

# Example of essay on engl 105

[Law](#), [Evidence](#)



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## **Synthesis Paper**

### Global Warming: Facts & Myths

“ The publicly available knowledge and information on global warming is both complex and marred by misinformation. Spin-doctors and political interest groups have hijacked sound science and appropriated it into a tool to galvanize support from environmental groups and the public” (Muller 259). The US economy, as well as modern civilization, was founded on abundant and cheap fossil fuels, and with a little luck, the global supplies will last several hundred more years. Additionally, the United States has even more natural gas and coal supplies available, despite their possibly detrimental effects on the environment. With massive amounts of CO2 being produced, notably by China and the rest of the developing world (The World Bank), efforts to combat these emissions and the resulting trade-offs with economic development of developing economies presents interesting scientific and political issues, addressed in chapter five of Richard Muller’s

book, pages 251 to 344. Among other issues covered in the book is whether greenhouse gasses are causing global warming, whether fossil fuels are responsible, and even more importantly, whether global warming is the result of man's activities. These issues are often taken for granted in our everyday perspective of global warming and I think Muller's approach to critically confronting these issues is essential to gain a better understanding of the causes and threats of global warming.

Muller (2009) presents a brief history of the global climatic change from 1850 in order to present the case for the possibility that human activities may not be the cause of the increased global temperatures. Muller concedes that the greenhouse effect may be responsible for the heating up of the planet, and presents a clear explanation of the mechanism, which is as well documented in other, objective scientific sources. The greenhouse effect is critically influential in the planet's thermal condition. The book also describes an even more urgent environmental problem resulting from the falling PH level of the planet's oceans, the result of ocean acidification. This accrues from the increased CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, which forms acidic rain that in turn finds its way into the oceans (Muller 269). The changes in the acid content of the oceans has in turn resulted into changes in the metabolic activities of marine plants and animals, which results in the demise of some species, the wearing off or disappearance of coral reefs among other effects. As such, Muller does not deny scientific truths. His explanation of these elementary climate change mechanisms shows his scientific nature. He does not deny credible, scientific evidence but does warn about misinformation. For example, while the UN-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

Change (IPCC) assessment reports reaffirm the critical role played by green house gas emissions on global temperatures, Muller prefers to divulge into the root causes of these elementary proclamations and challenge them if they lack sound evidence. This is made apparent when Muller (2009) asserts that the melting of ice nearly 14, 000 years ago, which triggered climatic and environmental imbalances in North America and Europe, was caused by natural changes in the climate. These natural occurrences effectively brought an end to the last ice age. Scientific evidence also points to this possibility, which makes one question IPCC's view that climate change is solely the result of green house gasses emissions. These views are in agreement with Pittock (2009), who also acknowledges the reality of global warming, but cautions against strict views on the causes and solutions for the phenomenon. The author believes that as far as scientific evidence is involved, there is no definitive knowledge on the actual causes of climate change, other than the agreement that it is occurring (Pittock 132).

This issue, according to both Pittock and Muller, is further worsened by the tendency to distort scientific evidence, which in turn influences government decision making. The IPCC's affiliation with governments is, according to Pittock, a factor in the endorsement of some evidence while discrediting other evidence, through its seminal assessment reports (Pittock 162). Muller rebukes the IPCC induced Hockey Stick mentality, which is a way of making something that draws the same conclusion as the truth appear to have taken the same path; as well as biased news, cherry picking and even outright distortion of the scientific evidence in order to support wide ranging political stand points and views of environmental groups.

Soja et al. points to the discrepancy between varied predictions and the outcomes as an indicator to “ possible errors in the evidence endorsed by the IPCC and other bodies”. “ Ecological models that did forecast that global warming could have induced upslope and northern tree-line migration, as well as the mosaic structure alteration of boreal forests”. In addition, the hockey stick related problems, coupled with multiple difficulties that make computer modeling and forecast both difficult and fraught with errors (Soja et al 287). Soja et al supports Muller’s claim that the issue of determining the causes and solutions for climate change is far more complicated than the simplified assessment proposed by international environmental assessment bodies. As such, the issue’s complexity remains at the forefront of scientific research and is still considered a phenomenon.

Nevertheless, awareness of the issue is required to improve the situation. The steps required to make the transition into an energy efficient way of life should be taken regardless of the lack of understanding of its causes. Thus, many scholars envisage an important role to be played by Green energy sources in the mitigation of further growth in the climate change, and the worst of its effects (Jefferies 76). These energy sources are not only green and sustainable over the long term, but perhaps more crucially, they have increased in efficiency over the recent past. Solar and wind energy and electric energy have been variously touted as providing the way out of the destructive fossil fuels. Muller and other skeptics do however, term these as non-solutions, which have been overly hyped by governments as well as other interest groups. Muller (2009) does so not because he does not view them as improved alternatives but he asserts that the world is addicted to oil

because of its resulting economic efficiency, ease of availability and ready applicability. These non-renewable fuel sources are cheap, and many of the economies across the world remain unable to afford green energy technologies, even if they grow more efficient. “ Fuel choices comprise complex economic and pragmatic decision making by economic agents” (Jefferies 74).

Jefferies does well to present scientific evidence that green energy sources are overly hyped and inefficient. He also envisages a possible role to be played by technological changes that would boost greater efficiency in energy use. Muller agrees with this view and states that “ Conservation efforts have borne fruit in ensuring a better utilization of energy resources and the reduction of green house gases emissions, emitted in the generation or use of traditional energy sources” (Muller 314). Compact fluorescent bulbs, cool colors and increased energy efficiency of automobiles represent positive steps that would be critical in the conservation of energy and reduced CO<sub>2</sub> gases emissions. Furthermore, Physics for Future Presidents alludes to the emergence of better fuel technologies such as bio-fuels and concentration on solar energy coupled with more efficient energy storage devices (Jefferies 76). Other solutions include the increased use of safe nuclear energy, cleaner coal sources and the introduction of carbon credits through the Kyoto protocol that will increase the employment of greener energy sources. The solution as outlined by both Muller and Jefferies calls for a pragmatic approach, based on scientific evidence.

Soja et al. (2007) is sympathetic to the views expressed by Muller (2009) and further urges the separation of the need for increased energy efficiency and

climate change. This article argues that global warming fears have formed the foundation for the investment in green energy sources and energy efficient technologies, which is a fallacy. Energy conservation, alluded to by Muller (2009), is a necessity, clearly. It is positive step forward and very welcome. But to pin the formation of a transition to a green economy on global warming, which is a delicate issue that is still in need of complete understanding would not only discredit the movement but fail to give it a real and tangible purpose.

## **Personal Assessment**

Physics for Future Presidents presents concise scientific information on a commonly misunderstood phenomenon. I am convinced from reading through all the literatures included herein, that climate change is a reality, but difficulties remain as to pinpointing its exact cause, and perhaps even more crucially, the foundation for efforts being made to alleviate continued global warming. There is credible scientific evidence to support Muller's assertion that climate changes can be traced back to the end of the last ice age. This could explain the constant changes in climatic conditions that began long before the green house gasses emissions were in effect, let alone catastrophic. However, given the widespread acknowledgment of the greenhouse effect and its potential detrimental effects, the sensitive issue must me dealt with accordingly. The greenhouse effect is indeed credible and thus increases in CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere could be the cause of increasing temperatures of the planet. There is also a possibility that the combined effects of natural climatic change and the greenhouse effect alluded to by scientists are jointly responsible for global

warming. Nevertheless several points should be made to conclude the argument presented. First of all, it is undeniable that the skepticism induced by doubtless global warming conventional wisdom does not have much of a scientific base. The issue remains complex and any single-minded approach will surely reach a dead end sooner or later. Muller presented this idea very clearly. Secondly, the fact that climate change has so many variables makes it unfounded to make simplified assessments. The authors presented in this argument all had a pragmatic view and a sound understanding of the complex mechanisms, both environmental and economical. Finally it should be made clear that while an understanding of the causes and solutions of climate change remain uncertain, efforts to make the transition into a green economy, that relies on renewable energy and does not contribute to greenhouse gas emission, should be observed regardless. The benefits that come with self-sufficiency are too great to deny and although these solutions are still far from being implemented significantly they present a path that will only bring about a better quality of life.

You seem to have taken a topic and found some sources that also talk about that topic. So, that's good, and I can see that you're attempting to follow the prompt of the assignment. However, this paper still needs a lot of work. It appears to me that you're summarizing and explaining what all of the other sources are saying without ever telling me how you think. Then, at the end, when you do discuss your thoughts, it reads more like your reaction to reading PFFP. While I wanted you to draw from PFFP for your idea, you don't need to make it the central part of your essay. So, what would make this essay better is stating a clear argument about the topic (right now it's very



broad and I don't know which specific aspect of global warming you're wanting to talk about). You then need to show me how the sources are relating back to YOUR argument and supporting YOUR argument. You did well finding and talking about the sources, but now you need to USE them to support an argument.

## **Completed requirements 50/50**

Argument 15/50

Use of Sources 30/50

95/150

## **Works Cited**

Jefferies, Eric. Green Energy: Sustainable Electricity Supply with Low Environmental Impact. New York: CRC Press, 2010.

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