

## **Illusions, collusions, conspiracies and corruption in climate science.**

It's been a difficult six months for climate science. In October of 2009, a raft of emails was leaked from the Climatic Research Unit (CRU) at East Anglia University which revealed the culture behind a research unit and its worldwide contacts beleaguered by the blogosphere and desperate to maintain the credibility of their temperature records and the interpretation of the modelling based upon them. Further, the IPCC has been caught relying upon un-refereed opinion in key areas of climate impact – Himalayan glaciers, African crop yields and Amazon rainforest. Given the huge investments hanging on policy decision dependent upon this science, the climatic research establishment has come under severe scrutiny and the official response to all this – that it doesn't affect the basic science of global warming. These three books are the latest salvo from the climate 'sceptics' camp – how far do they really question the science?

Firstly, it needs to be said that all of the errors and behind-the-scenes shenanigans have been revealed not by the institutions of science or the normally ever-watchful environmental NGOs – who remain mostly silent onlookers, and I rather suspect, reluctant readers, if they read at all, of the recent literature of criticism.

The current number-one bestseller in the global warming literature on Amazon is not Al Gore, but a little known blogger and former chemistry student at St Andrew's University now living in rural Scotland – Andrew Montford, custodian of the Bishophill blogsite. In *The Hockey Stick Illusion* Montford documents in excruciating detail the saga of climatologist Michael Mann's fabled statistical treatment of global temperature proxies over the past one thousand years – a treatment that effectively air-brushed all traces of global cycles in the past one thousand years.

The Hockey Stick emerged in 1998, the creation of a relative newcomer to climate science at the University of Massachusetts who was within a couple of years elevated to lead author at the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and became the pit-bull of the climate science fraternity. His graphics effectively removed both the Medieval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age from the global record – which was now smooth as a hockey-stick

shaft until the blade of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century unprecedented ‘uptick’. The graph featured large in the IPCC 2001 report and was massively influential throughout the world in convincing governments and environmental groups to support the IPCC’s call for concerted environmental action to mitigate carbon emissions.

Mann and his team had effectively removed the concept of ‘cycles’ from the climate modeller’s universe. The UN then reported that modern temperatures were unprecedented in the climate record. So sudden and pervasive was this story that the world of real climatology – outside of the computer simulators, fell silent.

One voice called persistently about the lack of supporting data and replication – a semi-retired minerals engineer in Canada, Steve McIntyre, someone with a long history of analysing mining stocks and with an interest in tree-ring chronologies. Mann’s analysis flew in the face of just about every chronology he has seen and he wanted to see how it was done. He asked for the data and the computer codes used to process it.

Montford chronicles McIntyre’s efforts. His book is fundamentally about science – the rules and the steps taken to avoid them. It took McIntyre *years* to discover just how the hockey stick was constructed. He finally discovered that the novel techniques used by Mann *mined* the data for hockey-stick type upticks, especially from tree-rings, which are notoriously difficult to correlate to temperature, and then skewed the analysis – so much that when McIntyre tested the technique with random numbers, it still produced a hockey-stick.

Montford documents in detail how he was *obstructed* at every turn and in the most cynical of ways. This is a book about how the scientific establishment protected its investment by denying access to data, using false trails and partial releases, outright lies, corruption of the peer-review process, undermining of Freedom of Information acts, packing of investigative committees and steering of the UN reports through biased editing and control of the review process. And all this was researched and written *before* the corroborative release of emails at CRU.

In the end, McIntyre’s critique was published in the recognised journals and upheld by a high-level congressionally instigated review by experts in statistics – yet in the 2007 IPCC report, Mann, who was still closely

involved with the UN network, was able to manoeuvre the wording such that it looked as if he had been right.

This book will have repercussions. It is well written, though demanding of constant focus, well laid-out and thoroughly referenced. It *should* be read by every believer in the authority of scientific institutions – but of course, that is not likely. Montford has done a great service to science, to history and to a public grown sceptical of the scare stories upon which vast amounts of research funding, carbon trading and energy technology subsidies depend.. That story cannot now claim that the 20<sup>th</sup> century warmth is unprecedented. Everything now hangs on the causal hypothesis and whether the natural climate has had a major role in the warmth that has been observed – and much of that knowledge relies on an understanding of cycles – which is still very low.

Montford lays bare a world of devious behind-the-scenes behaviour of scientists in positions of power and it is not one that our modern environmental movement seems keen to investigate. That task has fallen to bloggers and investigative journalists – and of the latter, most particularly the *bete noir* of environmentalism, Christopher Booker. His *The Real Global Warming Disaster* is another tome environmentalists are unlikely to read – but should.

It is also well written and thoroughly documented. Booker handles science well. But the real meat of the book is again behind the scenes in the corridors of power. All ‘greens’ should read the section describing Sir David King’s mission to Russia in 2004, the purpose of which was to get Putin onside over ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. It was successful. But in terms of the reputation of British science and diplomatic protocols, it should be a cringing embarrassment to anyone who cares about science. King’s bullying tactics and crass ignorance of real climate research are laid bare. This explains why, for example, Yuri Izrael, one-time Vice Chair of IPCC, a professor of global systems ecology, should retreat from public statements about the hype on global warming and how cycles were driving it, to then concentrate the work of his institute on geo-engineering concepts for cooling the planet. Putin funded his institute of global ecology after he signed up for his billions of carbon credits under the Kyoto Protocol’s trading mechanisms.

This is the murky world laid bare by Booker – and there are dozens of such examples – most particularly on the role of James Hansen’s institute within NASA where the models all began. This is the shadow not just of global carbon trading and the IPCC, but of science and its relation to funding and government policy.

What is here described is the second post-war formative force of ‘scientists driving policy’ of which Eisenhower warned in addition to the now long forgotten ‘military-industrial complex’, and it is also up there among Amazon’s best-seller list.

These books are scholarly and forceful. The ‘sceptical’ literature also has more journalistic best-sellers – like Ian Wishart’s *Air Con*. They can be wordy, dense, opinionated, uncoordinated and difficult to read with little or no scholarly referencing – the sort of book that speaks to the converted in what many see as a quasi-religious war. Wishart’s book would not convince any environmentalist there was anything rotten in the State. And Booker’s approach might not either – because few would get beyond the first couple of pages where he dismisses previous scare-stories on nuclear power and toxic chemicals, acid rain and lead in petrol. I gagged when Three Mile Island was dismissed as a minor leak – internal explosions actually came within 90% of the containment’s design limit and the loss of Pennsylvania to productive economy for one hundred or more years.

This is the crux of the problem. The green movement – which still refuses to look critically at the claims of global warming and reverts to ‘the argument from authority’ has too much invested to respond to the growing evidence of deception and corruption at the highest levels. The Hockey Stick story shows the UN’s IPCC reports to be the *dodgy dossiers* of the environmental movement. There is a great danger here – that anti-environmental forces which *do* read Booker, as well as a large number of uncommitted people who recognise corruption and will not tolerate it, will bring both science and the environmental movement into such public disrepute, that the regulation and finance needed to help the most vulnerable communities cope with their vulnerability to natural climate change, which *is* happening irrespective of carbon dioxide’s contribution – will simply not be possible, especially in a world of straightened finances.

Neither Booker nor Montford are arguing for an increase in environmental consciousness but they perform a great service in disclosure of the politics in

a real world of science and policy. Montford is arguing for a retrieval of honesty in this realm. Wishart represents the force of the common man, when affronted and about to be stung for vast carbon taxes. These forces are articulate and gaining a lot of ground. Where in all this stands the Royal Society, the knights of environmental advice to government, former prime ministers, and the rest of the world's science academies? Not a single criticism of the science! Not a single episode of malpractice uncovered: the Hockey Stick illusion, the IPCC's un-refereed statements, the e-mail saga and the soon-to-be revised late 20<sup>th</sup> century instrumental record (another hockey stick saga yet to be revealed) – all of these have been revealed by bloggers and journalists. There is a bad odour in the realm of environmentalism and unless there is a major awakening it may well be the first sign of a terminal illness.

**THE HOCKEY STICK ILLUSION**  
**Climategate and the Corruption of Science**

A.W. Montford

Stacey International, 2010, 482 pages.

Pbk £10.99 ISBN 9781906768355

**THE REAL GLOBAL WARMING DISASTER**

Christopher Booker

Continuum, 2009, 368 pages

Hbk £16.99 ISBN 9781441110527

**AIR CON**

IAN WISHART

Howling at the Moon Publishing, 2009, 284 pages

Pbk £15.99 ISBN 9780958240147