

Reflections on Data Science 2023

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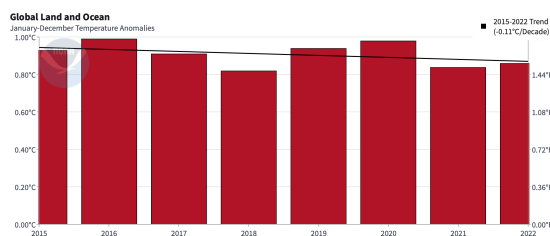
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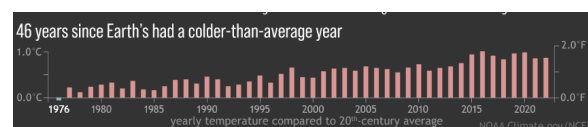
Steve Milloy, the author of the [tweet](#), argues that global warming caused by CO2 emissions is a hoax, based on a figure comparing yearly temperature to the 20th-century average. He includes a regression line to support his claim of a cooling trend and a declining temperature rate. However, Milloy's **visualization is misleading**. Figure 1 presents both Milloy's figure and the original figure from the [NOAA's press release](#), contradicting his assertions.

The original figure intends to demonstrate that it has been 46 years since the average yearly temperature was cooler than the 20th-century average. Furthermore, it highlights that the years 2014 to 2022 rank among the ten warmest years. Thus, the author distorts the visualization by selectively zooming in on a small portion of the original figure, obscuring the overall long-term warming trend. Additionally, Professor of geosciences at Princeton University Gabriel Vecchi explains in one of the [articles](#) that climate patterns such as [El Niño and La Niña](#) can cause temporary surface warming and cooling, resulting in fluctuations in the warming rate over short periods. Consequently, cherry-picking specific timeframes to portray a trend is an invalid approach.

Global warming is an ongoing and significant issue, with substantial efforts already undertaken. However, much work remains, and politicians play a critical role in driving change to mitigate global warming. To facilitate the implementation of measures by politicians, it is essential to ensure the public is well-informed. Unfortunately, tweets like the one by Steve Milloy only deepen divisions among people's opinions instead of fostering unity. As a consequence, progress towards achieving zero CO2 emissions is hindered, slowing down potential advancements.



(a) Steve Milloy's figure used in his [tweet](#).



(b) Original figure from [NOAA's press release](#).

Figure 1: Supporting evidence for the third entry.