

Are The 'Green 20' Suppressing Scientific Dissent?



By Hank Campbell — March 22, 2017

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Climate and public allies all stand with and firmly support U.S. state attorneys general for investigating corporations like Exxon for their possible past and ongoing climate fraud that is destroying our planet. #ExxonKnew

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We stand against Exxon and with State AGs
These are crucial investigations that can bring to light what #ExxonKnew about climate change and exactly how they denied humanity the chance to deal with this crisis.

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If you know a local politician has accepted a small fortune, \$300,000, from corporations with a specific agenda, would you believe:

- (1) They are compartmentalizing their decisions so funding does not matter;
- (2) They are simply getting donations for beliefs and work they've already done, so it does not sway them or;
- (3) They are engaged in pay-for-play.

If you are at politically-motivated, dark-money-funded sites like Mother Jones or Sourcewatch, or at one of the 300 corporate marketing groups (US Right To Know et al.) that are propped up by Organic Consumers Association, the answer will always be (3) because you sell stories of conspiracies and evil corporations and scientists being bought off.

How about if I add a wrinkle? What if I note that the politician in question is a Democrat, New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, and the corporate donors are environmental corporations rather than the for-profit kind, and that he is in a war with Exxon-Mobil? Is the politician still being bought off as a Denier For Hire or is he no longer a Merchant Of Doubt because he matches the political party those groups endorse, and it's about the only science (climate change) they claim to accept, and that he is against a corporation?

No, as experience has shown they frame the issue much differently when it matches the political goals of their funders. There is a reason for the easy switch and it strikes to the core of their agenda. They are not about defending science, they are instead about suppressing science dissent. And it may be why they support A.G. Schneiderman - he can accomplish using judicial means what activist groups cannot using the fearmongering kind.

The House Committee on Science, Space and Technology has issued subpoenas to Schneiderman because the supporters of his effort to suppress dozens of science groups with legal threats look a lot like his donors. Well, they *are* his donors.

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Mainstream media, and especially environmental groups, love what legitimate science media like to call "The Myth Of The Oppressed Underdog" where some lone advocate stands up against insurmountable odds. Examples are a vegetable that can do for free what Big Pharma charges for medicine, a chemical company preventing damaging evidence of a carcinogen from seeing daylight, or a fired employee who hands a bunch of stolen documents over to Mother Jones about pro-science consumer advocates (that one actually happened to us) so they can weave a fairy tale about secret funding. Oh, and that oil companies knew the ice caps were melting 40 years ago and suppressed it.

Mother Jones loves to write about that stuff, those Goldsmith Prizes won't win themselves, and pretty soon, everyone among their political allies, from Scienceblogs to NYU journalism professors, chimes in and no one ever asks the awkward question legitimate journalists ask; is any of it *true*?

A running joke in science circles about the conspiracy tales woven by partisan academics like Naomi Oreskes and supposed "science" tweeters, is that if scientists are so easily bought off - they routinely claim Monsanto has subverted the biology and food research community using money - why can't Exxon, with 15X the revenue, buy off climate scientists? It fails basic common

sense. Yet as we have seen thanks to Freedom of Information Act request documents, [anti-science activists have created a real conspiracy to combat a manufactured one](#) [1]. They not only promote their work inside their "echo chamber", they even call it an echo chamber and gladly amplify each other's conspiracy stories.

From: Hamerschlag, Kari [mailto:khamerschlag@foe.org]
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2015 11:25 PM
To: Hamerschlag, Kari
Cc: Stacy Malkan; Anna Lappé
Subject: Spinning Food: Please share far and wide
Importance: High

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Today, my colleagues Anna Lappe, Stacy Malkan and I are excited to share our new report-[Spinning Food industry front groups and covert communications are shaping the story of food](#).

Our findings are stunning (but may not surprise you): The industrial food sector has spent hundreds of millions of dollars over the past few years on stealth PR tactics and deployed over a dozen front groups to push coordinated messages to attack organic food, defend pesticides and the routine use of antibiotics, and promote GMO messages that are making their way, day after day, to the pages of the largest media outlets.

Our blog post about the report is [here](#).

Our aim is to shed light on how the food and agrochemical industry is trying to defuse concerns about the risks of chemical-intensive industrial agriculture and undermine public confidence in the benefits of organic and diverse, ecological production systems. We also hope to encourage journalists, opinion leaders and activists to bring increased scrutiny to industry's messages and messengers and to inspire greater investment in communications within our own organizations and the funder community.

Will you be our echo chamber and help us spread the word about this report and our findings?

It happened again a few weeks ago. A cabal of environmentalists, including many in the 'Green 20', demanded that *USA Today* not publish our scientists and doctors - they created a petition to demand [actual censorship](#) [2] - insisting we are an "industry front group" because we defend science. Any examination of our Form 990, and the fact that we have 1/1000th the revenue of the anti-science groups signing the petition, shows their claim is an obvious fabrication. Yet people inside the echo chamber pitched in to help anyway.



A few days later, [Harvard's Naomi Oreskes demanded](#) ^[3]

that [Nature magazine not publish](#) ^[4] our [examination of credible versus non-credible science sites](#) ^[5]. When she wasn't devoting her Twitter feed to retweeting progressive anti-science billionaire Tom Steyer, that is.

She helps because bans and suppression match the agenda of the groups she politically supports. And they dutifully cheered her on. A *Seattle Times* journalist and partisan professors at New York University joined in to endorse censorship as well, they all even used *the exact same verbiage they read in that organic marketing group email* asking people to create an echo chamber and get us banned. They hope that if a lie is repeated often enough, it will look like truth.

In a sense, they are correct for believing they can manufacture a truth out of lies. They have done it many times. Last year, a group of Attorneys General listed us on a subpoena, claiming we were paid skills to undermine climate science.

Who was first among them? A.G. Schneiderman, who got \$300,000 from organizations opposed to science - all science except global warming, that is.

It was an odd stance. What do we not write about here? Climate science.

Yet despite that, a few state attorneys wanted to bring the full force of their governments down on us, to mire us in legal paperwork, to drain our small budget fighting a conspiracy story that was manufactured due to [some old documents](#) ^[6] which were written by people at Exxon (as early as 1951, and in the 1970s by internal advocates for electric cars, synthetic oil, etc.) Had Attorney Scheiderman done any research, he would know we didn't undermine global warming any more than a malaria group that works in Africa did. Instead, his donors groomed him to take us on by providing our name on a list for him. They wanted to make sure that we were not covering any

science issues that their supporters do not accept. It wasn't about climate change; environmental groups don't want us defending vaccines, they don't want us defending affordable energy policies, they don't want us defending agriculture. It's their eugenics beliefs repurposed for the modern age.

It didn't work, we fought back and one Attorney General dropped the case when we mobilized outrage among the public who agree that government attorneys should be fighting real problems in their states, not acting as proxies for their environmental group donors. The public agree these officials certainly should not be smearing science groups in order to solicit donations from billionaires and boost their prestige for a run at the governor's office, as Schneiderman has done.

Emails obtained under Freedom of Information Act requests show that Attorney Schneiderman's office [even encouraged at least one green group lawyer to specifically not mention their coordination to the press](#) [7].

Kline, Scot

From: Lemuel Srolovic <Lemuel.Srolovic@ag.ny.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 9:01 PM
To: Matt Pawa
Cc: Kline, Scot
Subject: Re: Wall st journal

My ask is if you speak to the reporter, to not confirm that you attended or otherwise discuss the event.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Mar 30, 2016, at 6:31 PM, Matt Pawa <mp@pawalaw.com> wrote:

>
> Lem and Scot - a WSJ reporter wants to talk to me. I may not even talk to her at all but if I do I obviously will have no comment on anything discussed at the meeting. What should I say if she asks if I attended? No comment? Let me know.
>
> MP
>
> Matt Pawa
> Pawa Law Group, P.C.
> 1280 Centre Street, Suite 230
> Newton Centre, MA 02459
> (617) 641-9550
> (617) 641-9551 facsimile
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It has to be regarded as odd that Attorney Schneiderman seeks to penalize science groups using Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) laws while his office behaves like the mafia do. Almost \$300,000 in campaign donations from environmentalist donors opposed to science. The list of wealthy anti-science progressives he has curried is long, including members of the the Soros family and the same Tom Steyer that elite academics follow around.

It isn't just pro-science groups who object to this attempt to create an "icy chill" effect about science education. Other Attorneys General across the nation have been uniformly critical. Even one from New York. "It all smacks of politics," [said former New York AG Dennis Vacco](#) [8]. "What's

unsettling to me about this probe is that many of Attorney General Schneiderman's supporters are investors in alternative-energy companies and enemies of Exxon.”

Unconcerned by this obvious conflict of interest. All those academics who never seem to notice when it is one of their political allies.

The concern by other attorneys is warranted. How are they supposed to look like public defenders of their citizens when high-profile counterparts in states that routinely demonize science use their offices to remove the rights of people their donors happen not to like?

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Links

[1] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/09/22/will-you-be-our-echo-chamber-10197>

[2] <http://acsh.org/news/2017/02/27/anti-science-groups-demand-media-give-them-equal-time-or-ban-scientists-10906>

[3] <https://twitter.com/NaomiOreskes/status/839569163609845760>

[4] <http://www.nature.com/news/science-journalism-can-be-evidence-based-compelling-and-wrong-1.21591?source=acsh.org>

[5] <http://www.acsh.org/news/2017/03/05/infographic-best-and-worst-science-news-sites-10948>

[6] https://insideclimatenews.org/search_documents?field_related_project=41124

[7] <http://web.archive.org/web/20160805233528/http://eelegal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/NY-OAG-wants-Pawa-to-not-confirm-participation-to-WSJ.pdf>

[8] <http://nypost.com/2016/09/11/schneiderman-tried-to-contact-eco-tycoon-amid-exxon-probe/>