

= Climate Change Denial : Heads in the Sand =

Climate Change Denial : Heads in the Sand is a non-fiction book about climate change denial , coauthored by Haydn Washington and John Cook , with a foreword by Naomi Oreskes . Washington had a background in environmental science prior to authoring the work , and Cook was educated in physics and founded the website Skeptical Science which compiles peer-reviewed evidence of global warming . The book was first published in hardcover and paperback formats in 2011 by Earthscan , a division of Routledge .

The book presents an in-depth analysis and refutation of climate change denial , going over several arguments point-by-point and disproving them with peer-reviewed evidence from the scientific consensus for climate change . The authors assert that those denying climate change engage in tactics including cherry picking data purported to support their specific viewpoints , and attacking the integrity of climate scientists . They use social science theory to examine the phenomenon of climate change denial in the wider public , and call this phenomenon a form of pathology .

The book traces financial support for climate change denial to the fossil fuel industry , asserting these companies have attempted to influence public opinion on the matter . Washington and Cook write that politicians have a tendency to use weasel words as part of a propaganda tactic through use of spin , as a way to deflect public interest away from climate change and remain passive on the issue . The authors conclude that if the public ceased engaging in denial , the problem of climate change could be realistically addressed .

For his research on the book , and efforts in communicating the essence of climate change science to the general public , John Cook won the 2011 Australian Museum Eureka Prize for Advancement of Climate Change Knowledge . Climate Change Denial received a positive reception in reviews from publications including : The Ecologist , ECOS magazine , academic journal Natures Sciences Sociétés , the journal Education published by the New South Wales Teachers Federation , . An article in The New American was critical , describing the labels of " deniers " and " denialists " as cruel and forms of character assassination .

= = Background = =

The book was coauthored by Australian environmental science researchers Haydn Washington and John Cook . Washington worked for over 30 years as an environmental scientist prior to writing the book . His previously published books on the subject of environmental science include : Ecosolutions (1991) , A Sense of Wonder (2002) , and The Wilderness Knot (2009) . In 2015 , Washington was a Visiting Fellow with the Institute of Environmental Studies at the University of New South Wales .

Cook 's education includes a background in physics . Prior to his work on the book , Cook founded the website Skeptical Science , which compiles peer-reviewed evidence of climate change . He placed on the site the most common assertions made by individuals arguing against the scientific consensus for climate change , with evidence to refute each point they made . After the publication of Climate Change Denial : Heads in the Sand , Cook coauthored another book on the subject , Climate Change Science : A Modern Synthesis : Volume 1 ? The Physical Climate (2013) . In 2015 , Cook served as the climate communication fellow at the University of Queensland .

Climate Change Denial : Heads in the Sand was first published in 2011 by Earthscan , a division of Routledge . Both hardcover and paperback editions were released in April 2011 . It was released the same year by the publisher in an electronic book format . A second eBook release was published by Routledge in 2012 . The book was made available via Kindle by Amazon.com in May 2013 .

= = Contents summary = =

Climate Change Denial : Heads in the Sand presents a detailed analysis and refutation of climate

change denial . In her foreword to the book , Naomi Oreskes writes that people fall victim to the phenomenon of denial due to feeling frightened . The book examines several arguments against global warming , and uses peer @-@ reviewed evidence from the scientific consensus to back @-@ up rationale for disputing the validity of each argument . The methodology of those denying climate change is assessed , including : cherry picking data purporting to support their specific viewpoints , maintaining a high bar for evidence of climate change by those denying it , and criticism of the values of climate scientists themselves . The book puts forth an explanation why certain individuals , and the wider public , have a tendency to deny the scientific consensus for climate change .

The authors discuss the broader concept of denial using social science theory , noting its occurrence appears in society when individuals are frightened or ashamed of their actions . They write that these motivations , when expanded from an individual to wider society , present themselves as a form of disease . The book identifies climate change denial itself as a pathology afflicting the culture of the planet . The authors lament that an inverse relationship exists between an increasing scientific consensus regarding climate change , and a simultaneous increase in denial within the greater public about the same issue .

The book identifies a corporate underpinning influencing public opinion by way of companies which derive profit from the fossil fuel industry . Washington and Cook write that politicians often use weasel words as a form of spin and propaganda , in order to act as if they are going to do something about climate change , while in actuality remaining passive on the issue . The authors go on to identify a greater level of denial ? within the wider public itself . They argue that society enables denial of climate science through inaction and resistance to the scientific consensus . The authors conclude that if the public stopped denying climate change , the problem itself could realistically be significantly addressed .

= = Reception = =

The book 's coauthor John Cook won the 2011 Eureka Prize for Advancement of Climate Change Knowledge , awarded by the New South Wales Government as part of the Australian Museum Eureka Prizes , and was honoured for his role in communicating the essence of climate change science to the general public . Director of the University of Queensland Global Change Institute , Professor Ove Hoegh @-@ Guldberg , cited Cook 's research and authorship of Climate Change Denial : Heads in the Sand as the rationale behind him winning the award .

The Ecologist reviewed the book and described it as : " well researched and painstakingly footnoted " . The review concluded : Climate Change Denial is a wise and timely book It deserves an audience " . Writing for ECOS magazine , Mary @-@ Lou Considine wrote that the book " dissects objections to the peer @-@ reviewed science " in " forensic detail " . Considine recommended the book for those who had previously visited the website Skeptical Science and subsequently wanted to learn more about the wider topic discussed on the site .

In a review of the book by the academic journal Natures Sciences Sociétés , the authors ' thesis was praised for its ability to bring reason to their analysis : " This book shows how we can break through denial , accept reality , and thus solve the climate crisis " . Natures Sciences Sociétés recommended the work for multiple stakeholders , concluding : " It will engage scientists , university students , climate change activists as well as the general public seeking to roll back denial and act " .

Janine Kitson reviewed the book for the journal Education , a publication of the New South Wales Teachers Federation . Kitson described the work as timely and important within the context of a need for the public to act before a point of no return : " This is a crucial book to read before runaway climate change is truly beyond our control " . Her review concluded : " One can only hope that this book will be read by climate deniers so we can start the challenging journey to an ecologically sustainable future " .

In The New American , contributor William F. Jasper criticised the book 's authors ' characterization of those who engage in climate change denial as character assassination . He wrote that the labels " deniers " and " denialists " were non @-@ constructive and cruel . Jasper disputed the book 's

thesis that individuals who disagreed with anthropogenic global warming were organised and financed by the fossil fuel industry .