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August 8, 2007

12:41:25 pm, Categories: [Earth Science](#), [Global Warming and Climate Change](#), [Politics and Science](#), [Science and the Arts](#), [Public Policy](#), 365 words

Newsweek denies the existence of global warming*

Maybe it's because I don't have the faith in people that I should, but I find this [Newsweek](#) cover really irresponsible. Actually, it's due to the polls cited [in the article](#)--and [those I have seen elsewhere](#)--that suggest that the American public thinks, among other things, that scientists are still trying to determine if global warming is for real and that it's a major issue in the upcoming Presidential election.

Sure, the cover is provocative and gripping, but it also may be doing a disservice to the general public and the people working hard to develop new ways to combat what is realistically the greatest threat to our livelihood: climate change. In fact, global warming isn't just a threat. Combating it *will* require us to dramatically change the way we live. (But, you've heard this all before.)



[More:]

Anyway, as a journalist and magazine junkie, I spend a lot of time combing newsstands for new reads, eye-catching designs and little bites of information that can be gleaned from a cover line, a headline or a quick turn through a publication. So, if I am scanning a magazine rack--assuming I am not a science writer--what am I going to think when I see this *Newsweek* cover?

Probably not much. The Internet hasn't killed all journalism, but it certainly has deeply wounded news-weeklies like *Time*, *US News* and *Newsweek*. Am I going to take the time to read what the asterisk is referencing? Maybe. Another plausible scenario could be: I just read the big print, forget about it and then three weeks later--while I am talking to someone about politics or energy policy or compact fluorescent light bulbs--blurt out, "I read somewhere that global warming is a hoax."

I know I am being a little dramatic, but I think this cover would better

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serve readers (or, more importantly, casual observers), if it said something like: "Minority Report: The Global Warming Deniers".

Hat tip to Charlie Petit over at the [Knight Science Journalism Tracker](#) for bringing this to my attention.

**Actually, Newsweek does not deny the existence of global warming. But, this week's issue does have a story about "well-funded naysayers," who don't believe it's that big of a deal.*

Posted by [Nikhil Swaminathan](#) · 12 comments 

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COMMENTS  - Editor's Pick

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<p>Mark Palmer [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 2:14 pm writes: That's good. Let the human caused warming advocates dictate to the press how the issue should be presented. George Orwell's language goal in 1984, Newspeak, may yet take form.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>Sean Joseph [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 2:18 pm writes: Go to youtube.com and look for "global warming swindle". It'll certainly give you another view of the politics behind this. Remember the global cooling scare of the 1970's anybody?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>Joshua Carlson [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 3:21 pm writes: The scientific community never widely accepted global cooling as a theory. Where as, global warming is widely accepted in the scientific community. It was the media who spread the idea that global cooling was going to happen, not science. Thank you for doing an excellent job of showing the dangers in misrepresented information in the media.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>C Davies [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 3:25 pm writes: Remember when we all thought the world was flat? Anybody? Don't get too excited about this whole "outer space" thing; we've been wrong before.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>CS Samson [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 3:29 pm writes: "what is realistically the greatest threat to our livelihood: climate change" Has SCIAM completely lost their minds!?! You have GOT to be kidding me... Is this serious? I won't mention the elephant in the room, don't worry... Or wait, is it the SCIENTIFIC consensus that global warming is MORE IMPORTANT than anything else?? Chuckle... Nikhil, your hypothetical situation about scanning news racks isn't a "little dramatic" it's idiotic. It assumes everyone is as dumb as you're pretending them to be, but you KNOW that YOU are different, right? Because YOU know SCIENCE!! WOW! When did science become a punchline or some kind of social threat??? You know, maybe people would listen to scientists if they didn't go around making people feel like idiots for not understanding things. Oh wait, you are a journalist aren't you???? When will the journalists of the world unite and save me from my climate change ignorance!!! You think any of the people that you think "need" to hear your pov on the subject are reading it here????</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>John Bennett [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 4:01 pm writes: CS Samson, What, in your opinion, is the greatest threat to our livelihood?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>Eric James [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 4:02 pm writes: Since you said that you read the article and understand that it was not what the cover implied why go to the trouble of writing an article that also gives a false impression of what the article was actually about? The article was actually criticizing the nay sayers and global warming deniers and pointing out the tactics that these well funded groups use to muddy the water on the science. I agree that if you just read the magazine cover and take the title of the article as your total information on the subject you would get the wrong message but if that's all people read is the magazine and newspaper covers then as a society we have more problems then just Global Warming to worry about.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>Meme mine69 [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 4:48 pm writes: As a member of the Union of Concerned Scientists, please listen when I say that the theory of global warming is just a theory. It is unproven and more political science at this point than anything else. It is alarming to see public intellect at such a low point and is approaching that of witch burning. History will not view this kindly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Flag as inappropriate</p>
<p>Brett McGregory [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 4:49 pm writes:</p>

Like all shakedown artists, global warming shills use a fact here and there, glue it all together with cromulent wording to embiggen their esteem. We are surrounded by clever advertising and Newsweek is often found leading the parade. Where is the shock in that, True Believers? Gore gets \$100 MILLION and Timothy Ball gets DEATH THREATS. So much for Gorebal Warming piety...

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CS Samson [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 4:59 pm writes:

Good call Eric, I noticed that and forgot to mention it. I think Nickel was trying to chastise/castigate Newsweek, then feeling one-uped, cleverly turned around and did the same thing because you know "the cover is provocative and gripping" -a nod to sensationalism, the only thing journalists (x-bar) perceive through their insane filter/idea of an "objective" state of mind. Certainly humans aren't given a nod -- "Maybe it's because I don't have the faith in people that I should" -- regarding their inferior intellectual capacity, you mean? Or in general like original sin? I'd bet not the latter... John, the greatest threat to our "livelihood" (I assume this means culture/society with a slight economic connotation as a safety net for "objectivity" again. Can't ignore economics ya!!!!) would be Relativism in all it's forms: cultural, moral, scientific, aesthetic... SCIAM gets goofy journalists to write it's blog who know nothing but Relativism. Nickel here wrote a nice piece on the "intellectual appeal of radiohead" a few years ago. How "academic" of you d-bag!! What a joke. Science, to people like Nickel, is similiar to Radiohead's appeal: "...people no doubt like the way Radiohead's music just feels intelligent and important..." ".it's the audio equivalent to a prize-winning dissertation -- high art in a fast-food culture." "No doubt," Science, is the ultimate "high art" to Nikhil: the Relativists Everest...

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CS Samson [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 5:01 pm writes:

oh, terrorists are pretty bad too...

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Ken Ziegenbein [Member] August 8, 2007 @ 5:18 pm writes:

As a retired meteorologist, I think there should be MORE funding for the so-called 'deniers' from universities and governments, to really do unbiased studies on climate change and its causes. The way it is, there are billions spent on funding studies to further the warming alarmists views and only millions to see if there are other possible explanations we may not even be aware of yet. To say the 'Science is Settled' on any issue is in itself a form of denial - a denial of science's purpose to study all possible angles of any issue. After all, Galileo was also a 'denier' in his day. What if the 'science is settled' people of his day had their way? It just takes one unbiased scientist proving a point to undo thousands of consensus writers. Ken

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