

## Global Warming and the Media: A Contending Perspective

By

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### Abstract

Global warming and climate change are currently major topics of conversation. It seems that everywhere you turn the media is having a glorified field day. They over exaggerate biased data and alter the entire theory into a terrifying certainty, rather than giving heed to the facts of the matter. If everything we heard from news broadcasts were true, the oceans will take over every coast and the heat will zap us all into oblivion.

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### Introduction

Global warming and climate change are currently major topics of conversation. It seems that everywhere you turn the media is having a glorified field day. They over exaggerate biased data and alter the entire theory into a terrifying certainty, rather than giving heed to the facts of the matter. If everything we heard from news broadcasts were true, the oceans will take over every coast and the heat will zap us all into oblivion. Except, how is the world going to burn up if everything will be flooded?

As the mass media portrays things, the majority of scientists would appear to believe that there is little or no dispute among the scientific community about the basic facts of "global warming." However, a more comprehensive analyses reveals a plethora of sources that not only disagree with this alleged consensus, they downright refute these purported basic facts. Author of Environmental Ethics and Human Christianity Thomas Derr concurs that "obviously foolish behavior" will harm the planet, but states that "[the] climate will change naturally" (336). The Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine (OISM) initiated a petition, which individual scientists in excess of 17,000 have now endorsed. These scholars and experts are in opposition to the theory that greenhouse gasses are triggering significant temperature increases (Bast). In a 2007 edition of the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons, OISM reports, "the empirical evidence... shows no man-made warming trend" (Robinson 7). It seems there is, in fact, vast debate concerning global warming, contrary to all of the hype we see and hear from various television stations and periodicals.

An article in the September 2004 issue of National Geographic reported on the rate at which glacial melting is occurring, citing a decline in the number and size of glaciers belonging to Glacier National Park. Daniel Glick, the Newsweek correspondent responsible for the essay, notes that scientists have reported in the last ten years abnormally high temperature medians; keeping with the media's pessimistic view, greenhouse gas emissions are the target of his blame (327). Global temperatures are on the incline, although Glick's target is not primarily at fault. The Earth is continuing in its steady recovery from the "Little Ice Age;" 2006 was still roughly two degrees Fahrenheit colder than the Medieval Period (Robinson 9). Glick's essay is concerned that melting ice could cause sea levels to drastically rise and "cause striking changes in the world's coastlines" (328). Yet he later writes "floating ice does not change sea level when it melts (any more than a glass of water will overflow when ice cubes in it melt)" (329). Throughout the preceding three thousand years, average temperatures have been elevated even more so than those currently, yet "the historical record does not contain any report of 'global warming' catastrophes" (Robinson 9).

The current warming trend is a natural occurrence that alarmists have distorted and made to resemble an international crisis, though their claims are not as supported as they would like the masses to believe. Society today, particularly in the United States, is more inclined to show interest in and react to worrisome and disconcerting gossip than scientific research and fact; if that were not true the tabloids surrounding us would not be selling like hotcakes. When a publication needs to meet their quota, "bad news is good news" is the method turned to (Derr 336). The monetary bottom line is so often the focus, rather than the studies conducted in an effort to reveal truths and solutions. Ironically, a report written by OISM scholars asserts "energy [as] the foundation of wealth" (Robinson 25), yet the public hears little of that viewpoint. Due to the tactics of alarmists and lobbyists, federal and state governments now face billion dollar deficits (Bast), funds that taxpayers may very well never see again. The efforts to moderate and diminish greenhouse gasses are not only eating up local and global monetary resources, they are obliterating employment opportunities (Bast). Despite scientific findings, legislators continue with attempts to push through their

own agendas to solve the alleged pending calamity, ever fueled by reports laden with errors from the media at large.

Another prime example of media exploitation is the flooding of television broadcasts with commercials that tug at the heartstrings of environmentalists everywhere, claiming that forests universally are facing decimation and certain doom. Yet, ecological observations by satellite confirm “the earth has become about six percent greener overall in the past two decades, with forests expanding...The Amazon rain forest [has been] the biggest gainer [of plant life]” (Derr 336).

The facts of the matter are simple. Although the Earth is encountering an episode of warmer temperatures, the side effects of a warmer climate are increased shrubbery and flora, expanded inhabitable areas around the globe, and even improved well-being and endurance of the population. Rather than global devastation and ruin, future generations will likely experience increased wild life and vegetation (Robinson 29). Does that sound like a fiasco?

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**

*The above article is a contribution from our guest contributor for this edition. Christi Orndorff is a student of KCKCC. Opinions expressed here are basically that of the author and not necessarily that of KCKCC or editor.*

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