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

Asif Siddiqui – Term Instructor, Grant MacEwan Univ. School of Business, Asia-Pacific Management Program
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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”
Memes


• Memes evolve faster than genes

• People replicating damaging memes 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 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