

Mr. Harris Has It Wrong on Climate Change

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Tom Harris, mechanical engineer (not a climate scientist), wrote [an op-ed yesterday](#) with great magical finesse, pulling pigeons out of his hat and turtle doves from up his sleeve, while he tried to defend lawyer Scott Pruitt's climate change denial. Mr. Pruitt knows nothing about science except perhaps a little political science. As defenders of Mr. Pruitt's climate change misstatements, Mr. Harris quoted two philosophy professors.

You can't make this stuff up.

It gets better. For his greatest sleight of hand, Mr. Harris cited an applied mathematician Chris Essex who published peer-reviewed articles in applied mathematics, but he's got no climate science credentials, and I believe everything he's ever written about climate science has been discredited. Mr. Essex has a lengthy history of spreading climate change misinformation. Readers can see a summary of his activities at [desmogblog.com](#) including his affiliations with fossil-fuel funded think tanks — like the Fraser Institute (which received at least \$500,000 from Koch brothers' foundations), and the notorious heavily fossil-fuel funded Heartland Institute.

Some guys really know how to feather their nest eggs.

By the way, one of the philosophy profs has his own desmogblog page of climate change misinformation, and also is active with Heartland Institute. My husband's grandmother — a simple immigrant — used to mispronounce a common English expression as "birds of a fender." We're headed for a serious climate change fender bender if we keep listening to these turkeys.

Climate science is a deep, highly technical field that has developed over approximately 200 years, and when it's explained clearly by skilled climate educators, the evidence is compelling and the conclusions are clear.

When I first started volunteering with Citizens' Climate Lobby, I knew nothing at all about climate science — nothing, except that the people I trust most in life were very concerned about it. I set them as my North Star and started reading. For me, one particular website, [skepticalscience.com](#), was always my first place to go to have confusion cleared up. The writers and teachers at [skepticalscience.com](#) explain clearly the 200-year history of climate science, and they clarify popular myths that people like Mr. Harris toss out, but that just aren't true. They explain these myths at basic, intermediate and advanced levels.

What impresses me about them is they just want to help me, a non-scientist, understand. One day, I went to their site looking for an explanation to a new climate change explanation someone had written about in a newspaper article. The new idea smelled false to me, but I couldn't explain why. When I couldn't find this new myth on their

website, I sent them an email asking for help, and they responded within 24 hours.

I also make a point of reading all articles written by [Dana Nuccitelli](#) because he reliably presents the latest developments at a level I can follow. I learned to follow the money: when major banks and accounting firms have climate change departments, it's a sign that they take the risks seriously. When MunichRe, the world's largest reinsurance company, makes a public statement saying that flooding and storms are progressing rapidly and that "It is amazing how closely these developments fit with the outcomes of climate models..." it means that climate models have become very reliable; insurance companies with their money at risk say so. Finally, despite climate change's seriousness, I need to laugh once in awhile too — so I read [climate cartoons by Tom Toles](#).

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