



Written by [James Murphy](#) on January 20, 2024

Michael Mann's Defamation Trial Against Mark Steyn Heats Up

Climate scientist Michael Mann, the creator of the widely discredited "hockey-stick" graph that featured so prominently in Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth*, is again in the news, as his trial claiming defamation by Canadian writer Mark Steyn and engineer Rand Simberg finally began in earnest this week in Washington, D.C.

Mann alleges that Steyn and Simberg libeled him over a decade ago with their criticism of his work on the infamous hockey-stick graph and Penn State University's seeming cover-up of the science that made the graph possible. Mann used proxy data, specifically tree rings, to arrive at data points for a thousand years before switching to *actual* temperature data at approximately 1960. The resulting graph resembled a hockey stick and showed that temperatures have increased rapidly since the industrial age began.

The same graph featured prominently in the Climategate email scandal when Phil Jones, a climatologist at the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia, referred to Mann's method as "[Mike's Nature trick](#)."

Steyn's criticism of Mann's work in a blog post on *National Review* was definitely acerbic, comparing Penn State's cover-up of Mann's methods to the cover-up of the Jerry Sandusky sex abuse scandal, which also involved Penn State and was ongoing at the time.

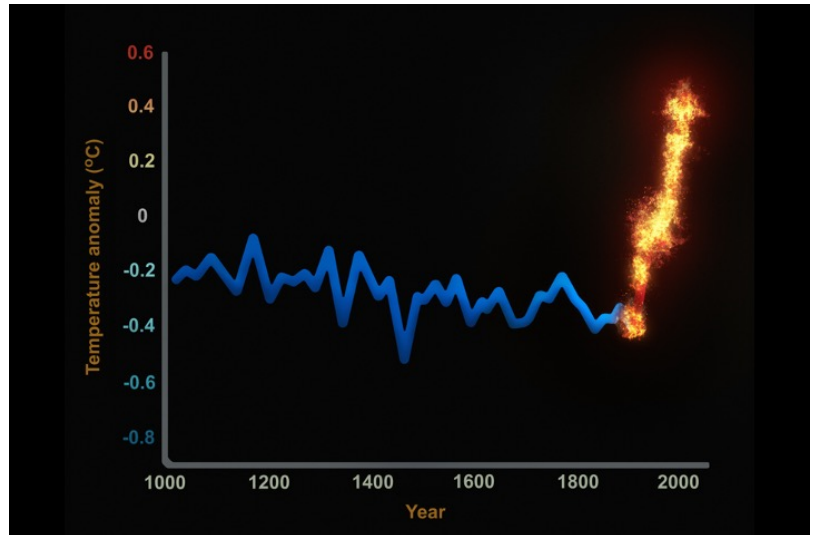
In addition, Steyn referred to Mann's work on the hockey-stick graph as "fraudulent."

Mann and his legal team originally included in the suit *National Review* and the Competitive Enterprise Institute, which Steyn quoted in his post. Both entities were dropped from the suit in 2021, however, because neither Steyn or Simberg was an employee of those companies.

In a controversial move, Steyn is acting as his own attorney, while Mann is represented by a team of lawyers. On the plus side, we may be treated to Steyn being allowed to question Mann in court.

In Steyn's opinion, Mann's harassment is not only an attack against him, but against the very concept of free speech.

"In my world, I can write something, Mr Simberg can write something, and Mr Mann can write something — and you're free to read all or none, and decide what weight to attach to all or none. But, in Mr Mann's world, there's his take — and everyone else has to be hockey-sticked into submission and



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silence,” Steyn [reportedly said](#) in court. “He’s a classic example of the guy who can dish it out but can’t take it.”

In a shot across the bow of Mann’s credibility, Steyn brought up the fact that Mann claims to have won a Nobel Prize, a claim disputed by the Nobel Committee itself. In reality, Mann was a part of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which shared a Nobel Peace Prize for political activism in 2007 with Al Gore.

“‘Michael Mann has never been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize’ — that’s a direct quote from the then Director of the Nobel Institute in Norway, Geir Lundestad,” Steyn reportedly told the court. “He’s not a Nobel Prize recipient. A decade after he was told to cut it out by the actual winner of the Nobel prize, [Mann] continues to promote one of the most brazen of scientific frauds — that he is of the same rank as Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, [and] Francis Crick.”

Mann’s suit against Steyn and Simberg is reminiscent of his failed attempt to pursue a libel claim against Canadian climate scientist Tim Ball. Ball had made statements that Mann and his cohorts at East Anglia were possibly guilty of fraud for their research on the hockey-stick graph. Ball eventually [prevailed](#) in the suit in 2019 after a judge found that Mann and his legal team engaged in an “inordinate delay” of the proceedings.

Mann was ordered to pay Ball’s legal costs, but never did as the Canadian court, which dismissed the case, had no way to impel the American scientist to pay. Ball died in 2022.

The case against Steyn is structured similarly in that Mann and his team have contrived to stall and delay proceedings, possibly hoping that Steyn will simply give up due to the costs and trouble associated with fighting the frivolous lawsuit.

Mann and his climate-zealot ilk are seeking to impose a kind of self-censorship on their critics. If anyone is effective in questioning the absolute lie of emissions-driven climate change, they can simply be sued, making it too uncomfortable and too expensive to keep questioning the fraudulent notion in any meaningful way.



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