

Grist Attacks on Fred Singer Reveals Alarmists' 'Credential' Hypocrisy!

By Marc Morano, Senate EPW

[Grist Article by Joseph Romm: Unstoppable disinformation every 15 minutes from Fred Singer (see full article below)]

First, a few comments about the Romm/Grist attack on Singer:

1) Grist violates its own criteria for what qualifies a scientist to comment on climate issues! As one of the comments noted, the author of this article Grist's Joseph Romm, (a Senior Fellow at the very liberal and well-funded Center for American Progress) mock's Singer's scientific credentials. But a post from Climate Resistance says Romm may be more accurately described as a "pundit, a policy maker, a political technology advisor." See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_J._Romm, And despite being a PhD physicist, it appears Romm would not meet Grist correspondent Andrew Dessler's definition of someone qualified to have an opinion on climate change issues. Grist is contradicting itself! (Note, according to Dessler, only a about 150-200 scientists in the world are actually qualified to have an opinion on climate issues and guess what, they all happen to be affiliated with the UN. Dessler also does not believe TV meteorologists are qualified, unless they agree with his brand of climate alarm) [For a complete debunking of critiques of the Senate 'Consensus Busters' Report, see Marc Morano's January 10, 2007 Letter to New York Times: <http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/01/09/the-road-from-climate-science-to-climate-advocacy/#comment-6702>)

2) Romm attempts to discredit Singer because "the Earth wasn't actually in a warm trend -- unstoppable or otherwise -- 1500 years ago!" Romm resurrects the canard that the Medieval Warm Period was not global and claims (ala Mann's Hockey Stick") that the Medieval Warm Period was much cooler than today. This assertion ignores multiple peer-reviewed studies showing the Medieval Warm Period warmer than today, including two papers in just the past 6 months! (See: 1: A November 2007 study published in Energy & Environment found the Medieval Warm Period "0.3C warmer than 20th century" The study was authored by C. Loehle and titled "A 2000-year global temperature reconstruction based on non-tree ring proxies." ([LINK](#)) & ([LINK](#)) and 2) A June 29, 2007 scientific analysis by Gerd Burger of Berlin's Institute of Meteorology in the peer-reviewed Science Magazine challenged a previously touted study claiming the 20th century had been unusually warm. Excerpt: "Burger argues that [the 2006 temperature analysis by] Osborn and Briffa did not apply the appropriate statistical tests that link the proxy records to observational data, and as such, Osborn and Briffa did not properly quantify the statistical uncertainties in their analyses. Burger repeated all analyses with the appropriate adjustments and concluded "As a result, the 'highly significant' occurrences of positive anomalies during the 20th century disappear." ([LINK](#))}

Perhaps Romm should stick to his theories about how bridge collapses are linked to global warming. See: [Ex-Clinton Official Ties Minneapolis Bridge Collapse to Global Warming](#)

3) Romm's ignores that Singer's 1500 year cycle is not exactly every 1500 years, but approximately 1500 give or take 500 or more. This point is very clearly laid out in the book. Romm knows this, but chooses to spin for cheap propaganda points.

4) Romm ignores the overwhelmingly evidence. Singer and Dennis Avery's book is based on more than 100 scientific studies with more than 300 co-authors revealing how solar activity is linked to the Earth's natural temperature cycles. It is not just a theory or speculation, but based on decades of peer-reviewed science.

5) Romm mocks Singer as having no credibility in the science community. A few notes on Dr. Singer: He is an atmospheric physicist and was former director the US Weather Satellite Service, past vice chairman of the U.S. National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere and the co-author of the recent peer-reviewed paper with Climatologist Dr. John Christy and climate scientist Dr. David Douglass in the International Journal of Climatology of the Royal Meteorological Society. The December 2007 study found ([LINK](#)) "The observed pattern of warming, comparing surface and atmospheric temperature trends does not show the characteristic fingerprint associated with greenhouse warming." Romm's failure to mention Singer's peer-reviewed work makes a mockery out of his claim that political leaders should only "talk with peer-reviewed climate scientists." For more on Singer's credentials see: <http://www.sepp.org>

6) Romm brings up the old silliness about industry funding. Once again, completely ignoring that it is the proponents of climate fear who have monumental funding advantages over skeptical scientists. (See this Senate funding report here: http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Minority.Blogs&ContentRecord_id=38D98C0A-802A-23AD-48AC-D9F7FACB61A7)

Plus, Romm is a Senior Fellow at the very liberal and well-funded Center for American Progress <http://climateprogress.org/about> and (Also note, just this week it was announced that the "Swedes are paying \$590,000 to study cow burp greenhouse emissions." This grant was to study just 20 cows or \$29,500 per cow! See: http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_8039081)

Full text of Grist Attack on Fred Singer:

<http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2008/1/21/11832/1079>

Unstoppable disinformation every 15 minutes from Fred Singer

Climate denier contradicts self, facts, remains famous

Posted by [Joseph Romm](#) at 11:12 AM on 21 Jan 2008

Tools: [print](#) | [email](#) | [+ digg](#) | [+ del.icio.us](#) | [+ reddit](#) | [+ stumbleupon](#)

So Kansas state House member Larry Powell has sent a copy of Fred Singer's lame denier treatise, [*Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1,500 Years*](#), to every Kansas legislator. Of course, he sent one to Governor Sebelius, who [denied a permit for two large coal-fired power plants](#) in his home county.

Since I've been blogging regularly on Kansas, Kansas reporter Sarah Kessinger called me Friday for my opinion on Singer's book and what legislators should do to become informed on climate. The book has been widely debunked -- [see this post on RealClimate](#).

The most absurd thing about the book is that ... wait for it ... **the Earth wasn't actually in a warm trend -- unstoppable or otherwise -- 1500 years ago!** (Yes, during the [Medieval Warm Period](#), *parts* of the earth were a bit warmer, but that peaked [below current temperatures] 1,000 years ago.) I thought the reporter would [like that fact](#):

"I don't think there's anybody in the scientific community who takes Fred Singer seriously," said Joseph Romm, a Washington scientist and author. Romm said the 1,500-year cycle theory isn't possible considering the earth wasn't in a warming trend 1,500 years ago.

Duh! I mean, seriously: Every book contains at least a few small errors, but most real scientists, heck, even most global warming deniers try to avoid putting egregious factual mistakes in the **title of the book**. That is a pretty good sign you can skip the contents.

An even better reason to skip the book: in 1998, coauthor Fred Singer testified to Congress that "[the climate is not warming](#)," and as recently as November 2003, he [wrote in the *Financial Times*](#):

The irony is that there is no convincing evidence that the global climate is actually warming.

I kid you not. So four years ago, Singer said the scientific evidence of warming was not compelling. By 2007, he was publishing a book saying the science shows we are in a natural warming cycle.

Why, why, why, traditional media, do you keep quoting someone who just keeps making stuff up and contradicting himself as he goes along?

Singer has been an unstoppable industry gun-for-hire for a long, long time -- [even for the tobacco industry](#):

For example, [here is the link](#) to a memo in which an official from the [Alexis de Tocqueville Institution](#) solicits \$20,000 from the Tobacco Institute for the preparation of a "research" paper challenging the health effects of second-hand smoke, and suggesting that Dr. Singer be retained to write the report. [Here is the link](#) to a letter thanking the Tobacco Institute for \$20,000 intended "to support our research and education projects." [Here is a research paper](#), just as described in the earlier memo, with Dr. Singer's name as the author. And here is another [Tobacco Institute memo](#), reporting on Dr. Singer's appearance with two Congressional Representatives releasing the paper to the media.

That is from DeSmogBlog. Here is [more](#).

True, working for organizations that take money from ExxonMobil doesn't mean all of your "research" is flawed -- but the fact that all of your research is obviously flawed, and that you'll change positions 180° if it suits your funders' arguments, does suggest your core beliefs are not based on fact and that you are ... let's be kind and say *Romney-esque*.

Anyway, I have a theory that Singer's unending and unstoppable 15 minutes of media fame is tied to the well-known 15-minute sun-spot cycle -- wherein every 15 minutes or so, somebody looks up and spots the sun, is temporarily blinded, and loses their cognitive ability to separate fact from nonsense. I challenge anyone to refute that theory without using any facts.

The reporter did ask me what I would suggest legislators read. Hmm. What [synthesizing document or summary](#) should policymakers read? Tough one.

If legislators want to inform themselves about global warming, Romm said, they should start by reading the U.N. panel's reports, which have been written

specifically for legislators.

He also suggests they talk with peer-reviewed climate scientists.

"There is no escape from global warming, so even in the middle of the country in places like Kansas, it's important for people to take the time to become informed," Romm said. "Because in 10 to 20 years, as consequences become more obvious, it will become a top issue."

I probably said, "*the* top issue" (it's already "a" top issue), but a good story nonetheless.

For story: [Unstoppable disinformation every 15 minutes from Fred Singer](#)

7 Comments | [Post a Comment](#)

Singer is quite consistent

I have a copy of Singer's "Hot Talk Cold Science" Revised 2nd Edition, 1999. My copy of "Unstoppable Global Warming" is currently mislaid, but I recall that between the two books Singer was quite consistent in his bottom line conclusion, quoted here from p.91 of the first book:

"Policies to limit CO2 emissions by energy or carbon taxes, while superficially attractive, are economically damaging to the great majority of countries..."

Now, the rationale for this, and the scientific unreasoning, have changed often, but never the bottom line... :-)

-John Mashey

by [JohnMashey](#) at [11:41 AM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

Kansas and Global Warmin'

I got a huge crack out of your post, Joseph, but it doesn't surprise me one bit...

I am from Kansas but currently studying climate change at Oxford for a masters degree, and I am constantly amazed at the idiocy of the vast majority of our legislators in my home state. While I love it dearly, quotes like the following from Melvin Neufeld, the Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives don't give me much confidence in that body's ability to address the issue: "They tell us that if you jog two miles you emit more

carbon dioxide than if you drive two miles."

Are you serious?! I mean, I know Melvin is a bit old, but COME ON!

Luckily, Governor Kathleen Sebelius and Lt. Governor Mark Parkinson just GET IT. As you mentioned, they took a huge step in denying permits to Sunflower Electric to build two 700-MW coal-fired plants near Holcomb last fall, and are taking HUGE steps toward making Kansas a world leader in wind energy. I think you will continue to see great things from those two leaders - and they are truly leaders - in the current legislative session and throughout the rest of their term.

And, you're right, Joseph - I don't think anyone in the scientific community takes Fred Singer seriously. Let's hope the Kansas Legislature refuses to take him seriously, as well!

-GreenOx
www.greenox.blogspot.com

-GreenOx www.greenox.blogspot.com

by [GreenOx](#) at [12:33 PM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

Speaking of which

Grist's "how to talk to a climate skeptic" hasn't really been updated in the past year.

Stuff like:

1. Mars (NASA findings of massive dust storms, why Abrusimov is wrong, and how the mars rover nearly got killed by the storms)
2. Nothing on the Lezpig, Lezpig mkII, Canada 100 scientists, or Inhofe 400 scientists
3. None of the new admissions by the IPCC, or new studies finding that MAYBE their sea level rise figures were understated.

[http://www.celsias.com/2008/01/21/melting-from-pole-to-po ...](http://www.celsias.com/2008/01/21/melting-from-pole-to-po...)

4. Most of the new stuff in by Lomborg/Nordhaus
5. Never have seen a page with a good explanation of Milankovitch cycles, why solar forced warming can't explain current warming, and how GHG can explain current warming. (This is one of our weakest arguments, so we need a very understandable argument for it)

-
6. How we know the CO2 is manmade
 7. Info on why 2006 hurricanes were weak
 8. Info on Gore's "Errors" by a UK judge, and the difference between Errors and "Errors"
 9. Why 1934 really wasn't the hottest year on earth
 10. Polar Bears
 11. NAS review of Mann et al. didn't discredit it
 12. Moberg 2005
 13. Baliunas 2006 / Singer 2006
 14. Svensmark 2007
 15. The issues with the Troposphere, and how John Christy continues to lie about it.
 16. James Hansen isn't being bribed by George Soros

etc.

And then just in general, clumps of counter arguments:
The alleged "errors" in An Inconvenient Truth
The real errors in Great Global Warming Swindle

by [GreyFlcn](#) at [1:01 PM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

Poleward ice starting to go?

A wee bit off topic, but some recent scoop says that the Antarctic is losing lots of ice on the western side near the Ross Shelf ... a volcano was discovered, and "lakes of water" exist under the pack ice that when warmed, could really melt it fast. Not sure if I got the stories right but they're dramatic and attention-grabbing.

Meanwhile in the Arctic, sea ice formation is extremely thin and likely to melt even faster next summer (source: Jeff Master's blog, highly respected).

Good article, Mr. Romm. If there was some BS it was about whether CO2 was man-made, which obviously not all is. It should be noted that the generalized models are only capable of measuring increases in anthropogenic CO2, which in turn increases CO2

concentration in the atmosphere, all other things being equal.

Unfortunately, the only way one can portray a "model" to a redneck is to show a cardboard cut-out of Farrah Fawcett with her tits falling off....

Onward through the fog

by [Sam Wells](#) at [3:23 PM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

Joseph Romm...Scientist?

Well, reading the Wikipedia article on Joseph Romm. He is obviously a smart and impressive guy...but a scientist?

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_J._Romm

I would say he is a pundit, a policy maker, a political technology advisor...but I don't see any primary scientific research to his credit?

Viva la Climate Resistance!

by [jabailo](#) at [3:36 PM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

Good sources

I've gotten good use of:

<http://www.skepticalscience.com/argument.php>

Which could also use some updating, but is well-organized. In particular:

1. one page that lists all the arguments tersely in one place. If you can get someone undecided to read that page, it's fairly powerful.
2. Links to a page apiece that describe the argument, point at who uses it, show why it's wrong, and point at relevant articles.

The terse item #s and codes make it easy not to waste space, which is very important in letters to editor and postings on websites that have constrained wordcount, where denialists are advantaged by the relative ease of causing confusion versus creating clarity.

One can easily write: Ho-hum, standard debunked arguments #3, 7, 10 from the website. Ntohing new, and if you have any doubt, look at the scientific references the detailed web pages.

That tends to derail incitements to long discussions that make it look liek there's a real

argument.

Here's a usage example, in a site with a tightly-constrained word-count:

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest ...>

-John Mashey

by [JohnMashey](#) at [3:45 PM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

[[Parent](#)]

Your Gonna Need an Ocean, of Calumine Lotion...

You're kidding right?

<http://www.skepticalscience.com/global-warming-positives- ...>

Here's one of the agricultural negatives of global warming.

Rampant, more virulent poison ivy

AGWers are scraping the tarmac...better land and refuel, with some real science!

[Viva la Climate Resistance!](#)

by [jabailo](#) at [3:59 PM on 21 Jan 2008](#)

[[Parent](#)]