly a thousand scientific papers on global climate change published between 1993 and 2003, and was unable to find one that explicitly disagreed with the consensus view that humans are contributing to the phenomenon. As Oreskes hastens to add, that doesn't mean no such studies exist. But given the size of her sample, about 10 percent of the papers published on the topic, she thinks it's safe to assume that the number is "vanishingly small."

What do the conservative think tanks do when faced with such an obstacle? For one, they tend to puff up debates far beyond their scientific significance. A case study is the "controversy" over the work of University of Virginia climate scientist Michael Mann. Drawing upon the work of several independent teams of scientists, including Mann and his colleagues, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2001 report asserted that "the increase in temperature in the 20th century is likely to have been the largest of any century during the past 1,000 years." This statement was followed by a graph, based on one of the Mann group's studies, showing relatively modest temperature variations over the



past thousand years and a dramatic spike upward in the 20th century. Due to its appearance, this famous graph has been dubbed the “hockey stick.”

During his talk at the AEI, Michael Crichton attacked the “hockey stick,” calling it “sloppy work.” He’s hardly the first to have done so. A whole cottage industry has sprung up to criticize this analysis, much of it linked to ExxonMobil-funded think tanks. At a recent congressional briefing sponsored by the Marshall Institute, Senator Inhofe described Mann’s work as the “primary sci-entific data” on which the IPCC’s 2001 conclusions were based. That is simply incorrect. Mann points out that he’s hardly the only scientist to produce a “hockey stick” graph—other teams of scientists have come up with similar reconstructions of past temperatures. And even if Mann’s work and all of the other studies that served as the basis for the IPCC’s statement on the temperature record are wrong, that would not in any way invalidate the conclusion that humans are currently causing rising temperatures. “There’s a whole independent line of evidence, some of it very basic physics,” explains Mann.

Nevertheless, the ideological allies of ExxonMobil virulently attack Mann’s work, as if discrediting him would somehow put global warming concerns to rest. This *idée fixe* seems to have begun with Willie Soon and Sallie Baliunas of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Both have been “senior scientists” with the Marshall Institute. Soon serves as “science director” to TechCentralStation.com, is an adjunct scholar with Frontiers of Freedom, and wrote (with Baliunas) the Fraser Institute’s pamphlet “Global Warming: A Guide to the Science.” Baliunas, meanwhile, is “enviro-sci host” of TechCentral, and is on science advisory boards of the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow and the Annapolis Center for Science-based Public Policy (\$427,500 from ExxonMobil), and has given speeches on climate science before the AEI and the Heritage Foundation (\$340,000). (Neither Soon nor Baliunas would provide comment for this article.)

In 2003, Soon and Baliunas published an article, partly funded by the American Petroleum Institute, in a small journal called *Climate Research*. Presenting a review of existing literature rather than new research, the two concluded “the 20th century is probably not the warmest nor a uniquely extreme climatic period of the last millennium.” They had, in effect, challenged both Mann and the IPCC, and in so doing presented global warming skeptics with a cause to rally around. Another version of the paper was quickly published with three additional authors: David Legates of the University of Delaware, and longtime skeptics Craig and Sherwood Idso of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change in Tempe, Arizona. All have ExxonMobil connections: the Idsos received \$40,000 from ExxonMobil for their center in the year the study was published, while Legates is an adjunct scholar at the Dallas-based National Center for Policy Analysis (which got \$205,000 between 2000 and 2003).

Calling the paper “a powerful new work of science” that would “shiver the timbers of the adrift Chicken Little crowd,” Senator Inhofe devoted half of a Senate hearing to it, bringing in both Soon and Legates to testify against Mann. The day before, Hans Von Storch, the editor-in-chief of *Climate Research*—where the Soon and Baliunas paper originally appeared—resigned to protest deficiencies in the review process that led to its publication; two editors soon joined him. Von Storch later told the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that climate science skeptics “had identified *Climate Research* as a journal where some editors were not as rigorous in the review process as is otherwise common.” Meanwhile, Mann and 12

other leading climate scientists wrote a blistering critique of Soon and Baliunas' paper in the American Geophysical Union publication *Eos*, noting, among other flaws, that they'd used historic precipitation records to reconstruct past temperatures—an approach Mann told Congress was “fundamentally unsound.”

ON FEBRUARY 16, 2005, 140 nations celebrated the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. In the weeks prior, as the friends of ExxonMobil scrambled to inoculate the Bush administration from the bad press that would inevitably result from America's failure to sign this international agreement to curb global warming, a congressional briefing was organized. Held in a somber, wood-paneled Senate hearing room, the event could not help but have an air of authority. Like the Crichton talk, however, it was hardly objective. Sponsored by the George C. Marshall Institute and the Cooler Heads Coalition, the briefing's panel of experts featured Myron Ebell, attorney Christopher Horner, and Marshall's CEO William O'Keefe, formerly an executive at the American Petroleum Institute and chairman of the Global Climate Coalition.

But it was the emcee, Senator Inhofe, who best represented the spirit of the event. Stating that Crichton's novel should be “required reading,” the ruddy-faced senator asked for a show of hands to see who had finished it. He attacked the “hockey stick” graph and damned the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment for having “no footnotes or citations,” as indeed the ACIA “overview” report—designed to be a “plain language synthesis” of the fully referenced scientific report—does not. But never mind, Inhofe had done his own research. He whipped out a 1974 issue of *Time* magazine and, in mocking tones, read from a 30-year-old article that expressed concerns over cooler global temperatures. In a folksy summation, Inhofe again called the notion that humans are causing global warming “a hoax,” and said that those who believe otherwise are “hysterical people, they love hysteria. We're dealing with religion.” Having thus dismissed some 2,000 scientists, their data sets and temperature records, and evidence of melting glaciers, shrinking islands, and vanishing habitats as so many hysterics, totems, and myths, Inhofe vowed to stick up for the truth, as he sees it, and “fight the battle out on the Senate floor.”

Seated in the front row of the audience, former ExxonMobil lobbyist Randy Randol looked on approvingly.

Submitted by Gaylyn Rowley (not verified) on Mon May. 28, 2007 7:56 AM PDT.

Thank you so much for this article. I am so frustrated and saturated by the "conservative's" view on global warming

but needed ammunition to debate their absurd unvalidated claims.I have it now.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Miles D Duvalier (not verified) on Wed May. 30, 2007 9:46 AM PDT.

The funding from XOM to any of this was miniscule, went for other things as well, is negligible compared to funding supporting the opposite opinion from various groups including the present, is not within the margin of error for the potential costs of responding to "HUMAN IFLUENCE" on the global climate, has at least produced SOMETHING (reports), which is more than will be accomplished by trying to influence any legislation in response to it.

(Going to moderate the comment? Or just let it stand???)

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Clayson Gregory (not verified) on Wed Jun. 20, 2007 10:21 AM PDT.

It's time that we challenge the mainstream media to host this discussion. Somehow we must find ways of making open, public and factual discourse on this topic a part of the American experience. All of us need to creatively find ways to develop public experiences that demand coverage by mainstream electronic and print media in spite of their huge conflicts of interest. In the past, public demonstrations, concerts, street theater, and celebrity support have been very helpful in carrying the message. One thing is certain. Action on climate change is the only thing that will put us where we need to be. Participate, Think and Act!

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Eichmann Goebbles (not verified) on Thu Jun. 21, 2007 7:52 PM PDT.

He who controls information controls the world.

Give me control of a nation's money and I care not who makes its' laws.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Justin Miron (not verified) on Sun Jun. 24, 2007 10:37 PM PDT.

For anyone that wants further information (or "ammunition" if you will), go to Mann (and colleagues) site: [Realclimate.org](http://Realclimate.org)

recommend this

reply



Submitted by M. V. (not verified) on Mon Jun. 25, 2007 7:11 AM PDT.

For all your rethoric, you offer no proof that your point has any backing. This is barely above bickering; there's nothing more than a bunch of anecdotes without substance.

Stuff like: "...that they'd used historic precipitation records to reconstruct past temperatures—an approach Mann told Congress was "fundamentally unsound."" Besides being a "creative" use of quotations to mock the idea put forth... what's your point? Can you prove that it is "sound" to use precipitation as the basis to reconstruct temperature? Just because you read it someplace, it doesn't make it true.

The saddest part is... whatever is happening, if something is, nobody can do anything about it. The countries that are polluting the most are the ones less able and willing to do anything about it.

Frothing and pandering won't help either.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Brad McColl (not verified) on Mon Jul. 2, 2007 7:15 PM PDT.

It is obvious to me through this article that many educated and well meaning people and groups are in disagreement with the theory that global warming is primarily man created. However, most agree that the continued use of Hydro-carbons as our primary fuel is a bad idea. This is not a Democrat vs. Republican issue.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Brad McColl (not verified) on Mon Jul. 2, 2007 7:17 PM PDT.

It is obvious to me through this article that many educated and well meaning people and groups are in disagreement with the theory that global warming is primarily man created. However, most agree that the continued use of Hydro-carbons as our primary fuel is a bad idea. This is not a Democrat vs. Republican issue.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Michael Kiely (not verified) on Sat Jul. 7, 2007 7:35 PM PDT.

Will there be Nuremberg Trials for those who put the safety of our children and grandchildren at peril to serve their ideology of greed? Let their deeds be remembered by generations to come. Exxon, Inhofe, Randol, Dobriansky, Ebell, Raymond, Milloy, Soon, Baliunas... names that stink in the nostrils of history. The shame these champions of liberty have brought on the United States of America will only be realised once the nation awakens from its sleep to find the nightmare was real. Eight years wasted when we could have been acting. The Presidency of George W. Bush: The Wasted Years. We don't blame the President for his weakness. We blame those around him who exploited it for their own narrow interests. We shall remember them. Lest we forget.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Douglas Eddy (not verified) on Mon Jul. 9, 2007 6:45 PM PDT.

It's even more clear to me now as i continue to study the bible that fear does indeed control the world. Just as it has predicted being one of the many signs of the coming of Christ before the tribulation. God Bless...

recommend this

reply



Submitted by I. Fletcher (not verified) on Mon Jul. 23, 2007 7:06 AM PDT.

Ten thousand years ago the earth transitioned out of the last ice age. If only the Cro-Magnons would have abandoned their Neo-Con ways and driven Priuses instead of subserviently following their corporate masters we would not be in the situation we are today. I weep for our children not seeing the northern hemisphere 30% covered in ice.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Joe Bloe (not verified) on Mon Aug. 13, 2007 12:21 AM PDT.

BBC Documentary Great Global Warming Swindle. Don't worry chicken little.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by hmmtmm (not verified) on Mon Aug. 27, 2007 8:01 PM PDT.



hey bhaguuuuuuu!!!!

vat a biggggggggggggg article.....but impressive!!!!

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Jimmy (not verified) on Wed Sep. 12, 2007 3:44 AM PDT.

wow talk about the ultimate conspiracy theory!

recommend this

reply



Submitted by kristi strausser (not verified) on Thu Sep. 13, 2007 9:49 AM PDT.

i think global warming is a horrible thing!

even though i won't be around when it actually starts killing people (thank god) i still care!

recommend this

reply



Submitted by JESSICA TEES &#9829; (not verified) on Thu Sep. 13, 2007 9:56 AM PDT.

Global warming is a really bad thing that will happen in maybe like 100 years they will be going through real global warming like in the movie A DAY AFTER TOMORROW =[ Alot of people today wont be alive...but its still a big issue to worry about =[

recommend this

reply



Submitted by terry mullin (not verified) on Fri Oct. 12, 2007 6:15 PM PDT.

The saddest thing I ever watched on TV was the proof of how much the northern Ice cap is melting from fossil fuel global warming. Then we have to go and watch the same Idiots who are causing the warming rush up there to claim the rights to the very thing they are creating that is melting the Ice caps in the first place,fossil fuel. This made me completely sick to my stomach!!

When are these Idiots going to realize if they keep on trashing Mother Earth to beyond repair that we can't just pack our bags and move to another Planet !!! This is it. This is all we have. The concept of Money (only green paper that burns)is the worst concept Humans ever invented. How much GREED is enough??? A billion dollars? A trillion dollars? A zillion dollars? Infinity? When does it end ? With or without money we'll still be here,,,, or will we??

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Rational (not verified) on Fri Oct. 12, 2007 7:45 PM PDT.

Let's all go to the church of carbon where we can prostrate ourselves and beg forgiveness for ruining the planet!

1. Fact: Human activity accounts for less than 4% of the 1.3% of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere
2. Fact: The ice sheet in Antarctica is getting thicker and larger

Martians must be driving SUVs because the ice caps on Mars are melting too.

If this site is truly open to free debate this comment will not be moderated.

recommend this (1)

reply



Submitted by Alastair (not verified) on Sat Oct. 27, 2007 4:22 AM PDT.

Lets see all these God loving sceptics put a little of their Blessed cash on the table to back their point off view.

Let's set up a bank (deniers money backed \$4\$ by govts) to repair the damage to coastlines, agriculture, endangered habitats, population movement, water wars. Oh, okay, not even a trillion trillion dollars could save a single endangered habitat or bring back a single state long stretch of coastal development or halt a full force hurricane if the US continues it liaise a fare ways. God Bless the Dollar (US Dollars only of course).

recommend this

reply



Submitted by digibot the band (not verified) on Sun Oct. 28, 2007 7:53 PM PDT.

Hey "Rational". Back up your claims. Where's the beef genius? Here are a few events we all remember: The Larsen A ice shelf, which measured 1,600 sq km, broke off in 1995. The 1,100 sq km Wilkins ice shelf fell off in 1998 and the 13,500 sq km Larsen B dropped away in 2002.

This one comes from the US EPA: "Plant respiration and the decomposition of organic matter release more than 10 times the amount of carbon dioxide released by human activities; but these releases have always been in balance with the carbon dioxide absorbed by plant photosynthesis."

Oh, and I could give a damn about Mars.

You disseminate disinformation and you're not even receiving payola from Exxon. Nice.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by jeannette maldonado (not verified) on Tue Oct. 30, 2007 6:11 PM PDT.

I think Global Warming is a really bad thing! and this article was great =]

Mr. Braxton do i get an a?

recommend this

reply



Submitted by David Bruning (not verified) on Sat Nov. 17, 2007 7:18 AM PST.

"Crichton is an M.D. with a basketball player's stature (he's 6 feet 9 inches"

Probably has a better understanding of "science" than that fear mongering, global warming based on what is science, now Nobel award winning Al Gore. What is degree in again, and since when did he earn a PhD in any science to be considered an "expert" on global warming??

"Thank you so much for this article. I am so frustrated and saturated by the "conservative's" view on global warming but needed ammunition to debate their absurd unvalidated claims. I have it now." Great let's use a non-scientific, leftist subjective article on Crichton to support "liberal" stance on global warming and not peer reviewed scientific articles...

I read the book, I certainly agree with Crichton that double blind research needs to happen, basically take money from both environmental and "capitalist" groups, fund scientist to do research independent of who provides the funding and release results in peer reviewed articles without the fear of "having" to cater to your funding source and lose your funding if your results do not fit there agenda.

Global warming now, reminds me of "acid rain" when I was going to school, what ever happened to that??

recommend this

reply



Submitted by David Bruning (not verified) on Sat Nov. 17, 2007 7:22 AM PST.

SATELLITES SHOW OVERALL INCREASES IN ANTARCTIC SEA ICE COVER

see: <http://www.gsfc.nasa.gov/topstory/20020820southseai.html>

WTF?!?, you mean while ice is melting in the North more is developing in the south? I thought global warming was increasing temps everywhere?!?

recommend this

reply



Submitted by David Bruning (not verified) on Sat Nov. 17, 2007 7:29 AM PST.

digibot the band- Sure let's start by stereotyping anyone who will not jump on the band wagon as lying in bed with the oil companies...nice comeback...and Al Gore does not fly in a jumbo jet to his global warming presentations, or ride a bike at all (fat tub of lard). Since when did democrats start wanting the government to have more influence over us?? Even (prepare yourself!) GW's home in TX is more environmentally friendly than AG's. I just hate, hate, hate hypocrites telling me how to live...

recommend this

reply



Submitted by David Bruning (not verified) on Sat Nov. 17, 2007 7:31 AM PST.

"Global warming is a really bad thing that will happen in maybe like 100 years they will be going through real global warming like in the movie A DAY AFTER TOMORROW =[ Alot of people today wont be alive...but its still a big issue to worry about ="

Is this really what people are thinking that in a 100 years we'll all freeze to death because of global warming?? The fear mongering works, keep voting left.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by David Bruning (not verified) on Sat Nov. 17, 2007 7:34 AM PST.

People. at least use google to educate yourself more on both sides before making stupid comments. Ever read a peer reviewed journal article on global warming, if not then do so and not follow what the media or politicians tell you, and form opinions yourself. I mean Global warming is a "feel good" subject to support but do we know all the facts yet?? Is science/global warming a religion? Does it meet criteria for one?

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Geoff Rhodes (not verified) on Mon Nov. 26, 2007 7:19 AM PST.

I want see Sanfransisco go underwater.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Ben Wojno (not verified) on Mon Nov. 26, 2007 7:21 AM PST.

:Your a Dick

recommend this

reply





Submitted by Geoff (not verified) on Mon Nov. 26, 2007 7:22 AM PST.

No im not

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Ben (not verified) on Mon Nov. 26, 2007 7:22 AM PST.

Yea you are

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Geoff (not verified) on Mon Nov. 26, 2007 7:23 AM PST.

I know

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Richard Murray (not verified) on Mon Dec. 3, 2007 11:22 AM PST.

So, your only answer to the scientist who disagrees with the global warming hypothesis is an ad hominem attack. Why can't you guys argue with them on the issue. If their conclusions are wrong then you should be able to disprove them without having to accuse them of bad faith. I have read dozens of articles written by the global warming sceptics who state why they disagree with it and present scientific arguments. Every time I read an article by global warming promoters I see absolutely no scientific refutation, only attacks on the scientists and the organizations they work with. If you are so right and they are so wrong prove with science. I am an ordinary person who does not know this kind of science but I do know how to spot false logic and every time I see this kind of "journalism" the stench of "snake oil salesmen" is what I detect.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Rob UK (not verified) on Sat Dec. 8, 2007 6:18 AM PST.

The main point is that global warming alarmists like Mann ,Jones and Co will not release the raw data or the computer code they used to reach their conclusions, therefore their work cannot be independently verified. Is it any wonder the general public do not believe the hype. Do we want another Rachel Carson where millions have to die before that study was found to be totally flawed. Reducing CO2 with bio-fuel will leave millions starving in the third world because of a lack of food and the rain forests, the worlds lungs would be a thing of the past.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Guest (not verified) on Sun Dec. 9, 2007 8:14 PM PST.

What is consensus to science, so what if there is a consensus in the scientific community that there is global warming does that make it so? If we lived by consensus then the world is FLAT and the CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE!

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Mark Cenci (not verified) on Tue Dec. 11, 2007 1:23 PM PST.

Scientists receiving government grants or those on government payrolls are as subject to corrupting influences as those receiving grants and funding from the market sector.

Government scientists have college loans to pay off and mortgages and kids who need braces. Obscure scientists love the attention of Media types who hang on their every word. They have careers they strive to advance. In short, they are not necessarily Pure and Noble in their motivations and actions.

There can be no doubt that Acedemia is enthralled with the concept of human induced global warming. And clearly, government Planocrats have a vested interest in expanding their rules and regulations. Think of the blizzard of memos that must be written, the Conferences that must be attended, the expanded budgets and Staff!

Only Pea Wits and Government Rump Swabs think otherwise. That's where you come in, Mother Jones!

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Samiche (not verified) on Tue Jan. 29, 2008 2:45 PM PST.

Is anyone thinking about the Polar Bears?

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Randall S (not verified) on Thu Feb. 28, 2008 9:09 AM PST.

The Polar Bears are doing just fine, thanks. It's only the projections, based on flawed computer models of catastrophic global warming, which say they must therefore be dying off. Next step is for AGW-chained researchers to come up with a way to 'objectively' look at migrating, hunting, eating, breathing bears they come across, as actually being 'Dead'. Oh, this one here is 5 pounds below normal weight, he's obviously almost dead. Oh this one over here has a small cut on his nose, obviously from cannibalizing his cousin. He'll be dead next....

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Justin (not verified) on Wed Mar. 19, 2008 11:02 AM PDT.

Here's an example of science. The set will be the comments of this article. The hypothesis is that the ability to perceive and disseminate information with no obvious device to prove the information leads to a destructive model. As perception is the rule, I can assure you that you should be thanking your lucky stars that Stephen King is not a neo-conservative activist.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by SMURFFFFFFFFF (not verified) on Thu Mar. 27, 2008 8:01 AM PDT.

HE IS

recommend this

reply



Submitted by J. Williams (not verified) on Wed Apr. 9, 2008 8:50 PM PDT.

Let me first state that I am a Democrat, not a right wing loon working for Exxon. To all of you who think the Polar bear population is decreasing because of Global Warming, do your research and you will find this is not true. Scientist agree that the earth is getting warmer, however if you do your research you will find that the hottest time in the last 100 years were in the 1930's. We are not going to die because of fossil fuels, your ethanol is worse for the environment than gasoline folks, again do your research. Furthermore, I run across you global warming people all the time and here is what I wonder, why are you driving that Chevy Suburban, why do you live in a huge home, why don't you have solar panels on your house. If you are so concerned about it then maybe you should be doing something about it. Just a thought...

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Omar Spence (not verified) on Wed Apr. 16, 2008 4:14 PM PDT.

The practice of skeptics bypassing real scientific scrutiny and debate constitutes cowardice and dishonesty. They know that their half baked denial theories would crumble in the face of such scrutiny. These denial theories are based on misinterpretation of scientific data, as well as a gross misunderstanding of climatic processes. Even if they are genuine scientists, they are typically trained in some discipline with no relevance to the earth's climate or ecosystems influenced by its change. The belief that the earth is infinite and cannot be adversely affected by man's activities is stupid, primitive and unacceptable. These skeptics ignore the simple basic concept of cause & effect; if we change something there will be consequences.

recommend this (1)

reply



Submitted by Omar Spence (not verified) on Wed Apr. 16, 2008 4:56 PM PDT.

One common thread that binds persons that deny the occurrence of climate change is ignorance. They base their arguments on margins of error which diminish as more information is acquired, and parts of evidence which haven't been completely clarified yet but are being clarified as we speak.

They also rely heavily on half truths (eg decomposition of organic matter releasing more CO<sub>2</sub> than humans) while ignoring the other halves (that CO<sub>2</sub> being recaptured by plants) and ignore the significance of the imbalance being created by man's activities (i.e. producing more carbon dioxide than plants can absorb). Skeptics completely ignore well established evidence such as coral bleaching in the tropics. Some even use seasonal occurrences to deny climate change (increasing sea ice cover from summer to winter despite decreasing cover compared to previous winters).

Biofuels do have sustainability issues to work out but inaction will have far greater consequences than making the effort to straighten out these issues. Flex fuel chevy suburbans and the like are a grand example of hypocrisy called greenwashing. You americans use several times per capita than the rest of the world. And the truth is most of it is wasted doing things that only require half as much energy or less. The average american family car uses 2-3 times more fuel per mile than a typical family car in most

other countries. Gas prices are starting to hurt some american families as a result. Climate change deniers help to perpetuate that by advocating inaction when there is a need for energy efficiency. The biggest question should not be "is climate change real" but it should be "so what do we do with the money we would save on energy" by adopting energy efficient technology.

Renewables such as wind and solar are getting less expensive as technology improves, fossil fuel prices can only go up as supplies are consumed.

The argument favoring inaction is baseless and stupid. We can only stand to gain from taking action in the long run

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Omar spence (not verified) on Wed Apr. 16, 2008 5:00 PM PDT.

\*You americans use SEVERAL TIMES MORE ENERGY PER CAPITA than the rest of the world.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by LOL (not verified) on Sat May. 10, 2008 3:30 PM PDT.



What I want to know is how many environmental groups are on the pay roll of big oil. The people in Alaska, hear 1 excuse after another for non development of leases, we hear pipe dream ideas of study after study, and finally when yelling about non development gets to hot and heavy, an environmental group comes in and saves the day. For the oil companies. Now all excuses for not developing go away and it is all the greenies fault. I am not against reasonable development, I am against the lies. I believe there are many people who truly want a green future and I think that is great. I also believe that the environmentalists are the oil companies greatest excuse for non development. The real reason they don't develop is they don't want to compete against themselves. So how many enviro groups are receiving pay offs from big oil.

I want to see green development, we could have solar powered street lights and the wind turbine barriers along busy hwy ways that could be putting the energy right into the electrical grid. The money being spent in law suits to stop bp in Alaska (stop them from doing nothing anyway) could be used to start putting High way wind power in place. When people start to see a drop in their electricity bills they will be more encouraged to leave the old and go with the new and better. We could do a lot better with electric and wind powered transportation, not just in the tech part but the looks as well as the price. People have to be able to afford to be green in order to do it.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by minikperi (not verified) on Sun May. 11, 2008 2:17 PM PDT.

sadsadasdsad

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Jeremy Henley (not verified) on Tue May. 13, 2008 10:06 AM PDT.

I know that the science is skewed from both sides, but at least their doing the research. What I don't get is how Exxon Mobile can fund these projects without an obvious conflict of interest. That's exactly the same as the arms dealers (i.e. Northrup-Grumman, Lockheed-Martin) participating in the Iraq war think tanks. That's an awful lot of faith to believe there will be no corporate influence.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by superman (not verified) on Tue May. 13, 2008 10:25 AM PDT.

your a dick;)

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Laurel (not verified) on Mon May. 19, 2008 5:19 AM PDT.

There will always be nay-sawers to every issue, no matter how obvious (take evolution for example...)The problem is that people don't trust what they read, so they're more likely to believe the alleged debunkers since we wish they were right anyways.(don't you wish global warming actually was just a hoax?)When the debunkers are exposed as fraudulent, people extrapolate those findings to both sides of the argument because nobody likes to have been fooled.

The question is not what's Exxon-Mobil doing to prevent public awareness and the advancement of progress to deflect destructive practices, the question is just how long will it take the truth to be believed? You can slap it in front of people over and over, but unless they have someone they respect to follow, they'll remain stagnant.

recommend this

reply



Submitted by Gerald Hinson (not verified) on Wed May. 21, 2008 11:07 AM PDT.

The consensus of scientists is not true. A petition signed by 31000 Scientists reject global warming 5/19/2008 [www.worldnetdaily.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=64734](http://www.worldnetdaily.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=64734)

There has never been a consensus.

1998 is the warmest recent year, 2 more years of cooling, 8 of temperature plateau. 1998 - 2008 is cooling/plateau and predicted more cooling. You cannot have this scenario, and man made, CO<sub>2</sub>, Global Warming, with ever increasing concentration of the green house gases. There is a lot more that just is not so. The temperature precedes the GW, and drives the CO<sub>2</sub> out of solution, NOT the other way around. There is as much as a 1500 year lag in CO<sub>2</sub> concentration. This is physics, it is law, it isn't for Al Gore to say it isn't true, while displaying the very data that shows this, if examined properly. The audience is led to believe a lie.

recommend this