

03 Propaganda as Science

I have a keen ear for science in the news. I also have a keen ear for propaganda, earned by listening for hours, in my younger days, to Radio Pyongyang and Radio Moscow. Those stations never managed to say anything which was true.

Trouble is, the news in the US is sounding the same these days. National radio and TV outlets are no longer just reporting, they are commentating, and they are no longer using their own people to find stories, they sit back and wait for activists to bring stories to them.

The worst kind of the propaganda is science propaganda, usually because the science is so poor the scientists can't convince their colleagues they are right.

Global warming is one of them. I just described how I did the analysis of the US thermometer data, and the warming is very small, but that doesn't suit the political needs of the alarmists and the news people remain completely gullible.

In fact, many "science" topics, none of which can be proven (multiverse, string theory, dark energy, dark matter) all lead the news, because to be believed the "scientist" must engage in propaganda to be believed. If we can really prove something, we just prove it and move on. Fake science needs propaganda to survive.

“ The researches of many commentators have already thrown much darkness on this subject, and it is probable that, if they continue, we shall soon know nothing at all about it.

— Mark Twain

In *The Sciences*, September-October 1989.

In the field we have a term: "hand-waving." During a seminar, when the presenter begins to wave their hands about, we know they don't believe what they are saying, and they try to impress on the audience how believable it is by gesticulating more towards the audience, trying to push the idea toward us. When I see handwaving, I generally tune out. I know it's a lie. Sometimes they wave sideways when asked a challenging question. "This is not the answer you are looking for."



“ There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact.

Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

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