



## **Australian Climate Denial Think Tank Picks Cat Author and Moonman Ken Ring as Climate Expert**

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Do you love cats and want to know what makes them tick? Do you think climate change is a hoax being pushed as part of a eugenics plot? Do you like rubber band magic?

If your answers to these questions are “yes,” “hell yeah,” and “sometimes,” then have I got the book for you? Hell yeah, I do.

Australian “think tank,” the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), has launched a fundraising drive for its 2017 edition of the book *Climate Change: The Facts*.

The IPA is Australia’s biggest pusher of climate science denial and has assembled a conga-line of deniers and contrarians to write chapters for the upcoming publication.

Of course, this isn’t how the IPA describes it. Rather, the IPA says the book, edited by senior IPA fellow Jennifer Marohasy, “brings together contributions on the latest climate science from some of the world’s leading experts in the field.”

Contributors include the likes of the Cato Institute’s Patrick Michaels, British peer Matt Ridley, political scientist and think tank boss Bjorn Lomborg, and writer Clive James.

But anyway, back to cats and rubber band magic. Why?

Paws for Thought

Because another of the IPA’s apparent “leading experts” on climate change is New Zealand’s Ken Ring — a so-called “long range weather forecaster” and former school magician who has written two, possibly three, books about cats.

In 1998’s *Pawmistry: How to Read Your Cat’s Paws*, Ring joined magician Paul Romhany to reveal the secrets of the lines on your cat’s paws. “A broken heart line means your cat is in a period of adjustment,” read the dust jacket.

Now in the interests of fairness, I should say that back in 2011 when I checked with Ring about the book, he said he had written it “as a joke” and the publishers at Penguin had made up a story about him uncovering a talent for reading paws at a party.

At the time, I only knew about *Pawmistry*, but it turns out Ring has a whole litter tray of literary greatness (though none of it has to do with climate science).

There was a 2014 follow up to the “runaway bestseller” *Pawmistry*, called *How Your Cat Chose You*, which comes with a note that the book is “a bit of fun” but that you “might learn something” anyway. Or you might not.

There’s also *Positive Affirmations for Cats*, which appears to also be from the Ken Ring cattery.

Ring teamed up again with Romhany (who seems to be doing pretty well) to write *Rubber-Band Magic*, in which the marketing people claim Ring was New Zealand’s “KING of rubber band magic.”

He worked with Romhany again for *How To tell Anybody’s Personality By The Way They Laugh and Speak*, which is a book about ... oh, never mind.

#### Moon Weather

These days though, Ring has left the world of rubber band magic and cat books to forge a career as a long-range weather forecaster. He is known as the “moonman.”

Ring produces multiple “weather almanacs” for about \$50 a pop, where he makes predictions about the weather based on the positions of the moon, the tides and planets and supposed cycles of weather events. His methods have no credibility with meteorologists.

He sometimes gets on Australian TV and radio as a weather forecaster and, once, as a “climate expert” which, by any credible measure, he absolutely is not. He claims CO2 can't affect the climate because it can't rise in the air.

When Ring was being challenged on my blog back in 2011, he made his personal views about climate change pretty clear.

“The eugenics agenda driven from the UN of the international global warmers, which is akin to the policies of Nazi Germany, which is to reduce human population by creating poverty by halting progress and discouraging economic development in underdeveloped countries is phenomenally disgusting.”

That’s right. He went full Godwin.

#### Skin Cancer Concerns Are “Alarmist”

But Ring’s “expertise” doesn’t stop at climate change, cats, rubber band magic, the weather, and Nazi ideology.

Ring is also happy to offer advice on skin cancer prevention.

His website has dismissed concerns about melanoma from sun exposure as “alarmist brainwashing,” suggesting that “many are now realizing that many cases of skin cancer may caused [sic], not by the sun, but by the lotions themselves.”

Instead, recommends Ring, people should just use plain old coconut oil (don't do that, because coconut oil has an SPF factor of just eight when the American Academy of Dermatology recommends at least 30).

New Zealand happens to have some of the highest skin cancer rates on the planet — higher even than Australia.

“Apart from the odd cut-out bits, after at least 50 sunny summers most of us still do not have terminal skin cancer,” the article on Ring's website said (there was no authorship).

Actually, skin cancer deaths in New Zealand have been rising in recent decades. About 350 New Zealanders died from skin cancer in 2013, according to the latest available government statistics.

So, How About That Weather?

But what about Ring's expertise as a self-styled weather (or climate) expert? Ring makes a lot of “forecasts” and produces annual almanacs for different areas, including Australia.

I thought I would check one of his interviews from late 2011, when he spoke to local ABC Radio on the Sunshine Coast in Australia. Ring gave several weather predictions which I have checked against rainfall data for the Sunshine Coast Airport.

Ring predicted there would be a “dump of rain” in the first three days of 2012. There was only 1.4 mm. Ring said there would be “no more for three weeks,” missing the 115 mm of rain that fell between January 16 and 18.

Ring predicted “main flooding” between the 12 and 19 of March, which was actually relatively dry. March 5 and 6, outside Ring's “main flooding” period, got 170 mm of rain. On March 23 there was 177 mm of rain, despite Ring saying that “the only dry period for the district” would be from March 22 to 27.

Checking Ring's predictions against other weather stations in the Sunshine Coast region, such as coastal Noosaville or inland Mapleton, gave similar results. See NZ Sceptics, SillyBeliefs and Gareth Renowden's Hot Topic and On The Farm for other analyses of Ring's “predictions.”

But let's remember too that you can get more of Ring's work in the IPA's upcoming book, which is the third version of *Climate Change: The Fcats* [deliberate typo].

The last version of the book was being sold by Canadian conservative and climate science denier Mark Steyn to help him pay for a libel defense.

Like previous versions, any Australian taxpayers donating to the book campaign can claim an equivalent tax break.

Seems worth it, right, for all that purrfectly legitimate expertise?