



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on March 1, 2012

“Peter Gleick Lied, But ...” — Global-warming Alarmists Justify His Crime, Deception

For those who may have missed the [story](#) over the past couple of weeks, Dr. Peter Gleick, who is an environmental activist and president of the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security, has admitted to stealing confidential documents from the Heartland Institute, a libertarian think tank in Chicago that challenges the accuracy of the theory of AGW.

James Garvey answers his rhetorical headline question with this opening subtitle statement: “Gleick has been criticised for how [sic] his Heartland Institute probe, but perhaps more climate scientists should play dirty.”

Aside from the obvious mistake of either an unintended extra word (“how”) or, perhaps, a missing word or two, the striking thing about Garvey’s subtitle sentence is the audacity with which he publicly justifies and champions Gleick’s criminal and immoral actions, and then suggests that other climate scientists follow his example and “play dirty.”

Of course, for those who are the least bit familiar with the “Climategate” e-mail scandals (for background, see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) it is quite apparent that many of the most vociferous climate alarmists with science degrees and occupying some of the most influential taxpayer-funded institutions have been “playing dirty” for a very long time. As the Climategate e-mails and subsequent revelations have shown, some of the “scientists” in prestigious and powerful positions have engaged in massive fraud and have colluded and conspired to destroy the careers and reputations of scientific colleagues that disagree with them. Some of the top names in AGW alarmism have been exposed for grossly unethical — and in some cases criminal — activity, such as inventing, fabricating, twisting, and bending data to support their theories; refusing to make their data available to other scientists for verification; refusing to comply with Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests; destroying, hiding, and “losing” data that would expose their unethical activities and discredit their theories; corrupting the peer review process to prevent scientists that don’t support AGW alarmism from being published in scientific journals; and attacking the integrity of scientists who don’t share their alarmist views and attempting to damage their reputations.

But, back to Garvey, who, it should be noted, in addition to writing for the *Guardian*, also serves as secretary of Britain’s Royal Institute of Philosophy. Moreover, he is also the author of a book entitled, *The Ethics of Climate Change*, which may make for an interesting read, in light of the “ethics” he espouses in his defense of the disgraced Dr. Gleick.

Garvey begins his Gleick defense thusly:





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A lie is a lie. There may be other considerations, but that's main motivation behind the condemnation of Peter Gleick

He's been criticised for a lack of scientific integrity, and those who fund his post are "concerned about any allegations of unethical conduct". Everyone is having a go at Gleick, including Gleick: he called his actions a lapse of "professional judgment and ethics". Are his actions wrong just because he lied?

Garvey then makes a ridiculously tortured analogy comparing Gleick's actions to a situation in which one might lie to a drunk friend in order to save his life. Garvey writes:

Suppose you stop a friend from driving after he's had too many drinks by slipping his keys in your pocket and lying about it until you manage to drive him home yourself. Sometimes lying is the right thing to do — a lie isn't just wrong full stop. We think through the moral side of our lives with a mixed bag of ideas, but consequences and intentions have a central place here. Maybe lying about the keys is morally right because the consequences of lying are better than the consequences of telling the truth. Or maybe the lie was right because of your intentions — you were trying to prevent harm coming to your friend, not trying to steal his car.

"Isn't his lie justified by the good that it does?" he asks. "You can see where I'm headed," says Garvey.

Yes, we can see you're headed off an ethical cliff, Mr. Garvey — and attempting to justify it all the way.

"Gleick's intentions matter when we try to work out whether he was wrong to lie," Garvey insists. "It's worth noticing that he wasn't lying for personal gain. What resonates for me, though, are the consequences of his action. If Gleick frustrates the efforts of Heartland, isn't his lie justified by the good that it does?"

This writer doesn't claim to know, from the evidence currently available, what specific intentions and motivations may have propelled Gleick's actions, but it would be unwise to accept Garvey's claim that "personal gain" was not one of them. First of all, Gleick and other alarmists like him have already benefited personally, with lavish government, foundation, and corporate funding for their alarmist "research" and propaganda efforts. The climate-change industry has become a multi-billion dollar business, and one that has been very profitable to those who toe the AGW party line.

Gleick and others like him have been elevated to "celebrity scientist" status by their AGW alarmist allies in the major liberal-left media. Honors, awards, book deals, movie and documentary deals, handsome salaries and perks, speaker fees, consulting fees, expense paid trips to exotic venues (with lavish accommodations) for international conferences on saving the world from CO2 — all this, and much more, has been showered on Gleick and company. And let us not forget what may be the most important, and perhaps most coveted, personal gain enjoyed by Gleick and his alarmist confreres: political power. Over the past two decades, climate scientists have become the new pharonic priesthood to the new would-be global Pharaohs, accruing political power undreamed of by any previous generation of scientists. They claim that the dire "crisis" caused by AGW has conferred on them a mandate to re-engineer human society and guide the planet to sustainable salvation.

Garvey, apparently, is so obsessed with his role as a self-appointed, self-anointed savior that he doesn't realize his apologia for Gleick will be understood by anyone with an atom of conscience as a self-indicting argument. Garvey argues:

The documents, if authentic, show that Heartland takes money — in secret — from people who have something to gain by the idea that climate science is uncertain, and then spread that idea



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with enthusiasm.

Several points of note:

- 1) Garvey's "if authentic" comment shows that he, like many others, rushed to print what they thought would be damaging "evidence" without exercising due diligence to ascertain authenticity;
- 2) According to the [Heartland Institute](#), at least one of the documents posted on the Internet by Gleick and his allies is a fake and others may have been altered;
- 3) "Heartland takes money — in secret": The AGW proponents repeatedly try to shift attention from the scientific arguments — which they are losing — to the straw man argument that their opponents are evil shills for Big Oil, Big Coal, and other industry groups. The irony and hypocrisy of this charge is that it is the alarmists who are rolling in the illicit cash — both private and public — while the more reserved climate realists are paupers by comparison. Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.) [pointed out](#) in 2007 that the promoters of global-warming panic enjoyed a monumental funding advantage over the scientific realists. The alarmists had received a whopping \$50 *billion*, compared to a paltry \$19 *million* in total funding for the skeptical AGW realists. In addition to the huge disparity in funding, there is also the issue of transparency. In this regard, it is noteworthy that many of the greenies screaming the loudest about "secret" funding from entities that "have something to gain" are themselves secretive about their own funding, even though they, arguably, have a much greater obligation to be transparent, since so much of their funding is from government sources, i.e., the taxpayers, to whom they owe an accounting. And much of their funding from corporate sources is aimed at legislating policies that will enrich the few who are politically connected, at the expense of the vast majority of the inhabitants of the planet. But even the huge multi-billion-dollar gravy train the AGW alarmists have enjoyed thus far is a pittance next to the *trillions* they expect to reap in various schemes such as the proposed "[Climate Debt](#)" transfers and the "carbon credit exchange" scam pushed by Al Gore and Goldman Sachs (see [here](#) and [here](#).)

There is yet another important point concerning Garvey's obsessing over Heartland's "secret" funding. Heartland spokesmen have pointed out that in the past when they have made their donor information public, green activists have targeted those donors for campaigns of harassment. Like the militant homosexual lobby, the militant greenies have shown that they can be malicious and vindictive. No organization is going to willingly subject their donors to such treatment.

Garvey's rant attempts to recycle one embarrassingly discredited statement after another. He continues: "Do I actually need to say this in 2012? There is no controversy in the scientific community about Heartland's target: the fact of warming and the human role played in it."

Simply reciting Al Gore's mantras, "the science is settled," "no controversy," and "scientific consensus," is wearing thin; [polls show](#) fewer and fewer people are buying it. And one of the reasons they aren't buying it is that they are finding that the AGW "scientific consensus" claim is totally bogus. Aside from the fact that scientific truth is not determined by consensus (and there are many examples of past consensus on scientific issues that have later proven to be wrong), it simply is not true that there "is no controversy in the scientific community" over AGW.

As we have [reported](#) previously, the so-called "consensus" is a fiction:

Large numbers of climatologists, paleoclimatologists, meteorologists, atmospheric physicists, geophysicists, oceanographers, geologists, and scientists in every virtually every field have been calling into question the claims of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)



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and the politicization of IPCC "science" to promote costly and draconian global policies. Some of the IPCC's most severe critics are scientists who have served as authors and expert reviewers of IPCC reports and have witnessed from the inside the blatant, hardball politics masquerading as science.

In the above-mentioned article we cited a U.S. Senate report quoting over 700 eminent international scientists questioning and challenging the AGW "consensus." We also reported again on the 31,000 American scientists who have signed onto a petition challenging the claimed consensus and urging the U.S. government to reject the kinds of radical civilization-altering policies being proposed by the United Nations and its AGW apostles. This does not add up to "no controversy" in any reasonable calculation.

More recently, a stellar lineup of 16 distinguished international scientists signed onto a January 27, 2012 op-ed letter for the *Wall Street Journal* entitled, ["No Need to Panic About Global Warming,"](#) that effectively tackles some of the false assumptions and claims of the AGW industrial complex. Their letter elicited predictable responses from the alarmists, which were answered in a follow-up letter (["Concerned Scientists Reply on Global Warming"](#)) on February 21, 2012.

Garvey winds up his ends-justify-the-means defense of Gleick's actions with some arguments that will no doubt leave many of his fellow AGW alarmists uncomfortable, at the minimum. However, anyone with even a minimally formed conscience should be outraged over, not merely uncomfortable with, Gleick's actions, and equally incensed with defenders such as Garvey who attempt to justify them. Garvey claims:

What Heartland is doing is harmful, because it gets in the way of public consensus and action. Was Gleick right to lie to expose Heartland and maybe stop it from causing further delay to action on climate change? If his lie has good effects overall — if those who take Heartland's money to push scepticism are dismissed as shills, if donors pull funding after being exposed in the press — then perhaps on balance he did the right thing.

What is Heartland doing that is so evil as to justify criminal activity against it? Well, it's getting "in the way of public consensus and action" and "causing further delay to action on climate change." Horrors! Garvey can cite nothing more sinister than that? And precisely how is Heartland carrying out these nefarious activities? By publishing papers and books by distinguished scientists and sponsoring conferences that have brought together hundreds of these scientists from all corners of the world to discuss and debate climate issues. Isn't that what real science is all about?

This writer attended Heartland's first International Conference on Climate Change in New York City in March 2008. As *The New American* [reported](#) at the time, the conference featured an impressive array of renowned scientists and climate researchers who presented serious lectures and papers, including some major blockbuster discoveries. This was not an homogenous coagulation of automaton "deniers" marching in lock-step; there was much disagreement over many scientific questions related to climate. But the tone was one of civility and respectful collegiality, in marked contrast to the Stalinist dogmatic group-think and the grab-you-by-the-throat apocalyptic fervor typical of the Al Gore/IPCC/Peter Gleick AGW panic choir.

Garvey concludes his *Guardian* piece with this equivocating Q&A:

Did Gleick go too far? I'm not sure he did, but I do wonder whether some climate scientists go anywhere near far enough.

Garvey and Gleick both subscribe, apparently, to the ethics of Gleick's mentor at Stanford University,



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Dr. Stephen Schneider, one of the founding fathers of AGW alarmism (who earlier had gained notoriety as a fervent apostle of apocalyptic global cooling). Schneider made one of his most infamous statements in *Discover* magazine in 1989, where he rationalized dishonesty and deception in order “to reduce the risk of potentially disastrous climate change.” Said Prof. Schneider:

To do that we have to get some broad-based support, to capture the public’s imagination. That, of course, entails getting loads of media coverage. So we have to offer up scary scenarios, make simplified, dramatic statements, and make little mention of any doubts we might have. This double ethical bind which we frequently find ourselves in cannot be solved by any formula. Each of us has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest.

Clearly, in the ethical constructs of Schneider, Gleick, and Garvey, being effective in the cause of climate-change activism readily trumps being honest.



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