

# Global warming: a critique assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The Great Global Warming Swindle certainly seemed to suggest that, and much more. But such reactions are momentary. The rational person must necessarily analyze and critique the contents any self-proclaimed sources of information before forming any conclusions. So what do we have? It's important here to note that both movies acknowledge that global warming does indeed occur. All scientific studies point towards this fact, so it is reasonable to assume that global temperatures have consistently been rising over the past 30 or so years.

An Inconvenient Truth relies primarily on Al Gore's riveting personality, gripping story and brilliant immunization skills, backed up by what seems like solid scientific data and statistics covering a whole range of causes and effects. Through Gore's experiences, it tries to show us how the Earth is being irrevocably altered by global warming. Pictures often convey what thousand words can't, and the melting of ice the world over depicts a bleak reality. The movie displays data and statistics which show a strong correlation between the level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere and global temperature, which one would find very convincing.

This is particularly evident in the past few years, where both CO<sub>2</sub> levels and global temperatures seem to have skyrocketed. It showcases the opinions of leading scientists the world over, each reinforcing the statement that it is indeed humans who major cause global warming, and something urgently needs to be done to stop it. The fact that it's presented as an almost personal crusade by Gore and his supporters adds a wonderful human touch. As he says, it is really not a political issue, so much as a moral one.

It goes on to show us how we can change the situation and why we must. The movie received an overwhelmingly positive response, going on to win awards at cost major events and achieving success that was unheard of for documentaries at the box office. More importantly, it changed the mindsets of tens of thousands of people around the world. While it did receive criticism for possible misrepresentation and vested interests, it by and large impressed both viewers and the scientific community; the latter expressing pleasant surprise at how accurately the facts had been portrayed.

The Great Global Warming Swindle tries to drive home the belief that the whole theory of humans being the single biggest agent for driving global warming is bunkum. It tries to showcase it as something backed by political and economic causes, rather than science, and claims that the real reasons for global warming are things beyond our control, such as (major) the Sun's cycles, animal respiration, and volcanic activity. It claims vested interests by media bodies and certain powerful institutions, and that anyone who is anti-establishment is swiftly made to pay.

It especially targets the EPIC and the scientific establishment. It shows correlation between sunspot activity and global temperature, which to a layman seem very revealing. It claims that while CA levels do show a correlation with temperature, the power of CA as a greenhouse gas is limited, overpowered by water vapor and methane. It asserts that harmful effects of the movement are an unhealthy focus on human-caused global warming, severe restrictions on developing nations that are cruel on the poor people living in them, and an overall wastage of resource, leading to economic slowdown.

<https://assignbuster.com/global-warming-a-critique-assignment/>

It is natural to reflect and analyze both viewpoints. After discussion with various other people and some research of my own on the Internet, the opinion I have formed is that while the Swindle does make points that are more than worth considering, its fundamental argument is flawed. After countless studies and experiments, if a majority of experts and scientists still maintain outright that it is humans, through CA emissions, who cause majority of the global warming; then either there's a conspiracy on a scale previously unheard of, or the second movie has stated some things that need to be investigated further.

While the makers of Swindle will have us believe in the first, let us for a moment consider the second option. . The effect of the sun: Solar variation theory, which talks about the effect of the sun on our climate, is still not complete by any means. At the same time, a 1997 study by the National Academy of Sciences in the USA concluded that solar activity was indeed the driving force behind climate, but in the pre- industrial era. The situation is different now.

While experts on solar variation theory do differ among themselves as to the current extent of its effect on our climate, they generally agree on one thing: That the marked increase in global temperature from around 30 years ago is mainly due to humans and their greenhouse gas emissions. Most of the statistics presented in the movie were conclusively proved to be either partially or wrongly represented, or to be out of date, with the solar variation theory being systematically debunked. 2.

The role of water vapor: This one is a bit tricky. The science presented in Swindle seems perfect. Water vapor is indeed a more powerful greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>, and is present in concentrations which are around ten times that of it. So why do we blame CO<sub>2</sub>? The way water vapor works is that it amplifies the already existing greenhouse effect, and while it has played a part in increasing global temperatures worldwide, it works only if there are other greenhouse gases (major CO<sub>2</sub>) that create the global warming in the first place.

To quote <http://knowledge.lillian.com>, CO<sub>2</sub> is the guy robbing the bank; water vapor is just the getaway driver. 3. Is CO<sub>2</sub> the major culprit for global warming? By all accounts, yes. The data says that the levels of heating in the past few years are unnatural, and so are the levels of CO<sub>2</sub>, or more generally, greenhouse gases. In fact, studies have shown that it is the heat retention in our atmosphere which has increased, overpowering any external factors.

Since retention is primarily caused by greenhouse gases (a well documented fact), and CO<sub>2</sub> is the big daddy of them all (crossing 400 ppm recently and ever increasing), it is pretty much reasonable to assume that it is the major cause of global warming. 4. Are humans responsible? Again, the general consensus seems to be that we are. The scientific community certainly believes so, and so do the numbers. In fact, certain claims, such as the one which said that volcanoes emit much more CO<sub>2</sub> than humans, has been conclusively proved to be false and was as such removed later from the film.

While natural sources do contribute, what the data says cannot be disputed. Human activities have significantly increased the amount of CO<sub>2</sub>, which has

been followed by increase in average temperatures worldwide. The Inconvenient Truth reiterates the above two points rather strongly, with Gore appealing to us to do something about the situation, and fast. Again, it backs these claims with well accepted science. 5. Are there vested interests? This is a conspiracy! This is one of the major selling points of Swindle, and difficult to argue against.

In fact, it might well be true. History has shown us time and again that the media and political organizations have used major events to either generate hype or to enforce policies to serve their own needs. And this one might not be very different. What definitely is true is that man-made global warming threatens our world, and while it might well be misused and misrepresented by certain agencies, there is an urgent need to take definitive measures to combat it. It is absolutely essential, both ethically and practically.

However, the theory that the scientific community is in fact promoting what is bad science seems patently false. They not only have innumerable precedents, studies and data to back this claim, but as far as the history of science goes, if something is proved conclusively to be wrong, it has not taken a long time for the community to forgo it completely and begin work on a new theory. That is how science has always worked. 6. That the developing nations are suffering due to environment policies This seems to be true.

All over, it is the poor third World countries that are being forced to take implement carbon control measures, severely impacting the lives of those people living below the poverty line and unable to pay for expensive

methods of power such as solar panels, windmills etc. This definitely must change, but at the same time, we must admit that global warming is a serious threat. While developing economies must definitely be protected and developed nations must take the onus on themselves as a moral duty, the fact that our implementation of the solution is faulty does not mean that the problem does not exist.

It is right there, in your face. The ice caps are melting, whether you like it or not. While we should definitely take care that the African dream is not destroyed, using it as a reason to bash the theory is pretty much wrong on all counts. 8. Reception While a large portion of the viewers of this documentary voted in its favor, the scientific community met it with strong opposition. Previous studies were carried out again and the current theory came out much the stronger. Statistics shown in the movie was shown to be misrepresented or the half-truth.

In fact, Channel 4, where the movie was broadcast, was found guilty of violating the honor code of being impartial while broadcasting something related to scientific fact, and of favoring controversy over accuracy. Certain scientists who'd been interviewed for the film later came out and claimed that their views were severely misrepresented. What we must do Under the pretty much accurate assumption that we are the main culprits for global warming, there are concrete steps We must take, ND fast, to combat it.

Just like suggested in the movie, we should consciously behave green in our day-to-day lives. Renewable power, green cars, CEO- friendly appliances, solar power are just a few of the many ways. It is also essential to spread

awareness, and making everyone conscious of the very real threat of catastrophe in the case of this continuing is the need of the hour.

Governments must strictly implement environment laws, while maintaining a balance with economic growth. The onus must lie on the developed countries to lead the way here, as it is their industries that arm the Earth the most.

Summary It seems evident from most of the data, studies, and scientists in the field do believe that humans are the main cause of significantly increased emission of greenhouse gases in the recent past, which in turn has led to global warming. The effects of this too seem indisputable. Skeptics of the human-caused global warming, it seems to me that, do not have solid evidence to back their claims, as is always needed when you propose any new idea. They form a small minority of dissenters and while some points do make you stop and think further, on rigorous analysis, all their arguments seem to fall apart.