

## The Koch Brothers

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*Charles and David Koch*

Jane Mayer has written what may be, because of its future repercussions, a history making [article in the New Yorker](#).

Her exhaustively researched article shows that the brothers Koch of Koch Industries are supplying a great deal of the money fueling the vapors of America's loony right and are the major financial power behind the highly organized and sinister attack on climate change science in the USA.

I will assume that you have read Mayer's piece. I have little new to add to it, only my take on what I think it all means.

As a starting point, here is a sample list of organizations they fund, which I have taken from [Sourcewatch](#):

- 1) Cato Institute \$8,450,000
- 2) Citizens for a Sound Economy Foundation \$6,025,375
- 3) George Mason University \$2,311,149
- 4) George Mason University Foundation, Inc. \$2,074,893
- 6) Heritage Foundation, The \$1,004,000
- 7) Institute for Justice \$1,000,000
- 8) Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment \$810,000
- 9) Reason Foundation, The \$642,000
- 10) Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, The \$504,000
- 12) Institute for Humane Studies \$455,000
- 13) Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy \$385,000
- 14) Washington Legal Foundation \$350,000
- 15) Capital Research Center \$340,000
- 16) Competitive Enterprise Institute \$254,460
- 20) Ethics and Public Policy Center, Inc. \$190,000
- 22) National Center for Policy Analysis \$175,000

- 23) Citizens for Congressional Reform Foundation \$175,000
- 24) Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Inc. \$125,000
- 25) American Legislative Exchange Council \$120,000
- 26) Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty \$115,000
- 28) Political Economy Research Center, Inc. \$80,000
- 29) Media Institute \$60,000
- 30) National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship \$60,000
- 31) University of Chicago \$59,000
- 32) Defenders of Property Rights \$55,000
- 33) University of Kansas Endowment Association \$50,000
- 36) Texas Public Policy Foundation \$44,500
- 37) Center for Individual Rights, The \$40,000
- 38) Heartland Institute \$40,000
- 39) Texas Justice Foundation \$40,000
- 40) Institute for Policy Innovation \$35,000
- 42) Center of the American Experiment \$31,500
- 43) Atlas Economic Research Foundation \$28,500
- 44) Young America's Foundation \$25,000
- 45) Henry Hazlitt Foundation \$25,000
- 47) Atlantic Legal Foundation \$20,000
- 48) National Taxpayers Union Foundation \$20,000
- 49) Families Against Mandatory Minimums \$20,000
- 50) Philanthropy Roundtable \$19,200
- 51) Free Enterprise Institute \$15,000
- 52) John Locke Foundation \$15,000
- 53) Hudson Institute, Inc. \$12,650
- 54) Alexis de Tocqueville Institution \$12,500
- 55) National Environmental Policy Institute \$12,500
- 56) Washington University \$11,500
- 57) Pacific Legal Foundation \$10,000
- 58) American Council for Capital Formation \$10,000
- 60) Institute for Political Economy \$8,000
- 62) State Policy Network \$6,500
- 64) Fraser Institute, The \$5,000
- 65) Mackinac Center, The \$5,000
- 66) Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation \$5,000
- 68) Institute for Objectivist Studies \$5,000

For me the real giveaway in the Koch's sucker list is the last one, the "Institute for Objectivist Studies"... in case you are not aware, "Objectivist" or "[Objectivism](#)" is the philosophy of [Ayn Rand](#), who I (full disclosure) consider one of the most evil human beings to grace that most evil of centuries, the 20th. Perhaps the title of one of her books that gives the most of her thinking away in the shortest dose is called "[The Virtue of Selfishness](#)".

Her *oeuvre* is compounded of many volumes of novels and essays, articles and speeches: millions of verbs and nouns and assorted prepositions, you name it, but the British, who still can use our language with pungent economy, might simply define Rand's philosophy in a few choice words such as, "*Bugger you Jack, I'm alright.*"

Rand's philosophy might be called the "secret doctrine" behind the Koch's manipulation of American democracy, just as it inspired Alan Greenspan and many other powerful people who have found in it a well constructed justification of their basest instincts.

I found the following quote from Mayer's article which positively reeks with Objectivism. The Kochs

have funded an exhibition at the Smithsonian which makes global warming sound sort of like fun. (*The bold, black, emphasis is entirely mine*).

At the main entrance, viewers are confronted with a giant graph charting the Earth's temperature over the past ten million years, which notes that it is far cooler now than it was ten thousand years ago. Overhead, the text reads, "HUMANS EVOLVED IN RESPONSE TO A CHANGING WORLD." (...) The accompanying text says, "During the period in which humans evolved, Earth's temperature and the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere fluctuated together." **An interactive game in the exhibit suggests that humans will continue to adapt to climate change in the future. People may build "underground cities," developing "short, compact bodies" or "curved spines," so that "moving around in tight spaces will be no problem."**

**Such ideas uncannily echo the Koch message. The company's January newsletter to employees, for instance, argues that "fluctuations in the earth's climate predate humanity," and concludes, "Since we can't control Mother Nature, let's figure out how to get along with her changes."**

People might wonder, "do the Kochs really think that they and their offspring will be exempt from the rigors of climate change? Are the presumably super rich future Kochs ready to go around with 'short compact bodies' or 'curved spines' in order to 'move around in tight spaces'?"

When they once asked George W. Bush about history's verdict on his administration he replied something to the effect that he didn't care because he'd be dead by then. I imagine that is the sort of attitude that the Kochs have toward the future of their country and our species, when nobody is looking or listening.

You might as well pose a question like that to a Mexican drug capo like the ones who run [Los Zetas](#). These are people who take what they want and are just as nasty as they have to be to get it. The Kochs, having been born rich, haven't had to take the same risks that the Zetas do, but we are still talking about sociopathic behavior whose only final value and measure is money and power.

Probably, if they think or care much about the world their grandchildren will live in, they picture them living in gated and heavily fortified communities, somewhere in a newly verdant Antarctic, maintained in glowing eternal health by miraculous genetic manipulations and tended by starved sex slaves, the tattered remnants of the world's once teeming billions, whom the neo-Kochs breed and consume like we breed and consume battery chickens today.

What Mayer's article and the Sourcewatch list I have reprinted reminds me most of is Terry Southern's 1960s period piece, "[The Magic Christian](#)" and the Peter Sellers film version of it: a simple allegory of [the things that people will do for money](#). At the time the film seemed way over the top, but in light of what the Kochs are doing to American politics and to the air that the entire world breathes, "The Magic Christian" seems [quite restrained](#).

I do see a tiny ray of light in all this. It may be that the apparent divisions in American society, that the great British historian [Eric Hobsbawm calls](#) the deepest divisions among our people since our Civil War, are more artificial than they appear to us now and that if the manipulation of peoples "feelings" and the darkening of their intelligence by people such as the Kochs and Rupert Murdoch becomes more widely recognized, sanity may rear its pretty head again... or maybe the Kochs will just have to personally buy us all off... one at a time, Magic Christian style.

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