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## **NY Times 'Climategate' Editorial A Reminder That Media Have Failed Miserably Covering Climate Science**

The New York Times deserves praise for its excellent editorial on Sunday, “A Climate Change Corrective,” which rightly confirms that the “Climategate” non-scandal has been thoroughly investigated and revealed as a political attack on scientists, not the grand United Nations conspiracy concocted by industry front groups and the right wing echo chamber.

Five separate reviews have found no evidence whatsoever to back up the outrageous claims made by skeptics and deniers that the state of climate science has in any way been weakened by the theft and public airing of years’ worth of emails and documents from the University of East Anglia’s Climatic Research Unit last winter.

The Times’ editorial correctly calls on all the media outlets that amplified the bogus conspiracy theories from the Climategate noise machine to return to the subject and set the record straight for their viewers. Far too much ink and airtime was spent on inflating the mythical Climategate conspiracy, and ever since there has been hardly any effort made to explain this episode accurately – as a baseless political attack on climate science. It is imperative that all the outlets that fell into this trap and perpetuated the Climategate nonsense now spend the time necessary to ensure that their audiences know the truth.

The Times editorial expresses hope that the “debunking of Climategate, will receive as much circulation as the original, diversionary controversies.”

Aside from the difficulty associated with correcting a lie once it has circulated this widely, editors at media outlets who lent credence to the Climategate myth must do some deep soul-searching to figure out why none of their reports initially probed the real conspiracy in this matter – the coordinated, political attack on climate scientists ginned up by a network of

climate change skeptics who turned the mountain of stolen material into a sensational global news story.

Why did none of the media outlets that covered Climategate attempt to identify the real perpetrators behind the theft of the CRU materials? Why didn't they question the fact that the wild allegations about the integrity of climate science - which surfaced almost immediately after the emails were posted online - was coming from a small network of notorious climate deniers and oil-industry funded skeptic groups like the Competitive Enterprise Institute and the Cato Institute?

Those are just two questions left unanswered; there are many more related questions that media outlets have failed to investigate.

In fact, there has been a coordinated attempt to manipulate public understanding of climate science, but it certainly didn't originate with Al Gore or the United Nations. There is vast evidence confirming such a coordinated effort has been underway for the past two decades, led by groups like CEI and others who collect large sums from oil and coal industry sources to manufacture doubt about climate change science.

Overall, the mainstream media has earned an F for failing to expose that very real conspiracy. Few outlets identify financial conflicts of interest when quoting such 'experts' in their misguided attempt at 'balance.' And fewer still have taken the time to educate the public about the orchestrated crusade to deny global warming by polluter-supported front groups.

While climate scientists have been thoroughly investigated recently and had their scientific findings confirmed independently under intense scrutiny, the same cannot be said for the skeptics who loudly proclaimed that Climategate proved global warming is a myth.

Where are the investigations into the broad network of polluter-funded skeptic groups who make these outlandish claims about climate science without any proof? Where are the corrections and retractions from those media outlets that promoted their false Climategate allegations?

How will the public ever understand the very real threat of climate change when so many mainstream media outlets fail so miserably at covering the subject accurately?

Much like the Times' editorial urges, my hope is that editors at every outlet who botched the Climategate story will revisit the issue and correct the record, and then take a deeper look at how they cover climate change in general so they don't keep perpetuating the manufactured 'debate.'

But the damage has already been done. Public understanding about climate science is moving in the wrong direction, and the mainstream media shoulder a lot of the blame for that.

Each media outlet can demonstrate their grasp of this fact by moving quickly to dispel the Climategate myth and working to educate the public about the robust body of knowledge confirming man's impact on the climate.

One outlet in particular that should review its coverage is the Wall Street Journal, which

trumpeted the Climategate myths early on and just today ran an opinion piece by climate skeptic and Cato Institute senior fellow Pat Michaels whining about a “whitewash.” Michaels doesn’t like the fact that the five reviews exonerating climate scientists didn’t match up to the scandalous version that he and others tried to sell. Rather than focus on educating its readers about the facts, the Wall Street Journal provided Michaels, who has admitted receiving funding from various fossil fuel industry sources over the years, more than 1,000 words to resuscitate his thoroughly-debunked Climategate conspiracy theory.

That is the type of misguided media attention that has aided and abetted the 20-year disinformation campaign waged by polluter-funded front groups and kept the public needlessly confused about climate change science.

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