

# The Great Memeoid Deviation: Corporate Tactics in the Debate over Climate Change

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# What Will be Covered

- 1. Background to Research
- 2. Research Question
- 3. Focus: Memes
- 4. Memetic Tactics used by Corporations:
  - Conditioning
  - Trojan Horse
  - Cognitive Dissonance
- 5. Conclusion

# Background to Research

- Research Project in Asia-Pacific Management Program – comparison of corporate tactics in China and the US
- Case-study or publication
- At start of project, working with scholars in China

# Research Question

- Why are corporations successful in getting people and governments to value short-term economic gain over long-term ecological damage?
- As noted, working title is: “The Great Memeoid Deviation: Corporate Tactics in the Debate over Climate Change”

# Mememes

- Term coined by Richard Dawkins in The Selfish Gene, Chapter 11: “Mememes: The New Replicators”
- Mememes evolve faster than genes
- People replicating damaging mememes are “memeoids” (source: Keith Henson)

# Memetic Tactic - Conditioning

- Conditioning: Programming a human through repetition (parents & children)
- Exxon Mobil set up many organizations including Cato Institute & Heritage Foundation
- Organizations challenge consensus on Climate Change by promoting known discredited work

# Memetic Tactic – Trojan Horse

- Trojan Horse: One true thing followed by untruth
- Philip Morris set up The Advancement for Sound Science Coalition (TASSC)
- TASSC set up [www.JunkScience.com](http://www.JunkScience.com) to link tobacco with politically correct products and government research with biotechnology, nuclear waste, and global warming

# Memetic Tactic – Cognitive Dissonance

- Cognitive Dissonance: Tangible short-term gain vs. unknown long-term consequences
- Most people will state they want government action on climate change
- But, nothing drastic that might damage economy



# Conclusion

- Memoid Deviation is taking place
- Reason for Pessimism: Day of Reckoning will surely arrive
- Reason for Optimism: Language-based cultures can change very quickly