



# ELECTRONOTES

WEBNOTE 29

1/25/2016

ENWN-29

## JERRY COYNE: REPREHENSIBLE CENSOR

-by Bernie Hutchins, January 2016

It is time to assemble and comment on a collection of exchanges. This is certainly “off topic” for our usual fare. Perhaps not that foreign for an EN Webnote! Further, central here is the issue of “Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming” (CAGW) which has been peripherally (sometimes directly) covered here as a signal processing and data analysis (engineering) issue [1-5]. The subject involves Professor Jerry Coyne of U. Chicago (Biology), who I have unhappily found to be a thin-skinned, reprehensible, censor and bully, as have others apparently also so found him thus [6-8], although they from a perspective generally somewhat different from mine. The time frame is largely summer of 2015.

First of all, Jerry is an atheist. Well, so am I. I delight to report an admiration of such atheist writers as Dawkins [9], Hitchens [10], and Harris [11], as well as the delightful (comedic) presentations of Julia Sweeney [Google]. It is a problematic thing to call oneself an “Atheist”, as Sweeney points out: when informing her mother of her “conversion” her mother bellowed, “not believing in *God* is one thing, but an *ATHEIST*?” Such it is that many “non-believers” prefer “non-theists” or “free-thinker” or even a supposed half-way “agnostic” to avoid the baggage. Recent polls say 25% of Americans are “un-affiliated” with much higher percentages in other areas of the world. My feeling is that a fully candid canvassing would show substantially higher counts. But – no matter – the relevance here is that Jerry Coyne and I would largely agree on this basic world view. Thus what many folks quarrel with him about (those who have even heard of him) is not an issue here. And he is supposedly an academic, so one would have expected an accord on agreeing to disagree, if issues arose.

Jerry has written two books that I know of [12, 13] the first of which I have not read. (I believe he also has a chapter in a compendium edited by John Brockman, but which I have misplaced). My exposure to Coyne is thus limited to one book, but I found the book to

be far inferior to Dawkins, Hitchens, or Harris who do (admittedly), all three, write extremely well on the same subjects Coyne does. (Based on his writing style, and subsequent behavior, it is very clear that he also lacks even a rudimentary sense of humor, so no comparison to Sweeny is thinkable!)

So my experience here relates to his second book [13]

### ***Faith Versus Fact: Why Science and Religion Are Incompatible***

which I purchased from Amazon June 8, 2015 and reviewed: “Why Coyne does not inspire confidence in his intellectual efforts”, July 8, 2015 [14].

*At this point, it will be useful to first reprint the Amazon review (Chronologically, it’s Document 8); as it comprehensively establishes perspective and details. Chronologically (as is evident from what the review says) it came later. Documents reprinted below each end with a row of five stars. My annotations added here are in italics. Colors are arbitrary but serve to hold full documents together. A few edits are in [ ]. Here is the review:*

### **DOCUMENT 8 Hutchins Review (July 8, 2015) of Coyne 2015 [14]**

8 of 23 people found the following review helpful

3.0 out of 5 stars

“Why Coyne does not inspire confidence in his intellectual efforts”

By B. Hutchins on July 8, 2015

Format: Hardcover Verified Purchase

Basically, I am an atheist and an engineer, with a good measure of analytical thinking ability, so I agree with most all Coyne says here. But he is not as good a presenter as Richard Dawkins (of whom I have read all), nor is he anywhere close to Christopher Hitchens (who managed somehow to be both bookish and entertaining), nor does he offer insightful vistas approaching what Sam Harris (often) does. So there is very little that is new here, and there is the off-putting stridency Coyne is apparently famous for. Read the others first.

For me, the book has an offensive five pages (245-250) that constitute a “deal breaker”. This is the section “Global-Warming Denialism”, the very title of which shows how “tone-deaf” Coyne can be in his eagerness to add one more item to the book. Most everyone knows that the issue of global-warming is controversial, and includes legitimate science (and politics, and economics) on both sides, as well as too many totally irrational and

ignorant rantings. My best guess is that we have no cause for alarm (because of lack of evidence), BUT no one knows. It seems to be Prsig's "Mu" answer (un-ask the question!)

Here is part of Coyne's invention:

"When people's religious beliefs were tallied with those data, the pollsters got the unsurprising result that acceptance of evolution, the Big Bang, the Earth's age, and anthropogenic global warming was dramatically lower among those who were more confident about God's existence and who attended church more often." (pg 245)

Here Coyne has taken four issues, two "settled science" (evolution and age of earth), one developing topic ("Big Bang" - when we include inflation, etc.) and one poorly established "science" (Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming - CAGW). All are then conglomerated by Coyne under a defining umbrella (or straw-man) that they are all "denied" by theists on a basis of religion.

I have read the skeptics blogs (Coyne's "deniers") for 10 years and have never seen anyone make a religious argument for stability. Coyne has somehow none-the-less dug up something called the "Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming", and thrown in a few ignorant politicians, then tried to form a "guilt by association" ad-hominem fallacy. Bogus and insulting.

Coyne would likely argue that CAGW is "established" and indeed, within the infamous 97% "Consensus". At the same time, a major recurring argument in SUPPORT OF a belief IN God is that "nearly everyone believes He exists, so it must be true." Thus people like myself can strongly disagree that a religious case can ever be made by consensus, while at the same time understanding how many theists will spot a dualism in a "science is really just another religion" taunt. Scientists marching through the doors of a conference sites; religious folks marching through the door of a church, both saying "Goody Goody For Us!" and taking false comfort in strength of numbers. A foreseeable perception of symmetry.

The claim of the reality of CAGW is at best, highly suspect. People such as engineers who understand time-series analysis, feedback, and that sort of technical matters are suspicious of "climate scientists" who make up and "tune" analytic methods as they go, and even more suspicious of scientists (such as biologists - who have fewer analytic skills), and still less regard is available for the gullible citizens (still less for politicians!).

So Coyne has, with regard to CAGW, driven away strong scientific/engineering allies, for NO gain to his cause. What was he thinking?

Much ado about 5 pages? Sure. But Coyne is manipulative here, so one wonders where else in the book this may be so. My initial complaint about the 5 pages was emailed privately to Coyne. Without asking my permission he posted my email on a website of his (WhyEvolutionIsTrue) that I had never heard of. A day later he emailed me to say that he

had posted my email, and that his 30,000 readers would “school” me. The site looked interesting and I wrote some 22 responses (several hours work) to his reader’s comments, all of which said “in moderation” [Appendix]. Little did I suspect that he would censor all my comments (some of which were just “thank you”). So sending me the site URL was not an invitation to participate in the comments, but one to be a “guest piñata”! Nice guy! Neither scholar nor gentleman!

I actually didn’t mind that he did not ask permission, but he did NOT attribute my words as my intellectual property. I complained to him about this, and it was only after I suggested I would take the ethical issue up with U. Chicago that he added my name.

Beyond this indiscretion, Googling one finds a dozen or so instances of “Silent Banning” by Coyne, and he is apparently reputed to be a zealous censor. This “gossip” I tend to believe BECAUSE it exactly parallels my experience, in details. The problem with the silent ban is it may appear that a commenter was outdebated by Coyne while it is actually the exact reverse. This is intellectual bankruptcy.

I have read his book twice – less thoroughly a second time after finding his CAGW “tack on” near the end. The first time, it was just “nothing new.” Because of my personal encounter, it became an issue of confidence in the author. Beyond the CAGW issue, and beyond the way Coyne behaves on the Internet toward commenters he finds inconvenient (like me), there comes a point where personal actions on the part of a book author reflect into the likely scholarly value of a book – an issue of trust.

So, does God have a hand on the thermostat of the earth? Does anyone even claim that? Hardly! The very idea is mainly Coyne’s straw-man construction alone.

I would like to hear your comments: here or by email, Google Bernie Hutchins. (Coyne censors my comments at his site however.)

\* \* \* \* \*

*Dawkins, Hitchens, and Harris get five stars. Coyne, on content, might deserve four stars, except his writing is so strident and dry. That counts. As of this writing, 8 of 23 thought my comment was “useful”. On controversial subjects, the “useful” ratings on Amazon are too often “votes” from people who probably read neither the book nor the review but were voting on the number or stars awarded! It happens too much. Not that it matters. For my review, there were some good comments. And one totally foolish (obvious pro-Coyne) commenter known as “anonymous”! who must cause Jerry to cringe. Fragmented, spittle-punctuated, undirected quips, most often beginning with a characteristic “hilarious” lead sneer. He/She must be laughing all the time. With friends like that.....*

*It is fair to post an unsolicited review (well – clearly Amazon DOES very actively solicit reviews, so let's say "impromptu" reviews). After all, they are in response to a book they sell, for an author. In this case, I had contacted the author (Coyne) first as a courtesy. Often this resolves issues. My supposition that this was a fitting way to approach a "fellow academic" was misplaced.*

*Here is the email I sent to Coyne on 6/23/2015:*

## **DOCUMENT 1 Courtesy Email to Coyne 6/23/2015**

Unfortunate Comments on Global Warming in Your New Book

Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr

To: j-coyne@uchicago.edu; Tue 6/23/2015 9:15 PM

Dr Coyne –

Whatever possessed you (word carefully considered) to add the six pages (245-250) on "Denialism" (a toxic word that) of global warming to your otherwise admirable recent book? It would seem you didn't select or write this material with your usual care? It comes across at an intellectual level of Jr. High, a cherry picked religious-flavored "strawman" contrivance, ignorant of (or dismissive of) the very existence of a true SCIENTIFIC opposition to your supposed CAGW (Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming) consensus. Moreover, viewed as a not uncommon or original "denier-rant", it is less skillful than what a half-dozen blogs post nearly every day. This reeks of a hasty, unfortunate, puerile afterthought. Singularly poor work in your book.

Many of us "deniers" are CAGW "skeptics" motivated not in the least by religion (or politics), but by physics, engineering, and evidence. I myself am an atheist of the Dawkins/Hitchens/Harris school; and a physicist and electrical engineer. When I see stability in a circuit I design, or robust thermostating in nature, I know it is due to negative feedback (a loop in my circuit) or some natural feedback in the case of nature (NO MYSTERY – Second Law of Thermodynamics). Looking at an overall physical picture, I understand it pretty well, and must conclude that Nature does in fact take pretty good care of Herself. Incidentally, I have always viewed natural selection as really little more than feedbacks.

Much as the links of an evolution process can be complex, the thermostating chains of the climate are complex (thus appearing designed) but only reflect the 2nd Law insisting that we must have something, somehow. It is a bit astounding that an evolutionary biologist such as yourself, familiar with amazing Law-of-natural-selection-driven puzzles

does not immediately grasp the corresponding self-organizing mechanisms of the 2nd Law. Instead in your case, you have Faith (word considered) in a bit of “greenhouse” arithmetic that is already in error by 18 years of no warming. Picking and choosing your science - so it would seem!

I have never heard of the silly “Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming.” but what did you expect? Of the two paragraphs you reproduce, the first is unreadable claptrap; the second is essentially the correct CAGW-Skeptic (scientific) view. What was the point of this radical juxtaposition?

Do I have any climate scientist credentials from which to speak? I have a degree in climatology fully equivalent to the one Al Gore has and the one you have – NONE. I have however studied the issue for over 12 years. How important are credentials? Google “Chomsky, Credentials, Substance” for my view.

Your unjustified “pigeon holing” of people who have analytically reasoned conclusions with those who resort only to religion for a similar conclusion, is frankly embarrassing, if not insulting to us. You are doing a “hit job” on many honest thinkers, many of whom know far far more about the issues of CAGW than you apparently do, and you come across less as a scientist and more as a political animal.

Those of us who are travelers within the CAGW-skeptic circle to which I am a part, are owed an apology.

Bernie Hutchins

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*The issue of no significant warming in 18 years is too often confused to be in conflict with the most recent years being (perhaps or perhaps not) the warmest “in history” (history unspecified). Don’t people study calculus any more, or do they just not know what it MEANS. It is much as one walks (essentially locally level) over the crest of a mountain, into a fog, without knowing for sure if you are going to proceed up, down, or level. That is, at a maximum we have zero derivative – do we not?*

**DOCUMENT 2 On 6/24/15 Coyne replied:** [15]

RE: Unfortunate Comments on Global Warming in Your New Book

Jerry Coyne <c525@uchicago.edu>

To: Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr; Wed 6/24/2015 6:55 PM

I'm sorry, but your letter was rude, but also ignorant, as if there were not many more people with credentials as good as or better than yours who take issue with your statements. Rather than waste time answering you myself, I posted your email (with name redacted) on my website, and I'll let my readers school you. You flaunt your credentials (check those of my readers), make foolish statements about evolution, and give no evidence whatsoever. Here's my answer:

<https://whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com/2015/06/24/a-letter-from-an-angry-climate-change-denialist-give-your-response/>

I'm always amazed at how rude humans can be to those they haven't met. You are a prime example of this.

I realize that your mind is closed on this issue, and that you won't accept what these people say about your "argument". However, at least have the decency not to bother me again. If you do, I'll post your name and email address on my website, which has 30,000 readers. I reiterate; I request that you not bother me again.

jac

\* \* \* \* \*

*The posting on his WEIT website (new to me at that time) is at [15]:*

<https://whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com/2015/06/24/a-letter-from-an-angry-climate-change-denialist-give-your-response/>

*and I had no idea that Jerry censored the comments there and that nothing I posted there would ever see the light of day. One extremely thoughtful post (one HelianUnbounded) was a delight and got past him. This is reproduced a bit below:*

*Just below is the website posting as I found it online in response to the 6/24/15 email from Jerry, WITH the exception of the extensive UPDATE (reproduced as lighter type) that Jerry added. The emails leading to the need for Coyne's update are below as well.*

*If Coyne wants to censor his own website, he can do so. But he should say he is going to do so, and that he has done so. In particular, he should not tempt commenters into wasting their time. That's just loutish, and academically, dishonest. Most websites I read (pro-skeptic) almost never censor or boot anyone in the first place. In rare occasions, when they have to, they describe and explain. To not do so, to just delete, is most likely a sign of cowardice. Boorishly bad behavior at best. In academics, unacceptable.*

### **DOCUMENT 3 Coyne's website on 6/24/2015 as later Updated [15]**

A letter from an angry climate-change denialist: give your response

UPDATE:

Our emailer insists on being named, so named his *[sic]* shall be as requested in the missive below:

Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr

You Must Acknowledge Intellectual Property

Jerry –

I make it three days now since I asked you to put my name on the item on your blog that was MY intellectual property which YOU posted without giving the source.

First, I asked you to put my name on it.

Second, you threatened to put my name on it if I contacted you again. I did contact you again – asking you to acknowledge the source. [Threats likely should not list actions that the threatener is already morally obliged to do!]

Thirdly, it is (as you must know) a tenant of academic integrity to acknowledge the source of material quoted. I presume this is the policy at UC, but I am willing to investigate this.

I think Noon Monday is a reasonable deadline for some response from you.

Bernie

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I'm busy preparing for my trip, and don't have much original stuff to post, but I wanted to share this email from a climate-change denialist who is angry and nasty about what I said in Faith Versus Fact about climate change. I'll make a few remarks at the end, but I'm posting this mainly so readers can respond, and then I'll simply send this person a link to the post and comments. I find that an efficient and multipronged way to deal with critics like this, and I don't have to write my own long response, since it's always counterproductive to engage people like this.

This is, by the way, typical of the kind of angry email I get, most of which I don't mention on this site.



Dr Coyne –

Whatever possessed you (word carefully considered) to add the six pages (245-250) on “Denialism” (a toxic word that) of global warming to your otherwise admirable recent book?

It would seem you didn’t select or write this material with your usual care? It comes across at an intellectual level of Jr. High, a cherry picked religious-flavored “strawman” contrivance, ignorant of (or dismissive of) the very existence of a true SCIENTIFIC opposition to your supposed CAGW (Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming) consensus. Moreover, viewed as a not uncommon or original “denier-rant”, it is less skillful than what a half-dozen blogs post nearly every day. This reeks of a hasty, unfortunate, puerile afterthought. Singularly poor work in your book.

May of us “deniers” are CAGW “skeptics” motivated not in the least by religion (or politics), but by physics, engineering, and evidence. I myself am an atheist of the Dawkins/Hitchens/Harris school; and a physicist and electrical engineer. When I see stability in a circuit I design, or robust thermostating in nature, I know it is due to negative feedback (a loop in my circuit) or some natural feedback in the case of nature (NO MYSTERY – Second Law of Thermodynamics). Looking at an overall physical picture, I understand it pretty well, and must conclude that Nature does in fact take pretty good care of Herself. Incidentally, I have always viewed natural selection as really little more than feedbacks. [JAC: Oy! Little more than feedbacks?]

Much as the links of an evolution process can be complex, the thermostating chains of the climate are complex (thus appearing designed) but only reflect the 2nd Law insisting that we must have something, somehow. It is a bit astounding that an evolutionary biologist such as yourself, familiar with amazing Law-of-natural-selection-driven puzzles does not immediately grasp the corresponding self-organizing mechanisms of the 2nd Law. Instead in your case, you have Faith (word considered) in a bit of “greenhouse” arithmetic that is already in error by 18 years of no warming. Picking and choosing your science – so it would seem!

I have never heard of the silly “Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming.” but what did you expect? Of the two paragraphs you reproduce, the first is unreadable claptrap; the second is essentially the correct CAGW-Skeptic (scientific) view. What was the point of this radical juxtaposition?

Do I have any climate scientist credentials from which to speak? I have a degree in climatology fully equivalent to the one Al Gore has and the one you have – NONE. I have however studied the issue for over 12 years. How important are credentials? Google “Chomsky, Credentials, Substance” for my view.

Your unjustified “pigeon holing” of people who have analytically reasoned conclusions with those who resort only to religion for a similar conclusion, is frankly embarrassing, if not insulting to us. You are doing a “hit job” on many honest thinkers, many of whom know far far more about the issues of CAGW than you apparently do, and you come across less as a scientist and more as a political animal.

Those of us who are travelers within the CAGW-skeptic circle to which I am a part, are owed an apology.

Name redacted

The section that this guy (yes, I'll say that it's a man) is referring to in Faith Versus Fact discusses religiously based climate-change denialism while also noting that religious opposition to climate-change is only a part of general opposition, much of which is based on economics. (But do note that 49% of Americans see natural disasters, including global warming as a sign of the End Times.) I also give quotes from US Senators and Representatives who also have religiously based take but in the opposite direction: that God would never let the Earth be destroyed by global warming. That attitude, of course, is as bad as denialism, for it encourages a lack of response.

Further, the “Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming,” signed by hundreds of prominent and credentialed economists, scientists, theologians, and other religionists and academics, also notes this:

We believe Earth and its ecosystems—created by God’s intelligent design and infinite power and sustained by His faithful providence —are robust, resilient, self-regulating, and self-correcting, admirably suited for human flourishing, and displaying His glory. Earth’s climate system is no exception. Recent global warming is one of many natural cycles of warming and cooling in geologic history.

. . . . We deny that Earth and its ecosystems are the fragile and unstable products of chance, and particularly that Earth’s climate system is vulnerable to dangerous alteration because of minuscule changes in atmospheric chemistry. Recent warming was neither abnormally large nor abnormally rapid. There is no convincing scientific evidence that human contribution to greenhouse gases is causing dangerous global warming.

We deny that alternative, renewable fuels can, with present or near-term technology, replace fossil and nuclear fuels, either wholly or in significant part, to provide the abundant, affordable energy necessary to sustain prosperous economies or overcome poverty.

We deny that carbon dioxide—essential to all plant growth—is a pollutant. Reducing greenhouse gases cannot achieve significant reductions in future global temperatures, and the costs of the policies would far exceed the benefits.

As for the evidence for global warming, there is a consensus among experts in climate science that Earth is experiencing anthropogenic global warming: 97% of climate scientists see this happening and, based on evidence, see the change as due to human activity. Of course scientific consensus can sometimes be wrong (remember that most geologists didn't accept the notion of continental drift), but with such a strong consensus, the best evidence we have points to human-caused global warming, not to the denialism of the writer.

I won't write more, or discuss the stupid "credentials" card played by the writer (except to note that the vast majority of scientists with equally good or better credentials than his disagree with him), except to point you to one place that gives a good summary of the evidence for anthropogenic global warming. It's the NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) site "Climate change: How do we know?", which summarizes the diverse lines of evidence, including temperature and gas monitoring, glacial retreat, ocean warming and acidification, reduced snow cover, and so on (it includes copious references). You can find the evidence for human causation at the NASA site "Why is climate change happening?" That evidence constitutes my "faith" to which the writer alludes. He couldn't be more wrong—about everything he says, especially his silly take on evolution.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Color code above:** *Heavy Purple is my email Coyne posted without attribution. Light purple is his update after I forced him to add attribution. Light blue are his comments as originally posted to his "posse" of experts to "school" me! Their comments – mostly not much. Jerry ignored the fact that I had preemptively dismissed the EDGW as "silly"!*

*Below is the Comment that got by Coyne. I guess it was so **obviously brilliant** that he didn't dare, and it also scared off the "fans". The content sounds like me! But I don't write nearly that well. Note: Helian is a physicist.*

#### **DOCUMENT 4 Helian Unbounded On Coyne's Site July 25/12 [15]**

49.

HelianUnbound

Posted June 25, 2015 at 4:38 pm | [Permalink](#)

I agree that this guy's comment is ranting and incoherent. It's also a data point confirming that you were ill-advised to include the bit about global warming in your book. I assume your goal wasn't simply to preach to the choir. In that case, what was the point of alienating a substantial bloc of potentially receptive readers? Global warming is a highly polarizing ideological issue. The very word "denialist" confirms that fact. It is a pejorative term used to

attack ideological foes, and should have no more place in scientific discourse than its mirror image, “alarmist.” There is no one to one correspondence between fanatical evangelicals whose minds are in permanent lockdown and those who reject the claim that there is proof global warming is an existential danger to mankind, or that we should immediately devote massive resources to attempts to solve the problem without solid evidence that our actions will actually have any significant impact. The relevant section in your book is based on the assumption that the latter are irrational and unscientific, lock, stock and barrel. That simply isn’t true.

In the first place, scientists are not just so many disinterested and objective saints. Their results can be and have been heavily influenced by ideological and political trends, the availability of research funds and the type of people who control them, the ideological leanings of journal editors, etc. A recent example that so traumatized the scientific community that its history will probably never be accurately recorded was the Blank Slate debacle. A “scientific consensus” that was palpably absurd to any ten year old nevertheless persisted for more than half a century.

Certainly, global warming theory is not as absurd as the Blank Slate. Sun-like radiation impinging on an ideal, earthlike surface after passing through an ideal, earthlike atmosphere, will result in highly predictable increases in temperature as the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is increased. However, there is nothing ideal or simple about our actual ecosystem. Given the amount of greenhouse gases we are pumping into the atmosphere, some warming must inevitably occur. The relevant questions are, how much, and what can we do about it? We don’t know how much. The computer codes used to predict it are probabilistic models that must somehow cope with literally millions of degrees of freedom, along with often inaccurate and missing data. The highly deterministic physics codes used to predict the result of the recent experiments at Livermore’s National Ignition Facility predicted results that were off by almost two orders of magnitude in spite of being benchmarked against earlier experiments and containing state of the art models of all the known physics. The chances that the climate codes will have greater predictive value than these mature and sophisticated Livermore codes are vanishingly small.

Meanwhile, we are already spending vast sums to “solve” the problem with no idea whether these efforts will have any effect at all. These sums might have been used to save many lives, increase the standard of living for millions of people, or conduct scientific research of great value to mankind. The notion that all this has no impact on the poor is not true. In Germany, one of the most active countries in “fighting global warming,” electricity prices for individual consumers are much higher than the European average. These costs are bound to have a disproportionately damaging effect on those who can least afford them.

In a word, I don't think a reasonable basis exists for equating reservations about the political response to global warming with religious fanaticism. The book is otherwise so good, making such a convincing case for science as our most valuable "way of knowing" by far, and turning the "sophisticated Christians" into so many dead men walking. I just don't think that the bit about global warming was sufficiently germane to the theme of the book to include it, and detracted much from its overall effectiveness.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Here is my FIRST request (6/25/15) to Jerry to put my name on my intellectual property.*

### ***DOCUMENT 5 Request to Acknowledge Authorship***

Please Put My Name On My Writings.

Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr

To: Jerry Coyne <c525@uchicago.edu>; Thu 6/25/2015 1:30 PM

Dr. Coyne –

Sincere thanks for providing the link to your site – I had not seen your site before. I took your link-inclusion as an obvious invitation to participate on the site. So I wrote 22 careful comments in reply to your reader's questions, and they were marked "in moderation" late last night. This morning, they are all gone! So was the invitation to appear as a "guest piñata"? Or are you going to post them?

Incidentally, you should not have taken my name off the text you reproduced. Please add it back.

Bernie Hutchins

\* \* \* \* \*

*Here is a second request (demand) to add my name*

***DOCUMENT 6: Email Hutchins → Coyne 6/28/2012 Demanding Acknowledgment of Authorship by "High Noon" the next day.***

*Jerry complied when I said I would get U. Chicago involved. Perhaps he realized that the name Hutchins (Robert M. was no relationship to me!) matters at UC. (Repeats some of above copied to Jerry's site)*

## You Must Acknowledge [Intellectual] Property

To: Jerry Coyne <c525@uchicago.edu>; Bcc:

Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr; ... Sun 6/28/2015 12:49 PM

Jerry -

I make it three days now since I asked you to put my name on the item on your blog that was MY intellectual property which YOU posted without giving the source.

First, I asked you to put my name on it.

Second, you threatened to put my name on it if I contacted you again. I did contact you again - asking you to acknowledge the source. [Threats likely should not list actions that the threatener is already morally obliged to do!]

Thirdly, it is (as you must know) a [tenet] of academic integrity to acknowledge the source of material quoted. I presume this is the policy at UC, but I am willing to investigate this.

I think Noon Monday is a reasonable deadline for some response from you.

Bernie

\* \* \* \* \*

*Here is an email to Coyne on 7/2/2015. I guess Coyne missed the humor that NO ONE CARES about either of us. What happened to his "posse of 30,000" who were going to "school me".*

**DOCUMENT 7: Email Hutching → Coyne**

Joke is on BOTH of US !

Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr

To: Jerry Coyne <c525@uchicago.edu>; Bcc:

Bernard Arthur Hutchins Jr; ... Thu 7/2/2015 1:52 PM

Hi Jerry –

The joke seems to be on both of us. (Thank you for posting my name with my intellectual property. Sorry to remark that I had to pressure you to do the right thing.) I have received no direct contacts, and it appears no one has posted any follow-up comments (stuck at 278 since before you updated). Of course, you may have censored many as you did mine. (In the skeptics community, there is essentially no censoring.)

So I did not get “schooled” as you predicted. Instead, one “[Helian] Unbound” kind of schooled you, to which you responded “Where in the bloody hell did you get that?” (nice touch for an atheist! – I assume that was intentional). Possibly [he/she] was referring to what you wrote:

“When people's religious beliefs were tallied with those data, the pollsters got the unsurprising result that acceptance of evolution, the Big Bang, the Earth's age, and anthropogenic global warming was dramatically lower among those who were more confident about God's existence and who attended church more often.” (pg 245) Clearly a poorly argued, and counter-productive, “guilt-by-association” fallacy.

One other thing, the point about Chomsky (which you missed) was his very famous comment:

“Generally speaking, it seems fair to say that the richer the intellectual substance of a field, the less there is a concern for credentials, and the greater is the concern for content.”

So this perhaps ties up some loose ends. I will be (in a week or so) be posting a review of your book on Amazon.

Sincere best wishes,

Bernie

\* \* \* \* \*

*Finally there is an additional story. During much of this “debate” I was significantly ill. It turned out to be Lyme disease (a tick-vectorred bacteria that is too common in NYS). I was in the hospital over a week. Once my strength returned, I was able to addend a comment to my review. I also emailed this to Coyne (no reply).*

## **DOCUMENT 9** *My Comment on My Amazon Review Aug 14/2015*

Your post: Aug 14, 2015 8:45:21 AM PDT

B. Hutchins says:

On June 23, 2015 after reading Jerry Coyne's Faith vs. Fact and taking exception to a particular five pages, I emailed him personally with comments. He posted my comments (without attribution!) on his WEIT webside. (At my insistence, he subsequently acknowledged my intellectual property). By the time he sent the website link, there were already some [202] comments [22 directed to me]. These details are in my lead Amazon comment review here (July 8).

I began replying to the comments. About 2 AM I stopped. I remember why. First, I finished all 22. Secondly, I was becoming quite ill. In the morning, Jerry had removed all my comments. My illness was still there however and getting worse. Somehow I did manage a few more days and got the June 8 review up. That was all I could manage. A week later it was 911 to the hospital ER, ICU, and Rehab. Lyme disease, probably exacerbated/triggered by a spider bite (dual arachno-attack!) into some "non-typical presentation". No stroke, tumor, heart attack - something auto-immune.

So, I am offering this by way of explanation if anyone requires. Not for sympathy. There is no room in Rehab for self-pity when the guy beside you in Rehab is five times worse off.

Now, at 70 years old, this was my first adult hospital experience. Endless paper work. To get slightly back to the "faith" topic, I was asked my religion (convenient "None" box) and how important a visit from the hospital Chaplin was (not at all). None the less I did encounter a Chaplin. Did he swoop upon me and let me know that God had sent the 8-leg avengers as punishment for my irreverence? He did not. Instead he was casually encountered as I was wheeled down the halls from scan-to-scan, being friendly to staff and patients and jogging ahead to hold doors and push elevator buttons. I have not the slightest reservation about saying "God bless you Chaplin Tim", however metaphorically adjusted, as an appropriated response from anyone.

Back to Fact. Jerry's knowledge of climate science remains abysmal. Ignorance is understandable. His adamant attempt to torture statements to fit a predetermined POLITICAL goal remains [ill]-advised and contemptible and all too back-stabbingly typical of today's activists. His thin-skinned arrogance and censoring activities should remain an embarrassment to the scientific community. Unacceptable.

Beautiful pictures on his website - Although the insects now give me the creeps! And, perhaps half as many cat photos would suffice!

I can be reached by email from my Electronotes website.

Bernie

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## ***Appendix: Example Showing “Awaiting Moderation” Entrapment***

*Here is how one of the “Awaiting Moderation” (ambushes) appeared when I tried to save page after adding 22 comments. It did not even save the comments for me:*

[Bob J.](#)

*Posted June 24, 2015 at 12:07*

*pm | [Permalink](#)*

And even if such negative feedback loops do indeed exist, what makes you think human life will be inside the new range of conditions? Remember it is not just us but we need wheat, rice, fish, many other biological organisms to support our population.

[Reply](#)



▪ [Bernie Hutchins](#)

Your comment is awaiting moderation.

*Posted June 24, 2015 at 10:52*

*pm | [Permalink](#)*

Frankly, you sound like one of those “just so” fine tuning religious apologist – the earth was made for humans.

Of course you aren't. So what are you suggesting.

[Reply](#)

*Everything appeared as though I never replied at all.*

## Closing Comments:

In reviewing (finally looking at) all the comments at the link [15] I see that there were more good questions than I remembered (as well as the *de rigueur* “peanut gallery” snipes which were disheartening). In particular, a fair number of the 289 comments were directed at me as actual questions, using various terms such as denier, engineer, e-mailer, etc. People thought they were actually asking ME questions in many cases. Some questions were excellent, actually, similar to respectful questions as almost universally asked on the skeptic blogs such as WUWT, Bishop Hill, or Jo Nova to name just three. These people deserved answers. True – I deserved TO reply but they deserved to GET a reply. Jerry Coyne however blocked both. What a complete time derivative of acceleration he is!

All threads die for some reason. Perhaps here it is a coincidence that this one died almost immediately after HelianUnbounded showed up. There is nothing quite like the appearance of an “Adult in the Room” to caution/moderate all but the most foolish.

One question. Didn’t anyone among Coyne’s faithful catch on to the fact that he must have been censoring all my replies? Two people who I managed to contact directly seemed to know this, but no one commented about my apparently NOT replying. OH – how silly of me! I know why they didn’t ask – Jerry would not allow it.

Did they just suspect that I gave up – perhaps in embarrassment? Or hoped that was a possible position. Are Coyne’s faithful too stupid to guess that I was banned? Not a chance, a few are perhaps that stupid, and a few more would perhaps approve of exclusion (for the usual warped reasons). But the vast majority likely wondered what was going on – perhaps not suspecting Jerry would deceive them (disrespect them) so. Those who did figure it out? Well, if they actually posted, Jerry could have gotten rid of them just as he did me.

As may well be appreciated by supporters of evolution, some of Jerry’s gang are perhaps like a certain proper lady (wife of the Bishop of Worcester), who in 1860, exclaimed “*My dear, descended from the apes! Let us hope it is not true, but if it is, let us pray that it will not become generally known.*” Jerry’s posse of apologists perhaps share this same sort of apprehension with regard to Jerry’s poor behavior.

Jerry\* is welcome to reply here. I will post what he submits WITH NO EDITING OR CENSORSHIP. Well, I guess there is a space limit. I used 19 pages here. He can have 38 pages, more if really necessary.

\*or anyone using a real name

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