

Science vs. junk science / Robert Whelan, Director, Committee on Population & the Economy.

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Date as postmark

Dear Colleague

SCIENCE vs. JUNK SCIENCE

There are worrying signs that respect for science, and confidence in the ability of scientists to solve the problems which are facing us, are both in decline.

On the one hand we have to confront widespread fears that science has made the world a more dangerous place by opening a Pandora's box of new technologies which are running out of control. On the other hand we have to listen to claims that the 'paradigm' of science is only one way of looking at the world, and that it is not exclusive.

It is hardly surprising that fewer and fewer young people are taking 'A' levels in science subjects, and looking to careers in science.

The extreme factions of the environmental movement bear a large measure of responsibility for the suspicious view of science. Powerful, vested-interest lobby groups have convinced large sections of society - and in particular the media - that the world is going to hell in a handcart. Scares about the climate, about food, about the supposed collapse of natural systems under the impact of man, about causes of cancer which are attributed to just about everything in the modern world, have been manufactured out of a misreading, which is often deliberate, of the scientific data.

Public policies which are pushed through on the back of the scaremongering can and will have the effect of lowering the standard of living for rich and poor alike. The denigration and misuse of science will also result in fewer idealistic young people seeing scientific research as a worthwhile career option. We will all suffer, through the loss of the very people whose efforts might have solved the problems we are all worrying about.

That is why it is so important to counter the junk science of Green extremists and unscrupulous lobbyists with the real science based upon a study of the empirical evidence.

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I am enclosing with this letter a short catalogue of books which set out to achieve this. Dixy Lee Ray (who died in the New Year) established a great reputation a debunker of junk science with her best-selling books *Trashing the Planet* and *Environmental Overkill*. She looks at the real state of scientific research into such areas as global warming, the ozone layer, nuclear power, DDT and other chemicals. It bears little relation to the popular myths!

Michael Fumento has also established a reputation for himself as one of the leading science writers of our time. His book *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS* was effectively suppressed in its first hardback edition by the powerful AIDS lobby. Now that all of his predictions have been proved true, and the 'pandemic' of AIDS is clearly never going to occur in the West, a new and revised paperback edition has appeared and is selling well. His latest book *Science Under Siege* reveals in detail the unscrupulous tactics of lobbyists, some section of the media and even - regrettably - some scientists to distort the data on a series of issues in order to achieve policy objectives.

I hope that you will find these books interesting. It is our intention to promote other titles on subjects of scientific interest, especially relating to issues which are currently the subject of public policy debate, with a view to encouraging a genuine spirit of scientific enquiry into contemporary problems and their solutions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Whelan', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

ROBERT WHELAN
Director