

Blowing things out of proportion

To hear former U.S. vice-president Al Gore tell it, we really are, as the old hippie anthem predicted, standing on the eve of destruction. Why? Global warming, of course.

Gore, who lost the 2000 presidential race to George W. Bush, has been basking in overwhelmingly positive media coverage from his current environmental doomsday film entitled "An Inconvenient Truth."

The real inconvenient truth, alas, is that much of what Gore baldly claims as absolute "truths" is either a)-completely twisted or b)- dead wrong.

Gore even vented against Prime Minister Stephen Harper's decision to not embrace the deeply flawed Kyoto Plan, expressing amazement that Canada, of all countries, would not understand that climate change caused by CO2 emissions is "the biggest crisis in the history of this country."



National Affairs

Claire Hoy

A clip of his film shown recently on CBC Newsworld - solemnly introduced by the admiring interviewer as "Scary stuff" - showed a world devastated by floods which would have made Noah blush.

"The Arctic is experiencing faster melting," claims Gore. "If this were to go, sea levels worldwide would go up 20 feet. This is what would happen in Florida, around Shanghai, home to 40 million people, the area around Calcutta, 60 million. Here in Manhattan. The World Trade Centre Memorial would be under water. Think of the impact of a couple hundred thousand refugees. And then imagine 100 million. Our ability to live is what is at stake."

Pretty scary stuff, indeed. But it's hokum, the real dangers overstated beyond the point of the absurd.

Here's an "inconvenient truth" which Gore and his fellow travelers in the climate change theocracy may wish to ponder:

Humans add three billion tonnes - that's gigatonnes, or GT - each year to the atmosphere's CO2 load. At first blush, that's a lot. In reality, as Ottawa's High Park Group pointed out, it represents less than half of 1% of the atmosphere's total CO2 content. Repeat that. Less than half of 1%.

Water vapour - which is something even Gore has no control over - constitutes 95% of greenhouse gases by volume.

You might also compare our three billion tonnes of CO2 production to the 210 billion tonnes per year of greenhouse gas produced by the earth's oceans and land.

As for flooding the world, Dr Chris de Freitas, a prominent New Zealand climate scientist responded to Gore's sensational claims by assuring him "that no one from the South Pacific island has fled to New Zealand because of rising seas. In fact, if Gore consults the data, he will see it shows sea level falling in some parts of the Pacific."

The same is true about Gore's claim - one of the more oft-repeated claims in the Canadian media - that global warming is putting our Arctic polar bears at risk.

Dr. Mitchell Taylor, manager, wildlife research section, Department of Environment, Nunavut, was cited recently saying that seven of the 13 populations of polar bears in the Canadian Arctic - more than half the world's total - are either "stable or increasing... Of the three that appear to be declining, only one has been shown to be affected by climate change..." And even that, it seems, isn't a sure thing one-way or the other.

And so it goes. Apocalyptic claim are apocalyptic claim. Reams of happy headlines for the publicity-seeking politician. More government and public funds flowing into the growing climate change industry. Pamphleteering replacing journalism in environmental reportage.

Naturally, Gore doesn't miss the opportunity to exploit the Hurricane Katrina disaster. He claims it got "stronger and stronger and stronger" as it came over the Gulf of Mexico. Actually, it didn't. It began as a category 5 over the ocean and was downgraded to category 3 when it reached landfall.

More importantly, hurricane specialist Ted Murty, former senior research scientist at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and now a University of Ottawa adjunct professor of Earth sciences, told the Financial Post last week that claims of an increase in hurricanes caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions are untrue.

There have been increases in the North Atlantic, he says, but "in all other six ocean basins where tropical cyclones occur, there is either a flat or a downward trend." He says the most intense U.S. hurricanes occurred in 1900, 1926 and 1935. As for the increase in North Atlantic hurricanes, Max Mayfield, director of the National Hurricane Center in Miami, says that global warming has nothing to do with it.

The point here is not that we shouldn't be concerned at all with greenhouse gas emissions. Cutting emissions, no matter how minor our contribution, isn't a bad thing.

But the end of the earth is not upon us. So let's deal with the science rather than running off in all directions at once and spending untold billions to combat a crisis which really only exists in the minds of self-serving, politicized propagandists and their assorted surrogates.

Parent: qualified for any job!

Nowhere on anyone's resume do you tend to come across an individual's personal, at-home accomplishments. These days, employers really can't ask about a person's home life or family situation.

Odd, that one of the most comprehensive, extensive and exhausting training exercises known to humankind is "skipped over" when examining a person's employment qualifications. HR people take note!

If you ask me, being a parent is not only one of the most important roles in life, it's also thankless at times. And, it really doesn't pay.

A recent survey tried to peg a stay-at-home parent's worth and translate it into an annual salary. They took into consideration the long hours (24) and duties (home care, custodial, transportation coordinator, nutritionist, volunteer, coach, etc.). They granted such a parent a decent remuneration of more than \$120,000 a year.

Fitting, yet no parent will actually receive such a hefty pay cheque or associated benefits, paid vacation and/or pension.

I believe any parent applying for any job should be considered before a single parent. Let me explain.

With parenting, there is no previous training or instruction. We are literally tossed into the deep end where it's sink or swim. Of course we rise to the surface and meet all the challenges, head-on, because that's the path we've chosen. Here are just some extraordinary abilities of parents.

Pregnant Mom: Science Experiment. Pregnant mothers become nutrition-conscious and test subjects in modern medical science. Given their vital role as incubator, they learn a lot about good diets during their pregnancy. They also learn a great deal about their own bodies, something few pre-med students would ever discover first-hand. It's quite fascinating, this whole creating life thing.

Mothers-to-be: Physical Athletes. Who else on the planet can guide a shopping



Mark Pavilons

cart with one hand, hold onto a toddler with the other, and still use their toes or teeth to reach to the top shelf? Who else can tuck and roll in perfect fashion should they fall? Who else can run a household, hold down a job and carry an extra 30 or 40 pounds around with them day in and day out?

Parent: Keen Student. Many parents do try to take a crash course and study for the position. There are countless resources in the form of books, magazines and online information that's helpful for new, and not so new, parents.

This is very similar to college or university book learning - poring over tons of information and literally burning the midnight oil. But in the end, there's no final exam, no marks, no report card.

The success is in the child.

So, regardless of age and background, give full marks to parents as keen students of humanity.

Parents: Sacrificial Lambs. Parents also know how to get along without a full night's sleep and remain fully functional and at the top of their game. Name another profession where this occurs without coffee or stimulants?

Parents also fully understanding the meaning of the term "sacrifice." For our children, we give up almost everything - our total freedom, spare time, any time-consuming hobbies, spare cash, personal clothing allowance, sports cars, action movies and anything sharp.

We go without for the

sake of our kids. That's not to say most parents run around with holes in their jeans, no socks and dilapidated runners, but they would if they had to.

Ask a recent university graduate to forgo the Armani suit and two-door coupe in favour of frugality and common sense.

I think they invented thrift stores for money-conscious parents.

Parents: Teachers. We parents, with no specific teaching credentials, become our children's first and perhaps most influential instructors in life. From basic motor skills and verbal communication techniques to English and math homework, parents provide tutoring 24/7. There's also social skills and etiquette all the while attempting to foster compassion, self-respect, self-esteem, cordiality, responsibility and a grip on reality. Boy, most real instructors teach one or two subjects!

Add to that lineup is of course, gym. We become coaches, cheerleaders and sparring partners for our athletically inclined youngsters. From gymnastics and figure skating to soccer and martial arts, we become "instant experts" in every competitive or individual sport.

Parent: Committed Until The Very End. Unlike other professions or career choices, this one never ends, never.

Our love, guidance, free advice and financial assistance are never-ending, except of course the cash part. Again, I think banks invented lines of credit and reverse mortgages for strapped parents.

Parent: Entertainer. As parents we often have to swallow our pride or get into the spirit of things and act as magician, entertainer, joke-teller and funny face-maker. Of course, many of us shine in this role and call upon our

long-forgotten class clown prowess and use it for good, not evil. Of course, the older your kids get, the more apt they are to be embarrassed by your antics.

So, in the final analysis, our resumes could be short and succinct: Parent capable of handling anything!

Joy of music

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They provide the opportunity for the students to compete in music festivals and travel to exciting destinations for these competitions.

Special thanks to Mr. Chalmers and Mr. Stevens, the current and former music department heads. Thank you to Mr. Wei and Mrs. Chalmers as well. Your enthusiasm, encouragement, dedication and patience with your students has been so appreciated by our family over the years.

Our many thanks to Patricia MacDonald, principal at The Humberview for her support of the music program and all the positive contributions she has made at the Humberview.

We know first-hand how the music program at The Humberview has had such a positive influence in the lives of our children and countless others. Thanks for the music and all the wonderful memories!

Melanie & Sam Fry

Parks & rec. month is June

Caledon council recently proclaimed June as Parks and Recreation Month.

Municipalities across Ontario are encouraged to support and recognize the importance of health and well-being and being physically active through promotion of the use of recreation programs and parks.

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