



Doug Craig Climate of Change

## Defending Rachel

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I recently read a book called *Merchants of Doubt* by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway and had the good fortune of interviewing Dr. Oreskes for my new radio show on [KCNR](#) called Wake Up Call. The recorded interview will be broadcast on August 15 at 10 a.m.

The book is the result of a five year project investigating how "a small group of men with scientific bona fides and deep political connections deliberately distorted public debate, running effective campaigns to mislead the public and deny well established scientific knowledge over four decades."

It started in the 1950s when the tobacco companies hired a public relations firm to deny the science that proved their product killed their customers. The authors also reveal how the George Marshall Institute was formed during the Reagan administration to run a propaganda campaign based on the ridiculous notion that we could "win" a nuclear war. Reagan was promoting his Strategic Defense Initiative despite the science showing that a nuclear conflict would be devastating to all life on Earth.

From there these men moved on to acid rain, the ozone hole and secondhand smoke, again fighting the hard, mainstream scientific consensus with effective array of lies and distortions that delayed action on these threats to the health of our planet and human beings. These same individuals moved on to Global Warming as I have endlessly documented but now it's [Rachel Carson](#).

For those of you who don't know, Rachel Carson is "a true American hero" who wrote *Silent Spring* in 1962 and alerted us to the dangers of indiscriminate pesticide use. She simply wrote a book but since her book was based on hard science, its findings were affirmed by President Kennedy's Science Advisory Committee and in 1972, "the EPA concluded that the scientific evidence was sufficient to warrant the banning of the pesticide in America."

The banning of DDT happened under a Republican administration, "had widespread public and bipartisan support" and most importantly allowed for exceptions. Despite the lies from the Competitive

Enterprise Institute (which defends tobacco and denies Global Warming), the Cato Institute, the American Enterprise Institute, the Heartland Institute, Bjorn Lomborg and Thomas Sowell, DDT could be sold to "the World Health Organization for use in countries with endemic malaria and for public health emergencies here at home." Rachel didn't kill anyone.

Oreskes and Conway show that the collective effort by conservative think tanks to destroy the reputation of a brilliant scientist who died more than 45 years ago is based on a cynical political calculation.

"In the demonizing of Rachel Carson, free marketers realized that if you could convince people that an example of successful government regulation wasn't, in fact successful--that it was actually a mistake--you could strengthen the argument against regulation in general."