

Re: OT: interesting global warming quote found elsewhere

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- *From:* Martin Brown <|||newspam|||@nezumi.demon.co.uk>
 - *Date:* Tue, 05 Aug 2008 09:56:49 +0100
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John Larkin wrote:

On Mon, 04 Aug 2008 09:21:50 +0100, Martin Brown <|||newspam|||@nezumi.demon.co.uk> wrote:

Experience is the worst teacher.

Not at all. Experience is exactly how we (and now computers) learn about the external world. the most powerful methods available at present are based on Bayesian statistics and do everything these days from classify spam to guess about how to balance a portfolio.

The problem with experience is that most people pick a few – sometimes one – essentially random experience and decide that's the general case. Especially in the case of bad experiences.

So are you saying that you never learn anything from your successes or your mistakes?

You have made it abundantly clear that you prefer blind faith in your rigid political ideology to any evidence that science has to offer.

Experience should show us points in a range of possibilities. For most people, it has the opposite effect.

Consider the space shuttles. Both the SRB seals and the external tank insulations were known, continuous hazards. But successive flights accumulated confidence, when they should have accumulated terror. Again, a failure of experience.

The tiles were also known to be a source of single point failures too. The amazing thing is that we have only

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lost two shuttles so far. Saturn V was a much better more reliable launch system (although not reusable).

I grew up in New Orleans, and it was common knowledge that a storm that took Katrina's path would fill the lake and dump it onto the entire city. What did they do? Eat, drink, and be merry.

I thought they made a token effort in New Orleans to reinforce the levees. And the old French quarter was sensibly on higher ground.

Same in Tokyo and San Francisco. If you live in a danger zone you just get on with it and hope for the best (I did).

In your wilful ignorance in the next breath you will deny that there is any possibility of an AGW induced catastrophe. Do you see the contradiction?

I don't deny any possibility. I suggest that there is a good chance that the models are crap, that AGW isn't happening, and that the "science" is bad. The fact that skepticism isn't allowed over this issue is a red flag that the "science" is twisted.

Seriously, think about who, in the AGW debate, is denying possibilities.

I have seen enough of the science to be convinced that we will pay dearly for failing to make the no regrets energy savings now.

It is abundantly clear the US fossil fuel lobby has managed to persuade even some intelligent people to ignore what genuine scientists have to say. And Joe Six pack will continue drive his SUV until he can't afford to (which won't be long now).

As things stand the big oil price hikes may do more to help in the fight against AGW than anything else. Shame about the lack of political leadership but then if you will elect a bumbling idiot for president.

Which one of the big 3 US automakers do you fancy to go bust first?

But yes, I really doubt that a little warming, if it is happening, manmade or otherwise, will cause some "tipping point" catastrophe. All sorts of real-life problems, from kidney stones to jellyfish to beach erosion, is being blamed on AGW, and it's silly.

It may not cause a tipping point catastrophe. I personally don't think it will. Unless the clathrates and methane in permafrost get destabilised – after that all bets are off. CH₄ is a much more potent GHG whilst it lasts in the atmosphere.

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I have tried to break one of the AGW computer models by putting an large impulse of CO2 into the atmosphere. It took a few hundred years to stabilise. And that is the problem. Raised CO2 concentration now in the atmosphere will continue to cause warming for a long time into the future. This goes way beyond the normal political horizon of 5 years.

But a little more CO2 will make a lot of plants happy. We were close to running out.

Only in Larkin fantasy world.

Regards,

Martin Brown

** Posted from <http://www.teranews.com> **

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