

Guardian - reply to James Randerson 12 Feb 2010.

Dear Mr. Randerson

I am currently travelling. Consequently, my existence is peripatetic and access to a computer is sporadic. Nevertheless, thank you for your message of 9 February inviting me to participate in The Guardian's experiment to arrive at a collaborative and definitive account of the so-called "Climategate" controversy. Since no doubt your colleague, Fred Pearce, will have told you that my view of The Guardian is pretty much one of undiluted contempt, I confess to being surprised to receive it. Still, the invitation may be seen, I suppose, as a kind of back handed compliment, so let's take a look at what you have to say.

I shall begin by making one issue clear at the outset. The global warming/climate change scam, for years consistently proselytised by your newspaper with every conceivable form of journalistic chicanery, was in deep trouble well before the release of CRU material to the internet. Climategate has been convenient in that, in one spectacular event, the entire mess of potage was exploded all over the kitchen - floors, walls, ceilings. This has left the denizens thereof slithering and scrabbling about in an effort to scrape up the crud, return it to the pot, and retrieve something from the wreckage. Copenhagen was the fiasco it was widely predicted that it would be. Subsequent revelations, which have torpedoed the credibility of the IPCC, simply reinforce the perception held by sceptics for years, and increasingly by the public at large for months, that what we have been witnessing in the guise of AGW science has been nothing short of the greatest fraud in the history of science; indeed, possible history full stop. Climategate, and by extension the plethora of succeeding "gates", has actually revealed little that was not perfectly apparent already by inference. Inference from what? To be sure, over many years, inference from the conduct of the relevant parties - scientific, political, journalistic, environmentalist on both sides of the Atlantic as well as further afield.

I will now digress briefly because the digression is relevant to what follows, which in turn is relevant to statements made in the editorial to which you draw attention in the link you provided. These will be dwelt upon at some length as, less comprehensively, will be the phrasing of your invitation. In 1989 (two decades ago, kindly note), Channel 4 broadcast a documentary entitled "The Greenhouse Conspiracy". It was short and did not claim to be an exhaustive summary of a complex, multi-faceted subject. Nevertheless, it asked a number of pertinent and reasonable questions. In the succeeding "Have Your Say" type programme for viewers, the University of East Anglia was represented by a certain Dr. Mike Kelly, of whom more imminently. His attitude to the programme maker was not to address questions raised equally pertinently but rather to deliver a diatribe characterised by a spitting, hissing, defamatory impertinence. So gratuitously insolent and unprovoked was this performance that I was moved to write a letter of protest to Channel 4 about the supposedly impartial programme chairman, who had allowed this travesty to be aired without rebuke to the perpetrator. As it happens, I had long been persuaded already of the facile, glib improbability of the entire Greenhouse explanation of alleged global warming; equally persuaded too that the assertion of such warming was unfounded in any robustly verifiable evidence. This episode did one thing, however. It confirmed that what we were here witnessing was a gross corruption of scientific method and, thus necessarily, of the science flowing from it. All the indicators too pointed, in all likelihood, to a richly funded criminal conspiracy. That was my conviction then; that is my conviction now. And that is what Climategate has revealed in all its stark, brazen nakedness.

So, to your paper's editorial. In its headline, it immediately sets off badly. "**Truth and tribalism**" is the trumpeted headline declaration. Well, you people can speak for yourselves. "Rubbish!" is what I have to say to that. Tribalism is absolutely nothing to the point. What is to the point is scientific and personal integrity. Sceptics/ dissenters (or in the puerile but intentionally offensive patois hitherto favoured by The Guardian - deniers, denialists, contrarians, nay-sayers) do not question AGW science qua science. They challenge it precisely because it is **not** science; in the words of Prof. Paul Reiter "dressed up as science but not science at all."

So what's the difference? Well, if nothing else (in fact, there is much else!), two vital requirements of authentic science are conspicuously absent - verification and replicability. And why is this? It is because those who practise so-called "AGW science" have gone to great pains to ensure that their work is not scrutinised ("peer reviewed" in the lingo of the trade) by reputable practitioners **not**, be it noted, outside their own areas of specialisation but simply from without their own immediate circle of cronies (the self-declared "Team"); in other words, not independently reviewed, not anonymously reviewed - in short, not peer reviewed at all in any honest and meaningful sense.

Some years past a brace of physicists with impeccable academic credentials announced to the world that they had uncovered the secret of cold atomic fusion. If true, allelujah, boundless cheap energy and clean to boot! They were misguided as well as overly optimistic. They were, however, also men of honour. They made their work available for others to confirm and replicate. Weaknesses in methodology were soon identified - almost as quickly as the elaborately contrived efforts of Messrs. Mann, Bradley and Hughes, and without the involvement of national institutions of governance. End of happy dream. Pity but, of critical importance, the integrity of science remained untarnished.

In and among (plentiful) electronic evidence of the University of East Anglia researchers going about their job diligently. Really? Would you care to specify? It might, perhaps, be worth recalling that the Artful Dodger could not be faulted for the diligence with which he pursued his metier. In fact, he was the model chosen by the Master for didactic purposes. Both were still crooks!

For a newspaper that prides itself on leading the fight to fix the climate, avoiding such a forthright interrogation of the scientific processes on which our call for action ultimately depends might have been more comfortable – comfortable but wrong. Oh jolly good - what wondrously upright citizens we are, to be sure! And I do love the emphasis! “The fight to fix the climate” forsooth! You would wiser, as well as better informed, if you took on board that (a) it is for people of your putative persuasion to demonstrate that climate needs “fixing” and (b) if so, human beings can achieve it. Both propositions are risible, but very much horse (donkey/ass?) nuts for The Guardian!

...hyped and distorted on the blogosphere. No, indeed - The Guardian would never dream of hyping or distorting anything. Tut, tut - what an unfounded canard! This is maybe a convenient point at which to draw attention to the fact that Mr. Pearce’s research, though doubtless thorough, also represents a duplication of effort. A comprehensive and eminently fair analysis of the Climategate material has/had already been completed by Dr. John Costello PhD. I have little doubt that you can access his work readily enough. If not, I will happily provide you with the complete text. In short, for the purposes of this exercise, I have read all the e-mails, every last grisly one of them. “Hyped and distorted” - gee, you don’t say!

Scientific progress comes through free and frank debate, the bedrock of truth being revealed only after every muddying stratum above it has been penetrated and cleared away. Indeed, the settled core of our knowledge on climate – the fact of increasing atmospheric carbon, the rising temperature trend, and the heat-trapping mechanism linking the two – has acquired the terrific authority it now possesses precisely because it has been forced to withstand so many challenges in the past. Well, I suppose that, confronted by the total collapse of years of mendacious claptrap, sanctimonious huff ‘n’ puff reinforced with copious infusions of ink in the water probably does seem to offer the only exit route with any potential semblance of dignity - an illusion, however. Take a leaf instead from Mr. Monbiot. Against the backdrop of all his rational and exquisitely modulated advocacy over the years within as well as without the august pages of The Guardian, he has been candid enough to acknowledge the devastating impact of the Climategate materials, an acknowledgement which, in turn, I ungrudgingly recognise required moral courage. Mr. Rusbridger - pray, take heed! But “Bedrock of truth.....forced to withstand so many challenges in the past”. God Almighty! And “Scientific progress comes through free and frank debate” comes as a blinding revelation only to AGW cultists; it is most surely the antithesis of The Guardian’s advocacy hitherto.

What Copenhagen did for the chances of a meaningful climate deal, East Anglia has unwittingly done for the prospects of prevailing in the battle for hearts and minds. The Guardian really does depress portentous blather to fresh depths of inanity. “Chances of a meaningful climate deal” - thankfully killed it stone dead, let it be hoped! Ditto “the prospects of prevailing in the battle for hearts and minds”, but what a piquant oxymoron in the former!

Before rushing to judgment on the hapless scientists involved, though, it is as well to recall the peculiar pressures that climate researchers face. Gosh yes! Like

- greater funding in a shorter timeframe than has ever been enjoyed by any other branch of the sciences - not excluding particle physics with its Hadron colliders plus this, that and the other;
- megaphone support from a corrupt and/or ovine political establishment across the Western world, in particular;
- governing administrations which are willing to pour public funding into proselytising propaganda and bogus research whilst simultaneously ignoring the requirements of the law;
- a compliant and manipulable civil service nationally and transnationally;
- the sappiest, most true believing, indolent and vicious media - well, until recently anyway - at long last;
- within the UK a statist public broadcaster which, on demonstrably untruthful and spurious grounds, long ago abandoned any pretence of respecting its own legally binding Editorial Standards;
- a cacophony of so-called environmentalist/religious cheer leaders, in reality often surreptitious string pullers as well, qv the activities of WWF/Greenpeace/FoE/the Anglican and other “faith community” prelatariat;
- an increasingly varied and well healed industrial chorus stage left keen to introduce, with crocodile hand wringing, all manner of vital new environmental enhancements - such a mercury vapour and lithium, both health promoting neuro-toxins of some virulence;
- and stage right, of course, we have the agriculturalists ever eager to turn an honest penny with monocultivations of “bio fuel” crops where once food staples, especially for the poor and dispossessed, held sway or, alternatively, where virgin jungle dominated. But, then, limitless palm oil plantations are so much more crucial to the urgent need “to save the planet”.

Yes, indeed, they've had a thankless, tough row to harrow - which brings me back to the revered Dr. Mike Kelly! By him, Guardianistas and others of like mind, have we not been regaled for years with tales of the self-serving scientific dissenters, who, we are stridently advised, are in the pay of big oil, big coal, big whatever? And what do we discover in the "Climategate papers"? Why, to be sure, none other than the said, the saintly, the purely motivated Dr. Kelly climbing into the four poster with none other than Shell. No, no, no, no, it cannot be! It must not be! Jawohl - it bloody well can! It bloody well is!

The climate clock is ticking on civilisation and it falls to them to answer the all-important question about just how much time there is left to act. Providing the answer necessarily involves forecasting the future, inevitably a less certain business than making sense of the present, and yet as much certainty as possible is urgently required. Crap! Furthermore, countless repeated has been the mantra that the "tipping point" is upon us, has passed, will be irretrievable tomorrow, the day after, next year, by 2009, by 2015, by 2035. A chimpanzee flicking paint at a canvas with a palette knife would generate something more coherent than this! As for "making sense of the present", everyone now knows about that, do they not? And that is not just a cheap shot, as I anticipate The Guardian would like to assert! It goes to the heart of the matter. CO₂ induced climate science is garbage, not just bad science but non-science which, amongst much else, flies in the face of copious multi-stranded evidence, scientific, historical and simply experiential for anyone in their 60s or over.

The blatant foul play of the deniers. Specifics please - or is this just a further example of attempted damnation by slimy innuendo so much favoured by AGW cultists? And there we have "deniers" yet again, in a supposed invitation to participate in a rational debate! Truly, you people are mentally diseased; you simply cannot help yourselves.

.....the well-grounded suspicion that their aim is squandering precious time provides a seeming rationale for simply cutting them out of the debate. Well grounded? Really? Again specifics please, not just unsupported assertion. No, "cutting them out of the debate" arises from an entirely different impulse. It used to be known as "blue funk"!

The well-financed interests that are set to pay a heavy price from any curbing of emissions will do anything to discredit those uncovering facts that they would rather keep buried. It doesn't take long for The Guardian to revert to type by trotting out old libels on far better men than the writer of this editorial. As for "uncovering facts", it would be a welcome novelty to witness "AGW science" deliver any facts at all.

Their arguments will get a sympathetic hearing from a public whose understanding can be distorted by the desire for an easy life. The writer is correct, of course. The proletariat is much too stupid, much too feckless to recognise revelation vouchsafed only to the faithful, the pure of heart, the preternaturally endowed protectors of Mother Gaia. That requires a refinement of consciousness, perception and conscience inevitably reserved for a chosen few. Their thankless task is thus to lead their less penetrating brethren into the paths of righteousness. We'll tactfully sidestep, shall we, the millions who have perished from earlier manifestations of this type of self-preening and obnoxious conceit, particular to the mindset of environmental jihadists.

Complacency is tough stuff to puncture; only the purest strain of truth can be relied on to do the job. My friends, you wouldn't know "the truth", if it bit you in the bottom!

Of your invitation, I will comment only on the heading: ***hacked climate science emails***. What evidence do you have that they were hacked? Such evidence as there is suggests whistle blowing not piracy. But once again The Guardian chooses to denigrate rather than to verify. What a surprise!

The editorial to which you drew attention is a masterpiece of equivocation and rank hypocrisy. In effect, it tries to have its bun and its penny - to suggest (tut, tut) that while all may not be right - in an understandable, provoked and small sort of way, nevertheless the central message retains its relevance and crystalline clarity. I will not say that nothing could be further from the truth. I will say simply that it is outright lie - just as always has been the anthropogenic global warming farrago.

Do I want to be part of your on-going "experiment"? No, I don't think so. Instead, this is my contribution. You may use some, all or none of it. To me your decision will be a matter of total indifference. Like you, I too do have one condition, however. You may not cherry pick words out of their surrounding context, an example of chicanery much favoured, for example, by Dr. Renouf of the BBC. To take a hypothetical example from the present, you may not use as a quote by me: "The Guardian would never dream of hyping or distorting anything.", tempting though that may be!

As for Mr. Pearson, yes, if I can access it without standing on my head and performing three backward somersaults, I'd be quite (but only quite) interested to see his take on material, which in reality speaks for itself perfectly satisfactorily.

Rupert Wyndham