

Triple Pundit

Nine Out of Ten Top Climate Deniers Linked to ExxonMobil

 By [RP Siegel](#) / May 9th, 2011 [0 Comments](#)

Today's story probably won't come as a big surprise to anyone, but in an era where unsubstantiated assertions fly through the news media like raindrops in a hurricane, obscuring the truth to the point of near-invisibility, it's nice when a bright beam of factual research and analysis shines in to cut through the haze.

A recent [analysis](#) conducted by [Carbon Brief](#) which investigated the authors of more than 900 published papers that cast doubt on the science underlying climate change, found that nine of the ten most prolific had some kind of relationship with ExxonMobil.

Links to these papers were proudly displayed on the denialist [Global Warming Policy Foundation](#) website, where they are still fanning the dying embers of [Climategate](#) hoping something will catch, under the heading, "900+ Peer-Reviewed Papers Supporting Skepticism Of 'Man-Made' Global Warming (AGW) Alarm."

The top ten contributors to this list were responsible for 186 of the 938 papers cited.

Foremost among them was Dr Sherwood B Idso, who personally authored 67 of them. Idso is the president of the [Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change](#), an ExxonMobil funded think tank. The second most prolific, [Dr Patrick J Michaels](#), a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, receives roughly 40% of his funding from the oil industry. Number 3 on the list, Agricultural Biologist Bruce Kimball co-authored all of his papers with the aforementioned Dr. Idso.

The report does not mention the [Koch Brothers](#), who as we know, spent twice as much supporting climate denial groups as Exxon Mobil did.

The researchers utilized the website [Needlebase](#) to help conduct their analysis.

The idea of maintaining an atmosphere of doubt in order to keep consumers from changing their behavior is not a new one. It was developed by the [tobacco industry](#) decades ago, in their efforts to dispel research results linking second hand smoke exposure to cancer and keep the public confused on the issue.

A recent book on these tactics by Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, entitled [Merchants of Doubt](#) explores "how ideology and corporate interests, aided by a too-compliant media, have skewed public understanding of some of the most pressing issues of our era."

Other prolific authors of climate-change denying include [Willie Soon](#), [John R. Christy](#) and [Sallie L Baliunas](#) who are all associated with the George C. Marshall Institute, whose [website](#) asserts that “...efforts to reach agreement on inferences about human influence on the climate system that can be drawn from science and policy prescriptions for addressing the climate change risk have been controversial.”

Ross McKittrick is [a senior fellow](#) at the [Exxon funded](#) Fraser institute and [Richard Lindzen](#) is a member of the ‘Annapolis Center for Science-Based Public Policy,’ which has also received Exxon funding.

Of course, the fact that these scientists’ livelihoods depend to one degree or another on a very rich oil industry with an extremely large vested interest in the outcome of the climate change “debate,” or more precisely in perpetuating the idea that there is in fact still a debate over anything more than minor details of the climate change phenomenon, does not mean that their positions on the subject are necessarily biased. However, human nature being what it is, a healthy dose of skepticism should be brought to bear here as we try to move forward on the repeated urgent warnings coming from the [overwhelming majority of scientists](#) who have studied the subject.

RP Siegel is the co-author of the eco-thriller [Vapor Trails](#), the first in a series covering the human side of various sustainability issues including energy, food, and water. *Like airplanes, we all leave behind a vapor trail. And though we can easily see others’, we rarely see our own.*