

# Contrarians are not Skeptics

What most folks don't understand is that the "so-called" scientists who speak out against climate change science - aren't really scientists at all. They are generally paid "consultants" fulfilling a contract. Or they are people like Pat Micheals who's Governor has asked that he stop using the title given him of State Climatologist for Virginia and who is widely accepted as having had to leave his job because of funding controversies resulting form energy companies pay him for his opinion.

Skeptics area natural part of scientific theory development, but contrarians are not skeptics. Science cannot exist without the appropriate testing of facts that the skeptics questioning brings forth. Contrarians continue with their same line of questioning after their questions have been answered - regardless of the outcome of the answer. Skeptics terminate a line of questioning once the question is answered.

The warm spell of the 1920s and 30s is an excellent example. Numerous papers have been written that answer the question about which period in history was warmer - today or the 20's and 30's. The skeptic's claim was one of the first widespread contrarian debates. It has been answered numerous times, each time definitively. Today's average global temperatures, including the Arctic, are warmer than they were in the 20's and 30's. Yet at every press worthy change in climate, the contrarians are there to have their say - regardless of how many times their lien of reasoning has been proven wrong. Last summer when the Arctic sea-ice broke the previous record, which was a big one, set in 2006, and when last years records was so large - 23% greater than the previous record, the contrarians were still there with their claim that climate was warmer in the 20s and 30's.

This issue is so old now that climate scientist have proven that it is warmer now than it was during the 1920's and 30's, than it is warmer now that it was warmer during the Medieval Warm Period 150 to 450 years ago, than it is warmer now than it was during the Holocene Climate Optimum 7,000 to 9,000 years ago, that it is warmer now that it was during the Penultimate Interglacial 100,000 years ago, that it is as warm now as it was over 400,000 years ago – that's three ice ages ago. Today, temperatures are within 1 degrees C of being as warm as they have been over the last one million years. Reference: Hansen, et. al., Director, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, Global Temperature Change, 1988 to present, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, September 2006.

## **Climate sceptic quits over 'lack of academic freedom'**

Patrick Michaels, one of the most controversial sceptics on global warming, retired from his post as state climatologist for Virginia earlier this summer, citing concerns about academic freedom.

Michaels, an environmental scientist at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, which co-hosts the state's climatology office, has been criticized for playing down the risks of global warming. As a result, Virginia's Democratic governor, Timothy Kaine, last year asked him not to use the title of state climatologist.

After news of his resignation broke last week, Michaels released a statement saying it was "impossible to maintain academic freedom" because his budget — and his salary — had become politicized. Joseph Ziemann, who chairs the university's environmental sciences department, counters that it was the consulting Michaels did for energy companies that got him into trouble. The University of Virginia has appointed Jerry Stenger to head the climatology office, although his official title is research coordinator.

Note: NatureNews is published by the academic journal *Nature*, online, on a weekly basis.

Patrick Michaels was one of the last big climate skeptics. He is a widely published op-ed author, who seems to rarely publish in scholarly journals. He is a member of two widely accepted hyper-conservative think tanks - the Marshall Institute and the Cato Institute. The periodical he founded to publish climate contrarians papers was funded by Western Fuels.