

Re: In Praise of Lyme Activists

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derdrittemann2003@yahoo.com wrote:

> *Why antagonize people with this sort of thing?*

This is the problem in a nutshell –and not just in this limited vein vis a vis reds and blues. Look, Weisman, you do have interesting points but you paint things with too broad a brush and leave out the grays. You take things that happened and build your case without a nod to the evidence against it, as if you are a high school debate team president trying to score a point instead of a seeker of all the truth. Even as you strive to deliver a complex argument you continually oversimplify by presenting only part of the evidence ––the part that supports your argument–– while leaving out the rest.

For instance regarding Phyllis, she protested strongly and vociferously to the Klempner results in the end. She was a tremendous aggravation to NIH when the reality of what went down hit her ––it just took awhile, it was a learning curve, something Phyllis has spoken about with great honesty and humility. Anyone who notes that Phyllis did not speak out in the beginning of the Klempner committee must acknowledge that she spoke out very loudly at the end. It is unfair and misleading to focus on the beginning of her service without mentioning the end ––and to lead people unaware of the situation to conclude Phyllis went along when in fact she became one of the most outspoken critics we have as time went on.

You cannot get at the truth if you leave out the part of the reality that undercuts your thesis ––this kind of arguing undercuts credibility and alienates those who would agree with you if you were only more nuanced.

People who make mistakes have often also done good ––those who were too trusting wise up. But but you rarely make a concession to the changes people go through, or the upside of their service, or their victories. It is all about good and bad to you, and you see no in between. It is all black and white to you, and the real aspect ––the gray or the "purple" of the situation and the individual and the event–– gets lost in what often sounds like rhetoric.

GG