

Delingpole: RIP Christopher Booker, the World's Greatest Climate Change Sceptic

Christopher Booker, the world's greatest climate sceptic, has died.

[JAMES DELINGPOLE](#)

3 Jul 2019

Booker – “Bookers” as I used to call him on our regularly weekly phone chats – would have hated being called the ‘greatest’ but he was, for a number of reasons.

Firstly, he wrote the [definitive book](#) on the climate change scam: *The Great Global Warming Disaster: Is the Obsession with ‘Climate Change’ Turning Out to be the Most Costly Blunder in History?*

Secondly, he was one of very, very few journalists capable of getting climate sceptical arguments prominent coverage in the mainstream media – notably in the hugely influential and widely read *Daily Mail* and also in his weekly *Sunday Telegraph* column.

Thirdly, he was a figure of such journalistic eminence, who did his research so thoroughly, that he made it very hard for his many enemies on the green side of the argument simply to dismiss him as an ignorant crank.

Fourthly, unlike more than a few on the sceptic side of argument, Booker did not attempt to cover his rear or make himself seem more reasonable and moderate by billing himself as a ‘lukewarmer’. Booker told it as he saw it and for many years was in no doubt whatsoever that ‘climate change’ was the most expensive, pointless and dishonest scam in the history of the world.

What made Booker so special, apart from the old-fashioned thoroughness and attention to detail he brought to all his investigations, was that he was a man of extraordinary intelligence, experience and breadth of insight.

During his long, varied career he had been the founding editor of *Private Eye* (and, by extension, a key player in London’s Sixties Satire boom), jazz critic for the *Spectator*, a campaigner against tower blocks and brutalist modern architecture, a correspondent at the Moscow Olympics and a crusader against the European Union (his book *The Great Deception* – co-written with Richard North is the definitive work on the subject).

He also wrote an analysis of literature and storytelling tropes through the ages – *The Seven Basic Plots* – so brilliant that it is now taught at universities and on screenwriting courses as a kind of key to all mythologies which demonstrates not only how stories have been constructed and told over the centuries but also why they play such an important role in our culture.

Booker, in other words, was considerably more formidable an intellect with a great deal more hinterland and breadth of understanding than most of the tragic little pigmies who made it their business to mock his journalistic columns and to wear him down with vexatious

complaints to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) (formerly the Press Complaints Commission).

These complaints – often made by people with vested interests in the global warming scam, either as paid shills like Bob Ward of the Grantham Institute, or as second-rate scientists defending their sinecures – would take up a good deal of Booker's unpaid time. Almost invariably at the end he won because the facts were on his side and because he had prepared his case thoroughly. But by that stage the damage had been done: the point of these complaints was and is to wear climate sceptics down and to make them suffer financially, as well as to make newspaper editors more wary of publishing their work. The process is the punishment.

Booker, being a philosophical and good natured soul, took most of these irritations in his stride. But in our final conversations he did admit to finding it extraordinary – as I do – that almost a decade after Climategate (the tenth anniversary falls in November) we are still no closer to derailing the \$1.5 trillion (plus) per annum global climate change gravy train.

On the contrary, the more clearly the evidence shows that catastrophic man-made climate change is a chimaera, the more shrilly and noisily the vast and powerful climate alarmism industry screams that the sky is falling and that we're all doomed (unless we spend still trillions more on this non-existent problem...).

Though Booker agreed that this is shocking he did not find it inexplicable. That's because, as an historian, he recognised that across the ages madness has run in cycles, and that every stupid idea – from the Taiping rebellion to Nazism to Maoism – has its day during which the warnings of the sane are ignored. The great global warming scam is just another example of this phenomenon.

When he died, Booker was working on a book on this subject. The early draft was a paper he wrote for the Global Warming Policy Foundation on the subject of groupthink.

Groupthink was a term coined in the Sixties by a Yale psychology professor Irving Janis. Booker brought it up to date by taking in the climate change scare.

He wrote:

What Janis did was to define scientifically just how what he called groupthink operates, according to three basic rules. And what my paper tries to show is the astonishing degree to which they explain so much that many have long found puzzling about the global warming story.

Janis's first rule is that a group of people come to share a particular way of looking at the world which may seem hugely important to them but which turns out not to have been based on looking properly at all the evidence. It is therefore just a shared, untested belief.

Rule two is that, because they have shut their minds to any evidence which might contradict their belief, they like to insist that it is supported by a "consensus". The one thing those caught up in groupthink cannot tolerate is that anyone should question it.

This leads on to the third rule, which is that they cannot properly debate the matter with those who disagree with their belief. Anyone holding a contrary view must simply be ignored, ridiculed and dismissed as not worth listening to.

His [full paper](#) is well worth a read – as is the one he wrote demonstrating the [key role of the BBC in promoting the climate scare](#).

Booker was like my honorary dad. I'll miss him greatly. Not that I really quite believe that he's no longer with us. Years from now, when the phone rings in the evening in the middle of some TV programme I'm watching, I'll still pick it up half expecting to hear a voice booming at me with the enthusiasm of a man about to launch into another hour long conversation ranging from the European Union to climate change to Peter Cook to his schooldays at Shrewsbury: "Dellers!..."