

 DESMOG VIDEO
  DESMOG DIRECTORY
  GREEN SHEET
  RESEARCH DATABASE

MITCHELL ANDERSON



3 July 09

"Suppressed" Climate Report Cribbed From Patrick Michaels?

Tags: [Desmogblog](#), [Competitive Enterprise Institute](#), [Desmogger](#), [Mitchell Anderson](#), [Pat Michaels](#), [Political Spin](#), [Science](#), [US](#)



The folks at Fox News were fuming this week that the EPA apparently [suppressed](#) an internal "scientific report" that questioned the rationale for listing CO2 as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act.

The report, however, is neither secret nor scientific.

It's not secret because it has been posted on the websites of the [Heartland Institute](#), the Competitive Enterprise Institute, and several other think tanks with a record of using any excuse to deny climate change science. The full file is available [here](#).

The person listed as the author of the report, Alan Carlin, is not a scientist, but an economist who works for [National Center for Environmental Economics](#). But Carlin also had some help.

Several years ago, Ken Gregory of the Astroturf group [Friends of Science](#) compiled an [eye-glazing compendium](#) of pseudo science questioning climate change. [Real Climate](#) points out that Carlin has imported sections of this verbatim, crediting Gregory 20 times in the report.

Carlin also referenced [Christopher Monckton](#) and [S. Fred Singer](#), a politician and a lapsed scientist, both of them darlings of the denial industry.

But what about un-referenced sources? Plugging Carlin's report into [Plagiarism Checker.com](#) revealed a whole series of un-referenced sections lifted verbatim from one of the deans of the denial industry, [Patrick Michaels](#), Senior Fellow at the [Cato Institute](#).

Have a look: Page 79 of Carlin's PDF states:

"For instance, despite the overall rise in U.S. and global average temperatures for the past 30 years, U.S. crop yields have increased (Figure 3-1), the population's sensitivity to extreme heat has decreased (Figure 3-2), and our general air quality has improved (Figure 3-3). Further, there has been no long-term increase in weather-related property damage once changes in inflation, population size, and population wealth are accounted for (an essential step in any temporal comparison). All of these trends are in the opposite sense from those described in the EPA's Endangerment TSD."

Small world. It seems that a [November 19th op-ed piece](#) on [Michael's website](#) entitled "Why the EPA should find against Endangerment" has exactly the same wording and exactly the same graphs. In fact, the entire section 3 of Carlin's report seems to be a very thin re-write of the anti-EPA piece from last November.

[Plagiarism](#) is a serious academic offence, particularly if it involves obviously biased sources. It is therefore ironic that Carlin's unsolicited 85 page report, on a subject well outside his area of expertise, is devoted to criticizing the scientific community for their shoddy work.

This week an indignant Senator James Inhofe [demanded an inquiry](#) into this strange report. Maybe that's not such a bad idea. It might be interesting to find out who else Carlin cribbed and who paid for the report.

[Recently revealed tax documents](#) show that Michaels' consulting firm was paid \$242,900 by the Cato Institute since April 2006, during which year Cato had accepted [\\$612,000 from 26 corporate supporters](#) including ExxonMobil, General Motors and the American Petroleum Institute.

Since neither Carlin nor Gregory are climate scientists, what do active climate researchers think of the "suppressed" report? [Dr. Gavin Schmidt](#) of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space

Democracy is utterly dependant upon an electorate that is accurately informed. In promoting climate change denial (and often denying their responsibility for doing so) industry has done more than endanger the environment. It has undermined democracy.

There is a vast difference between putting forth a point of view, honestly held, and intentionally sowing the seeds of confusion. Free speech does not include the right to deceive. Deception is not a point of view. And the right to disagree does not include a right to intentionally subvert the public awareness.

Although all public relations professionals are bound by a duty to not knowingly mislead the public, some have executed comprehensive campaigns of misinformation on behalf of industry clients on issues ranging from tobacco and asbestos to seat belts.

Lately, these fringe players have turned their efforts to creating confusion about climate change. This PR campaign could not be accomplished without the compliance of media as well as the assent and participation of leaders in government and business.

[read more](#)

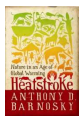
SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Like what you read here? Get our top five stories in your inbox every week. » [here's a preview](#)
Enter your email and subscribe now!

SUBSCRIBE TO DESMOGBLOG RSS FEED 

Desmogblog *monthly* book give-away

Enter now to win this month's book **Anthony Barnosky's Heatstroke: Nature in an age of global warming**



MOST POPULAR ITEMS

- [Slamming the Climate Skeptic Scam](#)
- [Report: Alberta Oil Sands Most Destructive Project on Earth](#)
- [GM, Canadian Government Bet Jobs Against Environment](#)
- [Oil Companies Funding Friends of Science, Tim Ball takes the brunt](#)
- [Full Version of White House "Edited" CDC Climate Report - with highlights!](#)

[ABOUT US](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[OUR COMMENT POLICY](#)

[SEND US YOUR NEWS TIPS](#)

[MEDIA CONTACT LIST OF GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE EXPERTS](#)

[LINKS TO WEBSITES AND BLOGS WE READ](#)

[LOGIN OR REGISTER](#)

[about us](#) | [contact us](#) | [desmog directory](#) | [green sheet](#) | [media centre](#) | [news tips](#)