

Heartland vs. Climategate

by Walter Starck

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Although climate alarmists have attempted to present the public release of the Heartland Institute documents as being a scandal for climate sceptics comparable to the one Climategate has been for AGW proponents, the comparison is spurious in several key respects:

- Heartland is a private advocacy group, whereas Climategate involved publicly funded scientific research.
- Climategate entailed a legal and ethical obligation to FOI. Heartland does not.
- The Heartland documents were obtained by criminal impersonation of a Heartland board member. It is unknown if the Climategate documents were obtained illegally or were released by a whistle blower.
- No malfeasance was revealed in the Heartland documents. The Climategate documents exposed multiple ongoing instances of scientific misconduct and conspiracy to illegally thwart FOI requests.
- The only Heartland document suggesting anything less than entirely ethical intent has been denounced as a fabrication and there is strong evidence to support this claim. The authenticity of the Climategate documents has never been denied by any of those involved.
- The very modest remuneration provided by Heartland to a few researchers for their assistance becomes a pathetic joke in contrast to the multiple orders of magnitude greater personal remuneration plus million dollar research grants received by leading climate alarmists.

The only significant parallel between the Heartland and the Climategate affairs has been in the behaviour of the climate alarmists themselves. In both instances they have:

- Been exposed to have blatantly lied
- Committed criminal offences
- Maliciously denigrated any who dare to question their claims
- Demonstrated a casual disregard for scientific and ethical norms
- Repeatedly attempted to excuse and even justify gross malfeasance by climate alarmists

Ironically the perpetrator of the Heartland fraud, Dr. Peter Gleick, was head of the science integrity task force of the American Geophysical Union and has often lectured on the subject. Lest one might be disposed to perceive the Heartland episode as only a momentary lapse in judgement by a frustrated overwrought individual, the widespread justification and approval from the alarmist community of both Gleick's actions and those of the Climategate researchers removes any doubt that an utter corruption of scientific integrity is in fact endemic in climate research.

In terms of absolute certainty despite only weak and conflicting evidence, an expressed desire to severely punish any dissent, a willingness to ignore normal ethical constraints and to indulge themselves in self-stimulated paroxysms of righteousness, the climate alarmists have managed to rival the extremes of religious fundamentalism. Starting with the handicap of an extended exposure to scientific rationality, their achievement in overcoming reason and evidence has been remarkable. When the time comes for assessment of responsibility in the decline of Western civilisation, it would be a shame if the proponents of postmodern philosophy in the academy did not finally receive the recognition they so justly deserve.